

## Chapter 09

Fire Management Planning ~~XXX & Response~~Policy ~~XXX and Implementation~~

Planning: Every area with burnable vegetation must have an approved Fire Management Plan (FMP). FMPs are strategic plans that define a program to manage ~~XXX wildland and prescribed fires planned and unplanned ignitions~~ based on the area's approved Land ~~XXX or Resource~~ Management Plan (L/RMP). FMPs 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. ~~XXX (2001 Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy).~~

~~XXX For complete interagency policy guidance see:~~  
~~[http://www.nwec.gov/branches/ppm/fpc/archives/fire\\_policy/index.htm](http://www.nwec.gov/branches/ppm/fpc/archives/fire_policy/index.htm)~~ For complete historical interagency policy and implementation guidance, see ~~[http://www.nwec.gov/branches/ppm/fpc/archives/fire\\_policy/index.htm](http://www.nwec.gov/branches/ppm/fpc/archives/fire_policy/index.htm)~~  
~~<http://www.nifc.gov/policies.htm>~~

## Purpose

The fire management planning process and requirements may differ among agencies. However, for all agencies (~~Forest Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, Fish and Wildlife Service, and National Park Service~~), ~~In addition, for the Department of the Interior (DOI) agencies,~~ the FMP contains strategic and operational elements that describe how to manage applicable fire program components such as: response to unplanned ignitions, hazardous fuels and vegetation management, burned area emergency stabilization and rehabilitation, prevention, community interactions and collaborative partnerships roles, and monitoring and evaluation programs. ~~a common purpose of a FMP is to provide decision support to aid managers in making informed decisions on all fire management activities. XXX on the appropriate management responses in response to unplanned ignitions.~~

The FMP includes a concise summary of information organized by fire management unit (FMU) or units. Each FMP ~~XXX will evolve over time should be updated~~ as new information becomes available, ~~conditions change on the ground and changes are made to L/RMP. XXX as conditions on the ground necessitate updates, or when changes are made to the L/RMP.~~

~~XXX For an example of an FMP see *Interagency Fire Management Plan Template, April 9, 2009* at <http://www.nwec.gov/branches/ppm/fpc/index.htm>~~

~~• *FS* – An example *FS* FMP can be found at:~~  
~~<http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/fire/fmp/>~~

~~XXX For an example of FMP templates, see:~~

- 1 • DOI- <http://www.nwcg.gov/branches/ppm/ifpc/library.htm>
- 2 • FS- <http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/fire/fmp/>

## 4 Wildland Fire Management Objectives

5  
6 A wildland fire may be concurrently managed for one or more objectives XXX  
7 as specified in the L/RMP and FMP. XXX and Objectives can change as the fire  
8 spreads across the landscape. XXX Objectives and are affected by changes in  
9 fuels, weather, topography; varying social understanding and tolerance; and  
10 involvement of other governmental jurisdictions having different missions and  
11 objectives.

## 13 Concepts and Definitions

14  
15 XXX For further clarification of concepts and definitions that follow, refer to  
16 *Terminology Updates Resulting from Release of the Guidance for the*  
17 *Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy (2009), April 30,*  
18 *2010 (NWCG #024-2010), and the *Guidance for Implementation of Federal**  
19 *Wildland Fire Management Policy, February 13, 2009.*

### 21 Land/Resource Management Plan

22 A document prepared with public participation and approved by the agency  
23 administrator that provides general guidance and direction for land and resource  
24 management activities for an administrative area. The L/RMP identifies fire's  
25 role in a particular area and for a specific benefit. The objectives in the L/RMP  
26 provide the basis for the development of fire management objectives and the fire  
27 management program in the designated area.

### 29 Fire Management Plan

30 XXX A Fire Management Plan (FMP) identifies and integrates all wildland fire  
31 management XXX(both planned and unplanned ignitions) and XXX related  
32 associated activities within the context of the approved L/RMP. ~~It defines a~~  
33 ~~program to manage XXX wildland fire planned and unplanned wildland fires~~  
34 ~~(both planned and unplanned ignitions).~~ The XXX FMP is supplemented by  
35 operations plans, including but not limited to preparedness plans, preplanned  
36 dispatch plans, XXX prescribed fire burn fuels treatment plans, and prevention  
37 plans. FMPs assure that wildland fire management goals and XXX components  
38 objectives are coordinated.

### 40 Fire Management Unit

41 The primary purpose of developing Fire Management Units (FMUs) in fire  
42 management planning is to assist in organizing information in complex  
43 landscapes. The process of creating FMUs divides the landscape into smaller  
44 geographic areas to more easily describe physical/biological/social  
45 characteristics and frame associated planning guidance based on these  
46 characteristics. FMUs should be developed through interagency efforts and

1 interactions to facilitate common fire management across boundaries. XXX See  
2 the *Interagency Fire Management Plan Template, April 9, 2009*.

