

National Fire & Aviation Executive Board

Directives Task Group

“Interagency Strategy for the
Implementation of the Federal
Wildland Fire Policy”

www.nifc.gov/fire_policy

Interagency Strategy for the Implementation of the Federal Wildland Fire Policy

- 1995 Federal Fire Policy was updated in January of 2001
- Chartered by NWCG, an Implementation Strategy was completed in June, 2003
- Approved by the Secretaries of Agriculture and Interior in April of 2004
- The NFAEB chartered a Directives Task Group August of 2004 to accomplish 8 tasks.

Mission Statement

“Establish a unified and cohesive federal fire management policy codified in agency, inter-agency and departmental manuals, guidebooks and other documents through clear, concise and uniform language across all agencies. Through a communication plan share work and information with all wildland agencies.”



8 Tasks from the Strategy

1. **Task:** Establish common terms and definitions where inconsistencies exist.
2. **Task:** Develop consistent interagency language that describes how to implement each of the wildland fire policy statements.
3. **Task:** Revise department level and agency specific manuals, handbooks, guidebooks and other documentation as appropriate.
4. **Task:** Revise interagency fire management handbooks, guidebooks and other interagency documents as appropriate.



8 Tasks from the Strategy (cont)

5. **Task:** Revise National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) and federal wildland fire management agency fire and fuels management training courses.
6. **Task:** Revise federal wildland fire management agency and interagency national and field level agreements to reflect fire policy and implementation language changes.
7. **Task:** Develop a periodic, internal review process(es) that will identify how well the federal wildland fire management agencies are implementing the 17 fire policy statement, objectives and management intent.
8. **Task:** Develop a communications plan that will aid and assist internal and external understanding of terminology and implementation process.

