

Chapter 04**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Program Organization & Responsibilities****Introduction**

This document states, references, or supplements policy for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Wildland Fire Management Program. The standards provided in this document are based on current U.S. Department of the Interior and Bureau policy, and are intended to provide fire program guidance. The intent is to ensure safe, consistent, efficient, and effective fire and aviation operations. This document will be reviewed and updated annually.

Agency Administrator Roles**Director**

The Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service has overall responsibility for the service wildland fire management program. The Director will ensure that all regional fire management activities are formally evaluated.

Chief, National Wildlife Refuge System

The National Wildlife Refuge System under the Chief provides leadership for the wildland fire management program. The National Wildlife Refuge System also formally evaluates all regional fire activities at least every five years. The Assistant Director is authorized to promulgate and approve the *Fire Management Handbook* and other fire related handbooks as needed to provide guidance.

Regional Director

The Regional Director is responsible to the Director for fire management programs and activities within their region. The Regional Director will meet the required elements outlined in the *Management Performance Requirements for Fire Operations* and ensure training is completed to support delegations to line managers and principal actings.

Regional Chief and Refuge Supervisors

Regional Chiefs and Refuge Supervisors are delegated specific leadership responsibilities by the Regional Director. They provide oversight and direction, in coordination with, the Wildland Fire Management Program for the National Wildlife Refuge System. These responsibilities occur through established lines of authority as assigned by the Regional Director.

Project Leader

The Project Leader is responsible to the Regional Director for the safe and efficient implementation of fire management activities within their unit, including cooperative activities with other agencies or landowners, in accordance with delegations of authorities. The Project Leader, or principal

- 1 acting, will meet the required element outlined in the *Management Performance*
 2 *Requirements for Fire Operations*.

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Management Performance Requirements for Fire Operations

PERFORMANCE REQUIRED	FWS Director	Regional Director	Regional Chief / Refuge Supervisor	Project Leader
1. Ensures that Fire Management Plans (FMP) reflect the agency commitment to firefighter and public safety, while utilizing the full range of fire management activities available for ecosystem sustainability.	X	X	X	X
2. Develops fire prevention, fire suppression, and fire use standards that are compliant with agency fire policies.	X	X	X	X
3. Ensures use of fire funds is in compliance with department and agency policies.	X	X	X	X
4. Ensures that all fire management activities are supported by a current FMP and is integrated with an approved Comprehensive Conservation Plan.	X	X	X	X

PERFORMANCE REQUIRED	FWS Director	Regional Director	Regional Chief / Refuge Supervisor	Project Leader
5. Attends the <i>Fire Management Leadership Course</i> . Ensures that personnel delegated fire program responsibilities have completed the <i>Fire Management Leadership Course</i> .			X	X
6. Provides a written Delegation of Authority to FMOs that gives them an adequate level of operational authority. If fire management responsibilities are zoned, ensures that all appropriate Agency administrators have signed the delegation.		X	X	X
7. Ensures that only trained, certified fire and non-fire personnel are available to support fire operations at the local and national level.	X	X	X	X
8. Ensures that master agreements with cooperators are valid and in compliance with agency policy, and that attached Annual Operating Plans are current.	X	X	X	X

PERFORMANCE REQUIRED	FWS Director	Regional Director	Regional Chief / Refuge Supervisor	Project Leader
9. Personally visits at least one wildland and one prescribed fire each year.				X
10. Annually convenes and participates in pre-and post season fire meetings.	X	X	X	X
11. Reviews critical operations and safety policies and procedures with fire and fire aviation personnel.		X	X	X
12. Ensures timely follow-up to fire management program reviews.	X	X	X	X
13. Ensures that fire and fire aviation preparedness reviews are conducted annually in all unit offices. Personally participates in at least one review annually.	X	X	X	X
14. Ensures that investigations are conducted for incidents with potential, entrapments, and serious accidents as per agency policy.	X	X	X	X

PERFORMANCE REQUIRED	FWS Director	Regional Director	Regional Chief / Refuge Supervisor	Project Leader
15. Provides a written delegation of authority, WFSA, and an <i>Agency Administrator Briefing to Incident Management Teams</i> .				X
16. Ensures that resource advisors are identified, trained and available for incident assignment. Refer to <i>Resource Advisors Guide for Wildland Fire PMS 313, NFES 1813, Jan 2004</i> .				X
17. Attends post fire closeout on Type 1 and Type 2 fires. (Attendance may be delegated.)		X	X	X
18. Ensures that a Wildland Fire Implementation Plans (WFIP) are completed, implemented and updated daily for all fires managed as wildland fire use.		X	X	X

