



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Washington Office

14th & Independence SW
P.O. Box 96090
Washington, DC 20090-6090

File Code: 6230/5100

Date: August 12, 2003

Route To:

Subject: Moratorium on Destruction of Certain Records Related to Wildland Fires

To: Regional Foresters, Station Directors, Area Director, IITF Director, and FPL Director

This letter serves as notification to Forest Service offices of a moratorium on the destruction of certain fire-related records. Fire records documenting the history of individual fires, found in file code 5180, and commonly referred to as fire packages, should not be destroyed until further notice.

In November 2002, the Archivist of the United States changed the mandatory disposition of fire package records from temporary to permanent. In order to identify specifically those records that will eventually be transferred to National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) and pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding between the Forest Service and the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), the reevaluation of retention requirements for all fire packages has begun. In order to review and inventory the records as part of this reevaluation, site visits are in progress. It is important that these fire records be retained until the reevaluation is completed and the records having long-term or permanent value are identified. Once this has been completed, you will be notified of the appropriate actions to take regarding these records.

The target date for completion for this project is September 2004. Thus, over the course of the next year, Forest Service fire and records personnel and NARA representatives will continue working to:

- a) provide further guidance on maintenance of fire records for the current fire season and beyond;
- b) provide information on how to inventory, sort, and maintain permanent fire records;
- c) provide strategies for managing and storing inactive Forest Service fire records, and transferring eligible permanent fire records to NARA.

If you have questions, please contact Rita Morgan at (703) 605-4910.

/S/ THOMAS J. MILLS

THOMAS J. MILLS
Deputy Chief for Business Operations