Directives Task Group Membership

Rick Jensen, Bureau of Land Management – co-chair

Greg Greenhoe, Forest Service – co-chair

Andy Bellcourt, Bureau of Indian Affairs

Rod Bloms, Fish & Wildlife Service

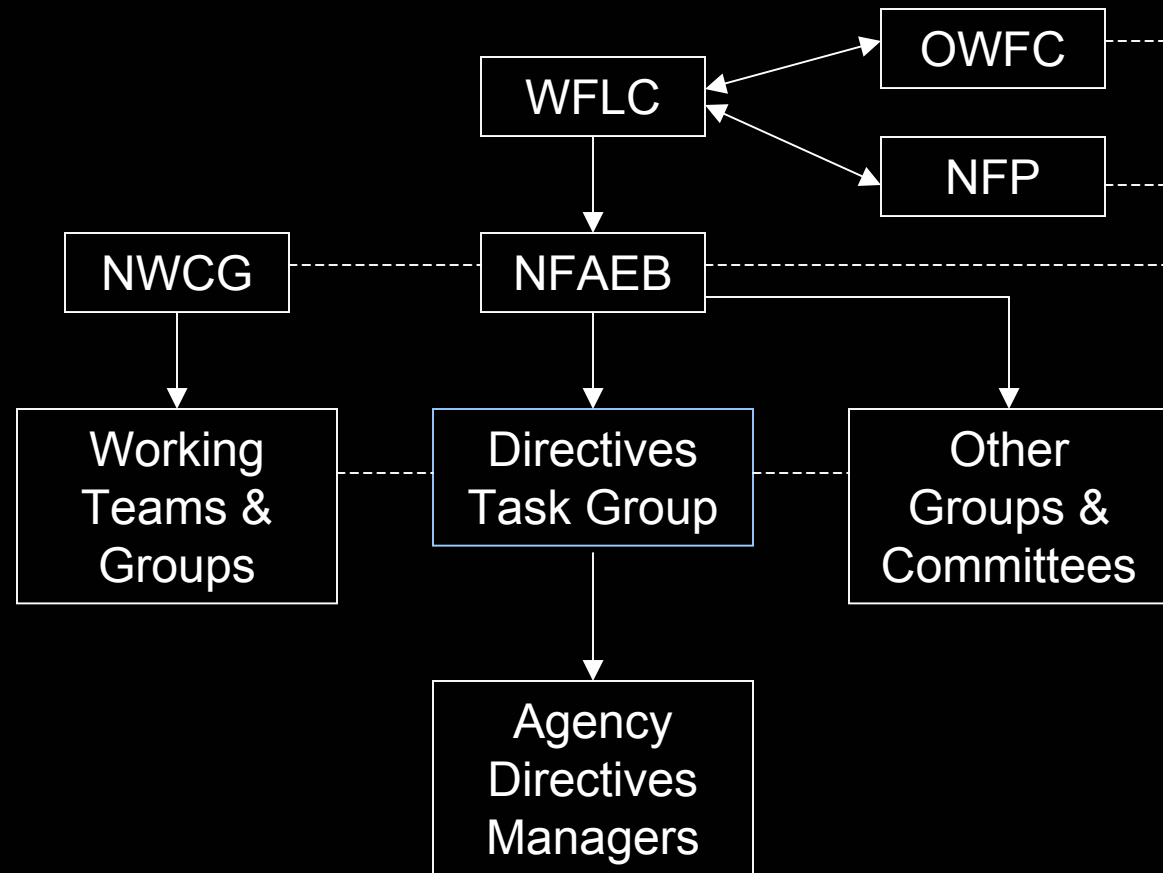
Fred Bird, National Park Service

Wally Josephson, DOI Office of Wildland Fire Coord.

Rose Davis, NIFC Office of Communications



Organization and Relationships



17 Policy Statements from the Interagency Strategy



17 Policy Statements

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



17 Policy Statements

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



17 Policy Statements

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.

17 Policy Statements

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.

17 Policy Statements

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.



17 Policy Statements

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.



17 Policy Statements

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.

17 Policy Statements

7. Wildland Urban Interface (cont.): Federal agencies may assist with exterior structural protection activities under formal Fire Protection Agreements that specify the mutual responsibilities of the partners, including funding. Note: Some federal agencies have full structural protection authority for their facilities on lands they administer and may also enter into formal agreements to assist state and local governments with full structural protection.

17 Policy Statements

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.



17 Policy Statements

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.

17 Policy Statements


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.

17 Policy Statements

11. **Suppression:** Fires are suppressed at minimum cost, considering firefighter and public safety, and all values to be protected, consistent with resource objectives.




17 Policy Statements



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

17 Policy Statements



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.

17 Policy Statements

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.

17 Policy Statements

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.



17 Policy Statements

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.

17 Policy Statements

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.

Operational Clarification

1. “Only one management objective will be applied to a wildland fire. Wildland fires will either be managed for resource benefits or suppressed. A wildland fire cannot be managed for both objectives concurrently. If two wildland fires converge, they will be managed as a single wildland fire.”



Operational Clarification

2. “Human caused wildland fires will be suppressed in every instance and will not be managed for resource benefits.”



Operational Clarification

3. “Once a wildland fire has been managed for suppression objectives, it may never be managed for resource benefit objectives.”



Operational Clarification

4. “The Appropriate Management Response (AMR) is any specific action suitable to meet Fire Management Unit (FMU) objectives. Typically, the AMR ranges across a spectrum of tactical options (from monitoring to intensive management actions). The AMR is developed by using FMU strategies and objectives identified in the Fire Management Plan.”



Operational Clarification

5. “The Wildland Fire Situation Analysis process is used to determine and document the suppression strategy from the full range of responses available for suppression operations. Suppression strategies are designed to meet the policy objectives of suppression.”



Operational Clarification

5. “The Wildland Fire Situation Analysis (WFSA) process is used to determine and document the suppression strategy from the full range of responses available for suppression operations. Suppression strategies are designed to meet the policy objectives of suppression.”




