

## **Appendix C 2001 FEDERAL WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT POLICY**

### **1. Safety**

Firefighter and public safety is the first priority. All Fire Management Plans and activities must reflect this commitment.

### **2. Ecosystem Sustainability**

The full range of fire management activities will be used to achieve ecosystem sustainability including its interrelated ecological, economic, and social components.

### **3. Response to Wildland Fire**

Fire, as a critical natural process, will be integrated into land and resource management plans and activities on a landscape scale, and across agency boundaries. Response to wildland fires is based on ecological, social and legal consequences of the fire. The circumstances under which a fire occurs, and the likely consequences on firefighter and public safety and welfare, natural and cultural resources, and values to be protected dictate the appropriate response to the fire.

### **4. Use of Wildland Fire**

Wildland fire will be used to protect, maintain, and enhance resources and, as nearly as possible, be allowed to function in its natural ecological role. Use of fire will be based on approved Fire Management Plans and will follow specific prescriptions contained in operational plans.

### **5. Rehabilitation and Restoration**

Rehabilitation and restoration efforts will be undertaken to protect and sustain ecosystems, public health, safety, and to help communities protect infrastructure.

### **6. Protection Priorities**

The protection of human life is the single, overriding suppression priority. Setting priorities among protecting human communities and community infrastructure, other property and improvements, and natural and cultural resources will be done based on the values to be protected, human health and safety, and the costs of protection. Once people have been committed to an incident, these human resources become the highest value to be protected.

### **7. Wildland Urban Interface**

The operational role of federal and State agencies as partners in the Wildland Urban Interface are wildland firefighting, hazard fuels reduction, cooperative prevention and education, and technical assistance. Structural fire suppression is the responsibility of tribal, State, or local governments. Federal agencies may assist with exterior structural protection activities under formal Fire Protection Agreements that specify the mutual responsibilities of the partners, including funding.

### **8. Planning**

Every area with burnable vegetation must have an approved Fire Management Plan. Fire Management Plans are strategic plans that define a program to manage wildland and prescribed fires based on the area's approved land management plan. Fire management plans must provide for firefighter and public safety, include fire management strategies, tactics, and alternatives; address values to be protected and public health issues; and be consistent with resource management objectives, activities of the area, and environmental laws and regulations.

### **9. Science**

Fire management plans and programs will be based on a foundation of sound science. Research will support ongoing efforts to increase our scientific knowledge of biological, physical, and sociological factors. Information needed to support fire management will be developed through an integrated interagency fire science program. Scientific results must be made available to managers in a timely manner and must be used in the development of land management plans, fire management plans, and implementation plans.

**10. Preparedness**

Agencies will ensure their capability to provide safe, cost-effective fire management programs in support of land and resource management plans through appropriate planning, staffing, training, equipment, and management oversight.

**11. Suppression**

Fires are suppressed at minimum cost, considering firefighter and public safety, benefits, and values to be protected, consistent with resource objectives.

**12. Prevention**

Agencies will work together with their partners and other affected groups and individuals to prevent unauthorized ignition of wildland fires.

**13. Standardization**

Agencies will use compatible planning processes, funding mechanisms, training and qualification requirements, operational procedures, values-to-be protected methodologies, and public education programs for all fire management activities.

**14. Interagency Cooperation**

Fire management planning, preparedness, prevention, suppression, fire use, restoration and rehabilitation, monitoring, research, and education will be conducted on an interagency basis with the involvement of cooperators and partners.

**15. Communication and Education**

Agencies will enhance knowledge and understanding of wildland fire management policies and practices through internal and external communication and education programs. These programs will be continuously improved through the timely and effective exchange of information among all affected agencies and organizations.

**16. Agency Administrator and Employee Roles**

Agency administrators will ensure that their employees are trained, certified and made available to participate in the wildland fire program locally, regionally, and nationally as the situation demands. Employees with operational, administrative, or other skills will support the wildland fire program as necessary. Agency administrators are responsible and will be held accountable for making employees available.

**17. Evaluation**

Agencies will develop and implement a systematic method of evaluation to determine effectiveness of projects through implementation of the 2001 Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy. The evaluation will assure accountability, facilitate resolution of areas of conflict, and identify resource shortages and agency priorities.