PERFORMANCE REQUIRED	FWS Director	Regional Director	Regional Chief / Refuge Supervisor	Project Leader
19. Ensures that trespass actions are initiated and documented to recover cost of suppression activities, land rehabilitation, and damages to the resource and improvements for all human-caused fires where liability can be determined, as per <i>FWS Fire Trespass Handbook</i> .		X	X	X
20. Ensures compliance with National and Regional Office policy for prescribed fire activities. Provides periodic reviews of the prescribed fire program.	X	X	X	X
21. Ensures that Prescribed Fire Plans are approved and meet agency policies.		X	X	X
22. Ensures that the Prescribed Fire Plan has been reviewed and recommended by a qualified technical reviewer who was not involved in the plan preparation.				X

PERFORMANCE REQUIRED	FWS Director	Regional Director	Regional Chief / Refuge Supervisor	Project Leader
23. Ensures that a policy has been established for review and signing of the go-no/go checklist.				X
24. Ensures Unit Safety Program is in place, has a current plan, has an active safety committee, and includes the fire program.	X	X	X	X
25. Annually updates and reviews the <i>Agency Administrator's Guide to Critical Incident Management</i>	X	X	X	X
26. Ensures that current fire and weather information is posted and available for all employees.				X

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2 **Fire Management Staff Roles**

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4 **National Office**

5 **Service Fire Management Coordinator (SFMC)**

6 The Service Fire Management Coordinator is the Chief of the Fire Management
 7 Branch in the National Wildlife Refuge System, and is the Service
 8 representative at the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC). The SFMC,
 9 through *Service Manual 621 FW 1*, is delegated authority by the Director to
 10 represent the Service on the National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group
 11 (NMAC Group). The SFMC is responsible for implementing the decisions of the
 12 NMAC as they affect U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service areas. The decisions of the
 13 NMAC include the prioritizing of incidents nationally and the allocation or
 14 reallocation of firefighting resources to meet national priorities.

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1 The Fire Management Branch is responsible for providing technical direction
2 and coordination of fire management planning, policy development, and
3 procedures servicewide.
4 Regional Office

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6 **Regional Fire Management Coordinator (RFMC)**

7 The Regional Fire Management Coordinator provides coordination, training,
8 planning, evaluation, and technical guidance for the region and is available to
9 provide assistance for intra-agency and interagency wildland fire management
10 needs. The RFMC will meet qualification requirements established by the
11 service for the position. The RFMC, through written delegation by the Regional
12 Director, is delegated authority to represent the region on the GMAC. The
13 RFMC is responsible for implementing the decisions of the MAC Group as they
14 affect U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service areas. The decisions of the GMAC include
15 the prioritizing of incidents and the allocation or reallocation of firefighting
16 resources to meet wildland fire management priorities.

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18 **Refuge**

19 **Fire Management Officer (FMO)**

20 The Fire Management Officer (FMO) is responsible and accountable for
21 providing leadership for fire management programs at the local level. The FMO
22 determines program requirements to implement land use decisions through the
23 Fire Management Plan (FMP) to meet land management objectives. The FMO
24 negotiates interagency agreements and represents the Agency Administrator on
25 local interagency fire and fire aviation groups.

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27 An FMO may be assigned to provide wildland fire management support to a
28 group of refuges (zone or district) when individually each refuge does not
29 warrant a fulltime FMO.

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31 **Training**

32 The qualification standards identified in the *Interagency Fire Program*
33 *Management Qualification Standards* will be required, in conjunction with
34 specific agency requirements, when filling vacant fire program positions, and as
35 an aid in developing Individual Development Plans (IDPs) for employees.

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1 **Fire Management Staff Performance Requirements for Fire Operations**

PERFORMANCE REQUIRED	Fire Director	RFMC	Zone/District FMO
1. Establishes and manages a safe, effective, and efficient fire program.	X	X	X
2. Ensures that the Fire Management Plan (FMP) reflects the agency commitment to firefighter and public safety, while utilizing the full range of fire management activities available for ecosystem sustainability. <i>(Federal Wildland Fire Management Plan 2001)</i>	X	X	X
3. Provides the expertise and skills to fully integrate fire and fire aviation management into interdisciplinary planning efforts.	X	X	X
4. Ensures that only trained and qualified personnel are assigned to fire and fire aviation duties.	X	X	X
5. Ensures completion of a Job Hazard Analysis (JHA)/Risk Assessment for fire and fire aviation activities so mitigation measures are taken to reduce risk.		X	X
6. Ensures compliance with work/rest guidelines during all fire and fire aviation activities.	X	X	X
7. Ensures that the fire and fire aviation management employees understand their role, responsibilities, authority, and accountability.	X	X	X
8. Organizes trains, equips, and directs a qualified work force. Establishes and implements performance review process.	X	X	X
9. Develops implements, evaluates, and documents fire and fire aviation training to meet current and anticipated needs.	X	X	X