Operational Clarification

6. “Wildland fire use is the result of a natural event. The Land/Resource Management Plan, or the Fire Management Plan, will identify areas where the strategy of wildland fire use is suitable. The Wildland Fire Implementation Plan (WFIP) is the tool that examines the available response strategies to determine if a fire is being considered for wildland fire use.”



Operational Clarification



7. “When a prescribed fire or a fire designated for wildland fire use is no longer achieving the intended resource management objectives and contingency or mitigation actions have failed, the fire will be declared a wildfire. Once a wildfire, it cannot be returned to a prescribed fire or wildland fire use status.”

Terms and Definitions

Wildland Fire Any non-structure fire that occurs in the wildland. Three distinct types of wildland fire have been defined and include wildfire, wildland fire use and prescribed fire.



Terms and Definitions

Wildfire An unplanned, unwanted wildland fire, including unauthorized human-caused fires, escaped wildland fire use events, escaped prescribed fire projects, and all other wildland fires where the objective is to put the fire out.



Terms and Definitions

Prescribed Fire Any wildland fire ignited by management actions to meet specific objectives. A written, approved prescribed fire plan must exist, and NEPA requirements (where applicable) must be met, prior to ignition.



Terms and Definitions

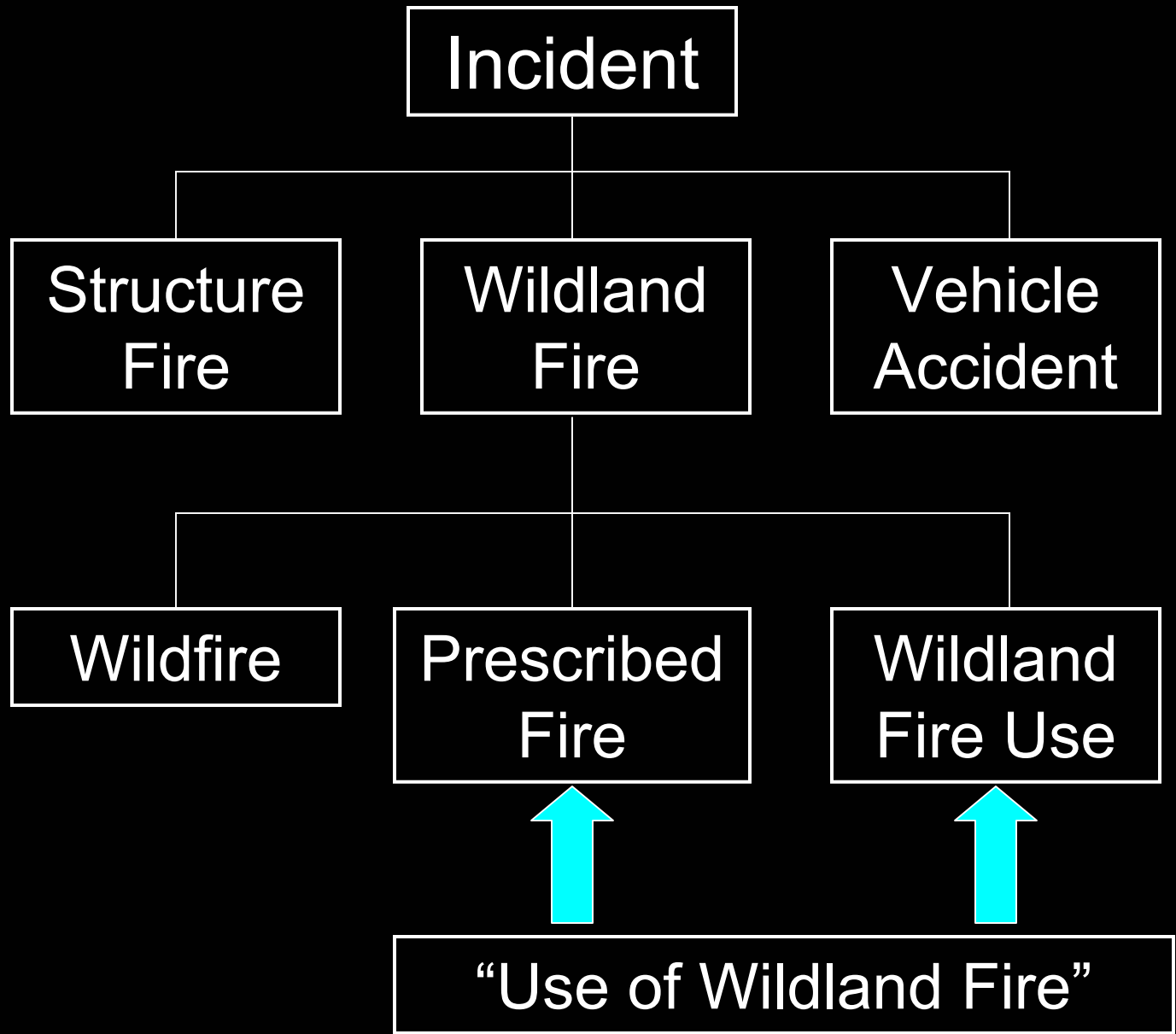
Wildland Fire Use The application of the appropriate management response to naturally-ignited wildland fires to accomplish specific resource management objectives in predefined designated areas outlined in Fire Management Plans.