3  
4 An FMU can be any land management area definable by objectives XXX that  
5 set it apart from the management characteristics of an adjacent FMU (e.g.  
6 management constraints, topographic features, access, values to be protected,  
7 political boundaries, fuel types, major fire regime groups). management  
8 constraints, topographic features, access, values to be protected, political  
9 boundaries, fuel types, major fire regime groups, and so on, that set it apart from  
10 the management characteristics of an adjacent FMU. The FMU may have  
11 dominant management objectives and pre-selected strategies assigned to  
12 accomplish these objectives. See *Guidance for Implementation of Federal*  
13 *Wildland Fire Management Policy, February XXX 13, 2009*.

#### 14 15 **Wildland Fire**

16 Wildland fire is a general term describing any non-structure fire that occurs in  
17 XXX the wildland vegetation and/or natural fuels including both prescribed fire  
18 and wildfire. XXX Wildland fires are categorized into two distinct types:

- 19 ● **Wildfires** – Unplanned ignitions or prescribed fires that are declared  
20 wildfires. See *Guidance for Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire*  
21 *Management Policy, February 13, 2009*.
- 22 ● **Prescribed Fires** – Planned ignitions. See *Guidance for Implementation of*  
23 *Federal Wildland Fire Policy, February 13, 2009*.

#### 24 25 **XXX Fire Type**

26 XXX Wildland fires are categorized into two distinct types:

- 27 ● Wildfires- **Unplanned** ignitions or prescribed fires that are declared  
28 wildfires.
- 29 ● Prescribed fires- **Planned** ignition.

#### 30 31 **Response to Wildland Fire**

32 XXX Responses to wildland fire will be coordinated with all affected  
33 agencies/cooperators regardless of the jurisdiction at the ignition point. Fire, as  
34 a critical natural process, will be integrated into land and resource management  
35 plans and activities on a landscape scale, and across agency boundaries.

36  
37 XXX Management response to a wildland fire on federal land is based on  
38 objectives established in the applicable L/RMP and FMP. Initial response to  
39 human-caused wildfires will be to suppress the fire at the lowest cost with the  
40 fewest negative consequences with respect to firefighter and public safety.

41  
42 Response to wildland fires is based on ecological, social and legal consequences  
43 of the fire. The appropriate response to the fire is dictated by:

- 44 ● The circumstances under which a fire occurs
- 45 ● The likely consequences to firefighter/public safety and welfare
- 46 ● The natural/cultural resource values to be protected

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1  
2 ~~XXX See *Guidance for Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Management*~~  
3 ~~*Policy, February 13, 2009.*~~

4  
5 **Initial XXX Action Response**

6 ~~XXX The actions taken by the first resources to arrive at a wildfire. Initial~~  
7 ~~actions may be size up, patrolling, monitoring, holding actions, or aggressive~~  
8 ~~initial attack. See *NWCG Glossary of Wildland Fire Terminology, January*~~  
9 ~~*2005.* Initial response is the immediate decisions and actions taken to react to an~~  
10 ~~ignition. These decisions and actions may include a management or initial~~  
11 ~~decision to postpone taking action on the ground based on conditions, safety,~~  
12 ~~and/or competing priorities. Initial action on human-caused wildfire will be to~~  
13 ~~suppress the fire at the lowest cost with the fewest negative consequences with~~  
14 ~~respect to firefighter and public safety.~~

15  
16 **Initial Attack XXX**

17 ~~XXX A planned response to a wildfire given the wildfire's potential behavior.~~  
18 ~~The objective of initial attack is to stop the spread of the fire and put it out in a~~  
19 ~~manner consistent with firefighter and public safety and values to be protected.~~  
20 ~~See *NWCG Glossary of Wildland Fire Terminology, XXX January 2005.* This~~  
21 ~~type of initial response is an aggressive action to put the fire out consistent with~~  
22 ~~firefighter and public safety and values to be protected.~~

23  
24 **Extended Attack**

25 ~~Suppression activity for a wildfire that has not been contained or controlled by~~  
26 ~~initial attack or contingency forces and for which more firefighting resources are~~  
27 ~~arriving, en route, or being ordered by the initial attack incident commander.~~  
28 ~~See *NWCG Glossary of Wildland Fire Terminology, XXX January 2005*~~  
29 ~~*November 2008.*~~

30  
31 **Wildfire Suppression XXX**

32 ~~XXX Suppression— all the work of extinguishing a fire or confining a fire~~  
33 ~~beginning with its discovery. See *Guidance for Implementation of Federal*~~  
34 ~~*Wildland Fire Policy, February 13, 2009.* Management action to extinguish a~~  
35 ~~fire or confine fire spread.~~

