



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Washington, D.C. 20240



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Memorandum

To: Regional Directors
From: Deputy Director *Kenneth Stansell*
Subject: Fire Program Analysis Revised Completion Dates
(Amended Reply Due: April 1 and May 1, 2009)

At the direction of Congress, DOI program managers and scientists have been working since 2002 across Federal and State agency jurisdictional boundaries to develop the Fire Program Analysis (FPA) system as a replacement for outdated legacy systems such as National Fire Management Analysis System (NFMAS), FirePro and FireBase. That hard work paid off last June with the deployment of the current FPA system. Since use of these legacy systems was discontinued several years ago, program managers have been lacking good information and analysis to support resource acquisition and allocation decisions. We now have the opportunity to support these decisions with state-of-the-art decision science.

At the onset of FPA implementation, the project team and scientists advised us that the first year should be considered a "learning platform" to identify system improvements, ensure quality data inputs and system outputs, and allow users at all levels to become comfortable with use of the system. We do anticipate learning from the initial analysis, and to the extent practicable, using it for informing program budget development later this year.

Since the June release, fire planners and analysts at the field level have become increasingly involved with FPA's implementation and provided feedback to aid in system improvement. Based on that feedback, the system has already gone through several upgrades. While the system appears capable of handling the complexity of wildland fire management across the nation, it is evident that we will all need to be adaptable and patient as we work through the initial deployment of the system and improvements are made to data quality, system functions and scientific models.

Last fall, a staged approach for Fire Planning Units' entry into the system and corresponding analysis due dates was developed and communicated to the field via the project. This approach included three stages, or "waves." In December, the final "wave" accessed the system and started their analysis.

In order to provide for this adaptive implementation approach, we are revising the original due date of February 15, 2009 as established in my May 13, 2008 memo for completion of Fire Planning Unit analyses. This revision is based on a commitment to ensure that the system is functioning properly and that field units have adequate time to complete their analysis in



consideration of model development and other priority tasks. The revised due dates for submission of completed analysis are as follows (reference enclosed map):

Waves 1 & 2 FPU Analysis Due - April 1, 2009

Wave 3 FPU Analysis Due - May 1, 2009

Use of the FPA system to support the development and implementation of the wildland fire program, and its associated budget, is a priority for the Forest Service and the Department of the Interior. To ensure FPA's success, it is crucial that you and your line officers are engaged, providing leadership and support to ensure quality interagency Fire Planning Unit analyses. The Forest Service is releasing a similar memo to their units revising their due dates to those above.

The project has provided analysis parameters in Interagency Guidance for the FPU's. These parameters will include a specific set of preparedness and hazardous fuels options based on incremental budget changes which will be paired into alternatives. In this first year, we are limiting the number of options in order to manage the workload on the field while we gain a better understanding of the system's functionality. The guidance can be viewed online by visiting http://www.fpa.nifc.gov/Implementation/index_fpuguidance.html

Despite the challenges ahead, we look forward to the evolution of FPA over the coming years and the increasingly reliable information it will provide to our decision processes. Many field offices contributed invaluable assistance during prototype development and as early adopters. Their hard work, the commitment of the project team and the excellent science FPA is based on together provide a solid basis for moving forward. The world's pre-eminent wildland fire scientists have also served in key positions on the science team. With their involvement, we are also working to merge FPA with other systems such as the Hazardous Fuels Prioritization and Allocation System. As the interagency community works through system refinements, the underlying state-of-the-art science will shine through and help us all make better program management decisions.

Your continued feedback will be important and it will help us improve the system and its future application. Questions should be directed to Jaymee Fojtik, DOI FPA Business Lead at 208-947-3756 or Becky Brooks, National Fire Planner at 208-387-5345.

Attachments

