

## Chapter 09

### Wildland Fire Management Planning

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) Fire Management Handbook incorporates, by reference, all guidance in the [Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations Handbook](#) (known as the Redbook, NFES #2724) Chapter 09 in addition to the following FWS specific clarifications:

FWS wildland fire management planning is a complex activity incorporating interagency fire management obligations and coordination at local, regional and national levels, the mission of the Service and the National Wildlife Refuge System, and local Refuge management. It occurs within the overall National Wildlife Refuge System and National Fish Hatchery planning process. The fire planning process is much more efficient and effective if the requisite land/resource management plans, called Comprehensive Conservation Plans (CCP), have been completed and approved.

This chapter is intended to enhance the capability of Agency Administrators, Fire Management Officers (FMO), and other Service personnel to develop, review, and update Fire Management Plans (FMP) that provide for safe, effective and efficient actions during wildfires, prescribed fires, non-fire hazard fuel reduction operations, and other related operations. An outline of responsibilities at local, regional, and national levels is included.

#### Authorities for Wildland Fire Management

These statutes authorize and provide the means for managing wildland fires on FWS lands or threatening FWS lands and on adjacent lands:

**A. Protection Act of September 20, 1922** (42 Stat. 857; 16 U.S.C. 594) Authorized the Secretary of the Interior to protect, from fire, lands under his/her jurisdiction and to cooperate with other Federal agencies, States, or owners of timber.

**B. Economy Act of June 30, 1932** (47 Stat. 417; 31 U.S.C. 1535) Authorized Federal agencies to enter into contracts and agreements for services with each other.

**C. Reciprocal Fire Protection Act of May 27, 1955** as amended by the Wildfire Suppression Assistance Act of 1989 (69 Stat. 66, 67; 42 U.S.C. 1856a) (102 Stat. 1615). Authorized reciprocal fire protection agreements with any fire organization for mutual aid with or without reimbursement and allows for emergency assistance in the vicinity of agency facilities in extinguishing fires when no agreement exists.

**D. National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966, as amended by the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997 and the Refuge Recreation Act of 1962.** Governs the administration and use of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

**E. Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of December 18, 1971.** (88 Stat. 668; 43 U.S.C. 1601). Alaska Natives' lands are to continue to receive forest fire protection from the United States at no cost until they become economically self-sufficient

**F. Disaster Relief Act of May 22, 1974.** Authorized Federal Agencies to assist State and local governments during emergency or major disaster by direction of the President.

**G. Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of October 29, 1974 et seq.** (88 Stat. 1535; 15 U.S.C. 2201) as amended. Authorized reimbursement to State and local fire services for costs incurred in firefighting on Federal property.

**H. Federal Grants and Cooperative Act of 1977.** (Pub. L. 95-244, as amended by Pub. L. 97-258, September 13, 1982. 96 Stat. 1003; 31 U.S.C. 6301-6308). Eliminates unnecessary administrative requirements on recipients of Government awards by characterizing the relationship between executive agencies and contractors, States and local governments and other recipients in acquiring property and services in providing U.S. Government assistance.

**I. Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of December 2, 1980.** (94 Stat. 2371, 43 U.S.C. 1602-1784). Designates certain public lands in Alaska as units of the National Park, National Wildlife Refuge, Wild and Scenic Rivers, National Wilderness Preservation and National Forest systems resulting in general expansion of all systems. Any contracts or agreements with the jurisdictions for fire management services listed above that were previously executed will remain valid.

**J. Supplemental Appropriation Act of September 10, 1982.** (96 Stat. 837). Authorized Secretary of the Interior and Secretary of Agriculture to enter into contracts with State and local government entities, including local fire districts, for procurement of services in pre-suppression, detection, and suppression of fires on any unit within their jurisdiction.

**K. Wildfire Suppression Assistance Act of 1989.** (Pub. L. 100-428, as amended by Pub. L. 101-11, April 7, 1989). Authorizes reciprocal fire protection agreements with any fire organization for mutual aid with or without reimbursement and allow for emergency assistance in the vicinity of agency facilities in extinguishing fires when no agreement exists.