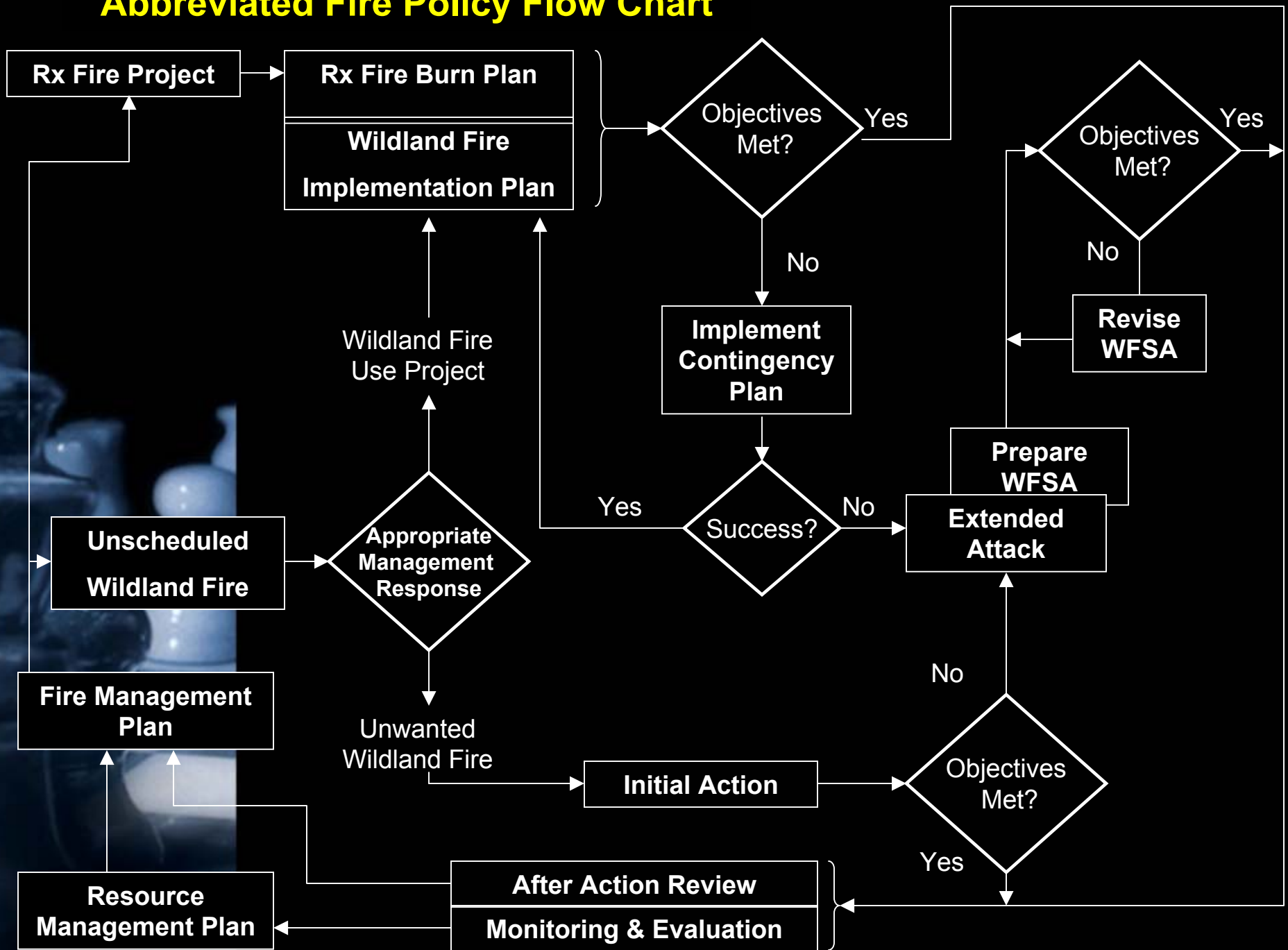
Terms and Definitions

Use of Wildland Fire Either **wildland fire use** or **prescribed fire** application to meet resource objectives.





Abbreviated Fire Policy Flow Chart



Accomplishment Reporting

Directive	Review	Update Needed?	Priority	Due Date	Status
Manual					
5100 Zero Code	done	Yes	1	3/1/05	Review complete. Final to directives.
5110 Prevention	done	Yes	12	4/1/05	Edited draft sent to Lew Southard
5120 Preparedness	done	Yes	3	3/1/05	Reviewed, edited and back to Sharon Allen-Brick
5130 Suppression	done	Yes	4		Sharon working on, will review policy
5140 Fire Use	done	Yes	5		W/Tim Sexton, have draft
5150 Fuels Mgt	done	Yes	6		W/Tim Sexton
5160 Equipment	done	No		done	Alice Forbes
5170 Cooperation	done	Yes	7		
5180 Fire Reports	done	No	9		
5190 Management	done	Yes	8		Sharon working on, will review policy
5700 Aviation	done	No		done	Jim Barnett has lead
Handbooks					
5109.14 Fire Report	done	No		done	
5109.17 Qualification	done	Yes	10	3/1/05	Meet with Sharon 10/19