36  
37 **XXX Operational Use of XXX Fire Management Plans Wildland Fire**

38  
39 ~~Fire organizations responding to wildland fires must utilize the direction XXX~~  
40 ~~and guidance in the XXX L/RMP and FMP to guide the fire management~~  
41 ~~response.~~

42  
43  
44 ~~XXX Management response to a wildland fire on federal land is based on~~  
45 ~~objectives established in the applicable Land/ Resource Management Plan~~

1 and/or the Fire Management Plan. See *Guidance for Implementation of Federal*  
2 *Wildland Fire Policy, February 13, 2009.*

3  
4 Human caused wildland fires will be suppressed in every instance and will not  
5 be managed for resource benefits.

### 7 **XXX Wildfire Responses**

#### 9 **Responding to a Wildfire**

10 Responses to wildland fire will be coordinated across levels of government  
11 regardless of the jurisdiction at the ignition source. Management response to a  
12 wildland fire on federal land is based on objectives established in the applicable  
13 Land/ Resource Management Plan and/or the Fire Management Plan. Initial  
14 action on human caused wildfire will be to suppress the fire at the lowest cost  
15 with the fewest negative consequences with respect to firefighter and public  
16 safety. See *Guidance for Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Policy,*  
17 *February 13, 2009.*

#### 19 **XXX Escaped Initial Attack**

20 A fire has escaped initial attack when:

- 21 ● The fire has not been contained by the initial attack resources dispatched to  
22 the fire and there is no estimate of containment or control and;
- 23 ● The fire will not have been contained within the initial attack management  
24 objectives established for that zone or area.

### 26 **XXX Next Sections moved to Chapter 11**

#### 27 **Wildland Fire Decision Support System (WFDSS)**

29 The Wildland Fire Decision Support System (WFDSS) is a web based decision  
30 support system, which replaces the Wildland Fire Situation Analysis (WFSA),  
31 Wildland Fire Implementation plan (WFIP), Long Term Implementation Plan  
32 (LTIP) and Strategic Implementation Plan (SIP). These documents have been  
33 combined into a single dynamic process within the WFDSS. WFDSS utilizes  
34 GIS information that incorporates modeling, documentation of a decision  
35 process, and multiple databases. These features are combined into a system that  
36 gives the decision maker maximum flexibility in defining their course of action  
37 and subsequent strategic and tactical actions based on planning documents,  
38 incident specific analysis and risk assessment. As an internet based system with  
39 multiple database links; WFDSS can give decision support in a timely and  
40 efficient manner.

42 Use of WFDSS for all unplanned fires has been implemented differently  
43 throughout the agencies. It is the decision of the local unit to determine who  
44 shall be responsible for initial entry and updating fires in the system. Mandatory  
45 use of WFDSS is required for all agencies.

#### 46 **WFDSS Support**

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1 A National Fire Decision Support Center (NFDESC) has been established to  
2 support analysis used in wildland fire decision making and WFDSS. The  
3 support provided by NFDESC consists of developing, improving, and increasing  
4 production and operational use of decision support products. As part of that  
5 support NFDESC will provide not only direct decision support but also mentoring  
6 and training to develop and strengthen regional and unit level decision support  
7 capacity. Information for requesting assistance from the NFDESC can be found  
8 at the WFDSS website: <http://WFDSS.usgs.gov>. An over view of the WFDSS  
9 Elements can be found in appendix S.

10

#### 11 **WFDSS User Roles**

12 Privileges within WFDSS are controlled by several user roles which have  
13 varying levels of capability in relation to creation and editing of incidents,  
14 analyses, reports, and decisions. More information can be found on the WFDSS  
15 homepage under the Related Resources link.

16

#### 17 **Fire Modeling**

18 Fire modeling has been incorporated into WFDSS, in the form of the FIRE  
19 Spread Probability model (FSPro) and FlamMap. Single purpose models from  
20 FlamMap; the "Basic" and "Short Term", have been incorporated in to the  
21 system. Comparison of WFDSS short and basic models to stand alone  
22 FlamMap and other fire behavior information can be found on the WFDSS  
23 homepage under the Related Resources link, fire behavior section. Information  
24 for requesting assistance in running these models for your incident can be found  
25 at the WFDSS homepage through the National Fire Decision Support Center  
26 (NFDESC).

27

#### 28 **XXX Response Levels**

29 WFDSS can be used to assess the entire spectrum of incident complexity and  
30 risk within three Response Levels (RL), RL1, RL2, and RL3. These response  
31 levels are used in a manner similar to that of the stages of a WFIP in that your  
32 incident can escalate and de-escalate through these levels as the incident  
33 progresses. WFDSS differs from the WFIP process in that there is no nationally  
34 prescribed time requirement in which a RL must be completed. The movement  
35 through Response Levels does not necessarily need to be linear and should be  
36 determined by incident complexity, objectives, and expected duration of the  
37 incident.