PERFORMANCE REQUIRED	Fire Director	RFMC	Zone/District FMO
10. Ensures fire and fire aviation policies are understood, implemented, and coordinated with other agencies as appropriate.	X	X	X
11. Monitors fire suppression activities to recognize when complexity levels exceed program capabilities. Increases managerial and operational resources to meet the need.	X	X	X
12. Monitors fire season severity predictions, fire behavior, and fire activity levels. Takes action to ensure safe, efficient, and effective operations.	X	X	X
13. Ensures that master agreements with cooperators are valid and in compliance with agency policy, and that attached Annual Operating Plans are current.	X	X	X
14. Develops, maintains and implements current operational plans. (e.g., dispatch, preparedness, prevention).		X	X
15. Ensures use of fire funds is in compliance with department and agency policies.	X	X	X
16. Ensures that fire severity funding is requested, used, and documented in accordance with agency standards (<i>Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations</i> , Chapter 9).	X	X	X
17. Reviews and approves appropriate overtime authorization requests for personnel providing fire suppression coverage during holidays, special events, and abnormal fire conditions.		X	X
18. Ensures a process is established to communicate fire info to public, media, and cooperators.	X	X	X

PERFORMANCE REQUIRED	Fire Director	RFMC	Zone/District FMO
19. Annually convenes and participates in pre-and post season fire meetings. Specifically address management controls and critical safety issues.	X	X	X
20. Oversees pre-season preparedness review of fire and fire aviation program.	X	X	X
21. Initiates, conducts, and/or participates in fire program management reviews and investigations.	X	X	X
22. Personally participates in periodic site visits to individual incidents and projects.		X	X
23. Utilizes the Incident Complexity Analysis appendix F & G to ensure the proper level of management is assigned to all incidents.	X	X	X
24. Ensures that transfer of command occurs as per appendix D on incidents.		X	X
25. Ensures that incoming personnel and crews are briefed prior to fire and fire aviation assignments.		X	X
26. Ensures an accurate and defensible Wildland Fire Situation Analysis (WFSA) is completed and updated daily for all fires that escape initial attack.	X	X	X
27. Ensures that a Wildland Fire Implementation Plan (WFIP) is completed, approved, and certified daily for all fires managed for Wildland Fire Use objectives.	X	X	X
28. Works with cooperators, groups, and individuals to develop and implement processes and procedures for providing fire safe communities within the wildland urban interface.	X	X	X

PERFORMANCE REQUIRED	Fire Director	RFMC	Zone/District FMO
29. Ensures that trespass actions are initiated and documented to recover cost of suppression activities, land rehabilitation, and damages to the resource and improvements for all human-caused fires where liability can be determined, as per <i>FWS Fire Trespass Handbook</i> .	X	X	X
30. Ensures training for fire cause determination and fire trespass is completed.	X	X	X
31. Ensures compliance with National and State Office policy for prescribed fire activities. Provides periodic reviews of the prescribed fire program.	X	X	X
32. Annually updates and reviews the <i>Agency Administrator's Guide to Critical Incident Management</i> .	X	X	X
33. Ensures that fire season severity predictions, weather forecasts, fire behavior predictors, and fire activity levels are monitored and communicated daily to all employees (hard copy, web page, email, radio, or fax).		X	X
34. Uses current National and Local Mobilization Guides and ensures that national, geographic and local mobilization standards are followed.	X	X	X
35. Complies with established property control/management procedures.	X	X	X

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2 **Delegation of Authority**

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4 **Delegation for Regional Fire Management Coordinators (RMFC)**

5 In order to effectively perform their duties, a RFMC must have certain
6 authorities delegated from the Regional Director. This delegation is normally
7 placed in the regional office supplement to agency manuals. This delegation of
8 authority should include:

- 1 • Serve as the Regional Director's authorized representative on geographic
- 2 area coordination groups, including MAC groups.
- 3 • Coordinate and establish priorities on uncommitted fire suppression
- 4 resources during periods of shortages.
- 5 • Coordinate logistics and suppression operations regional-wide.
- 6 • Relocate agency pre-suppression/suppression resources within the region
- 7 based on relative fire potential/activity.
- 8 • Correct unsafe fire suppression activities.
- 9 • Direct accelerated, aggressive initial attack when appropriate.
- 10 • Enter into agreements to provide for the management, fiscal, and
- 11 operational functions of combined agency operated facilities.
- 12 • Suspend prescribed fire activities when warranted.
- 13 • Give authorization to hire Emergency Firefighters in accordance with the
- 14 DOI Pay Plan for Emergency Workers.
- 15 • Approve emergency fire severity funding expenditures not to exceed the
- 16 agency's annual authority.