5109.18 Prevention	done	Yes	11		
5109.19 Planning	done	Yes	2	3/1/05	Edit underway

Committee/Group/Team	Chairperson or Contact	Directives Task Group Liaison	Initial Meeting
NIMO	Paul Hefner	Greg Greenhoe	9/04
IOS Working Team	Bob Leaverton	Andy Bellcourt	8/04
IBP Working Team	Hallie Locklear	Rick Jensen	9/04
Training Working Team	Logan Lee	Greg Greenhoe	8/04
WUI Working Team	Sam Scranton	Rick Jensen	8/04
Wildland Fire Education WT	Marueen Brooks	Wally Josephson	8/04
Safety & Health WT	Paul Broyles	Rod Bloms	9/04
Fire Use Working Team	Bill Leenhouts	Fred Bird	8/04
Red Book Committee	Kurt LaRue	Rod Bloms	9/04
National Fuels Team	Dave Mueller	Fred Bird	10/04
Fire & Aviation Safety Team	John Gould	Rod Bloms	9/04
Large Fire Cost Team	Brad Powell	Andy Bellcourt	
Fire Program Analysis	Howard Roose	Rick Jensen	10/04
Mega Fire Team	Marc Rounsaville	Greg Greenhoe	10/04
Aviation Board of Directors	Dennis Lamun	Fred Bird	
Nat'l Fire/Air Quality Issues Group	Dennis Haddow	Rod Bloms	10/04
Interagency Readiness Review Group	Paul Broyles	Greg/Rod	12/04