38 ● **RL1**—Most fires will not progress beyond this point. Response Level 1 is  
39 characterized by basic analysis and preplanned actions and decisions. This  
40 RL will be similar to the WFIP stage 1.

41 ● **RL2**—Response Level 2 is characterized by a more detailed analysis and  
42 planning process. It is at this point your initial course of action is developed  
43 and a decision is approved by an agency administrator. This RL is  
44 comparable to WFIP stage 2.

45 ● **RL3**—Response Level 3 is characterized by a very detailed analysis and  
46 course of action that may include long term planning considerations. This

1 RL is comparable to WFIP stage 3 or the Long Term Implementation Plan  
 2 (LTIP). Fires in this category will typically be large, highly complex, or  
 3 long term fire management events. This RL decision document must also be  
 4 approved by an agency administrator.  
 5 Remove, or replace with new guidance?

6  
 7 **WFDSS Decision Approval and Publication**

8 Decisions in WFDSS are approved and published by the appropriate line officer  
 9 as defined in the table below. Incident privileges must be assigned within  
 10 WFDSS to designate the approver. During the approval process, prior to  
 11 publishing a decision, the timeframe for periodic assessment can be set (1-14  
 12 days).

13  
 14 It is imperative that a decision be reviewed carefully as once approved and  
 15 published, a decision becomes a system of record and all WFDSS users can  
 16 view the information. Additionally, the action CANNOT be undone. If there is  
 17 an error in the information, or new information is added for documentation or  
 18 update (i.e. fire behavior, Management Action Points) a new decision must be  
 19 made to permanently update the record.

20  
 21 **WFDSS Approval Requirements**

Cost Estimate	BIA	BLM	FWS	NPS	USFS
\$0-\$2M	Agency Superintendent	Field/District Manager	Project Leader/Refuge Manager	Park Superintendent	District Ranger
\$2M-5M	Regional Director	State Director	Regional Director	Regional Director	Forest Supervisor
\$5M-10M	BIA Director	BLM Director	FWS Director	NPS Director	Forest Supervisor
\$10M-50M	BIA Director	BLM Director	FWS Director	NPS Director	Regional Forester
>50M	BIA Director	BLM Director	FWS Director	NPS Director	USFS Chief

22  
 23  
 24 **Periodic Assessment**

25 The Periodic Assessment must be completed by the designated approver at the  
 26 time frame set during the publication process. This timeframe can be set 1-14  
 27 days depending upon the complexity and status of the incident and the Line

1 Officer can request a reminder email for the morning the next assessment is due.  
2 It is beneficial to document clear, concise information about the incident when  
3 completing the periodic assessment as this information will be part of the  
4 decision record. It is a way for someone to gather situational awareness of the  
5 incident and should be useful information not only during the incident but for  
6 years to come when looking back at the incident. It is especially pertinent  
7 because it will outline your thought process and reasons for either continuing a  
8 current decision or requiring a new decision.

#### 9 **Wildland Fire Decision Support System (WFDSS) Tools**

10 Modeling tools are available to assist fire managers and agency administrators in  
11 decisions regarding strategies and tactics.

12  
13  
14 Rapid Assessment Values at Risk (RAVAR) is the primary fire economics tool  
15 within the Wildland Fire Decision Support System (WFDSS). It utilizes Fire  
16 Spread Probability Model (FSPro) outputs and county assessor cadastral data for  
17 structural property values as well as other Tier 1 (national) and Tier 2 (regional)  
18 values at risk. RAVAR is typically integrated with the FSPro model to identify  
19 the likelihood of a resources being impacted in the potential fire path but can be  
20 linked to any expected fire spread polygon. This quantifiable data can be used to  
21 inform managers while developing the best course of action.

22 • **USFS** – Congressional mandate required the Forest Service to develop a  
23 performance measure for wildland fire suppression expenditures which  
24 resulted in the development of the Stratified Cost Index (SCI). The SCI  
25 estimates expenditures on individual large wildland fires (>300 acres) by  
26 geographic area considering characteristics of the fire, the fire environment  
27 and values within proximity of the fire. The use of SCI for Forest Service  
28 fires is not mandated however it is recommended that SCI be used for large  
29 FS fires exceeding 5 million dollars or that will likely be audited. Check  
30 with your Forest or Region for local protocol on the use of SCI.

31 • **DOI** – There are unique SCI models which have been developed for each  
32 DOI agency. Agency specific direction will be given in the future related to  
33 when the models will be available in WFDSS, and how field units will use  
34 them in cost estimation.