**L. 620 Departmental Manual (DM) 1-3.**

#### **Local Fire Management Planning Responsibilities**

The primary responsibility for Fire Management Plans rests with Agency Administrators, including use of local expertise of Fire Management Officers and staff, wildlife biologists, cultural resource specialists, and ensuring appropriate compliance with appropriate federal, state, and local laws, requirements, and regulations. Annual FMP updates are approved at the local level. In addition, implementation plans such as prescribed fire burn plans are developed at the local level.

#### **Regional Fire Management Planning Responsibilities**

Regional Offices are responsible for coordinating unit, interagency and geographic area fire management planning in each Region. In addition, they are to establish a formal review and approval process for FMPs, identifying the staff that will provide biological, technical, policy, and fiscal reviews of the FMPs and providing guidance to reviewers on the parameters of the review process. The Regional Fire Management Coordinator (RFMC), the Regional Refuge Chief, and their staffs typically are involved. A Regional Director must approve all FMPs. RFMCs will determine if preparedness plans are needed at the refuge level or if those plans developed by respective Geographic Area Coordination Centers provide adequate guidance.

#### **National Fire Management Planning Responsibilities**

The Service Director and the Chief of the National Wildlife Refuge System are responsible for related policy and for ensuring that FMPs are current. Development of policy and oversight of wildland fire planning is delegated to the NWRs Branch of Fire Management in the Division of Natural Resources and Planning. The Branch Chief and staff are co-located with other federal "Fire Directors" at the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) in Boise, Idaho.

FWS NIFC Staff develop and update Service guidance for use with the Interagency FMP Template. They track status of FMPs in a database for periodic reports to the Department or Congress. NIFC staff review and propose updates to the Service Manual and the Service Fire Management Handbook. They participate as members of interagency committees and work groups under the umbrella of the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG), which sponsors development and publication of standard training courses and position certification checklists, Interagency Handbooks and Guides such as the Fireline Handbook 410-1, The Interagency Prescribed Fire Planning and Implementation Procedures Guide, and other similar products. They participate with other federal partners in annual updates of the Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations.

The NIFC staff plays a key Service role in development and execution of budgets for the Wildland Fire Management Programs. The Wildland Fire Management budget is managed as a set of discrete funds within the Department and has separate Congressional appropriations from other Service functions. The NIFC staff relies on reports of wildfire occurrence data and prescribed fire and hazardous fuels project implementation to develop budgets and allocate budgets, with key involvement of RFMCs, meeting as a National Fire Leadership Team (NFLT), a formal working group chartered by the Regional Refuge Chiefs.

#### **Wildland Fire Terminology used in Fire Management Plans**

The source of the terms and definitions in this chapter is the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) Glossary of Wildland Fire Terminology which represents federal, state, and local firefighting agencies and departments nation-wide. These definitions can change as wildland fire management policies change. For clarification of terms in this chapter and for the latest terms and definitions which may have changed since the update of this chapter, access the web site at: <http://www.nwcg.gov/pms/pubs/glossary/w.htm>

#### **Fire Management Plan Requirements**

Every unit managed by the Service that has burnable vegetation must have an approved FMP, unless exempted in writing by the Regional Director. An approved FMP allows a manager to consider a wide range of management responses to wildfires and to conduct prescribed fires. FMPs must be coordinated and approved by the responsible Agency Administrator to ensure consistency with approved CCPs and other management plans.

FMPs are intended to be dynamic and reflect current situations and policies; therefore, they must be reviewed once a year and sections updated as the need arises. Typically the appendix section is developed to house information that may need updating annually since annual appendix updates can be approved locally.

FMPs must be revised every five years, or when a significant change in land use or other circumstance occurs that significantly impacts the ability to implement the approved FMP. Extensions not to exceed six months for meeting the 5-year revision timeframe may be granted by Regional Directors. Without a current FMP, prescribed fires cannot be conducted and response to unplanned ignitions can only consider suppression strategies. Pre-suppression and prevention activities can continue in the interim period as outlined in the expired plan.

All new FMPs and those needing revisions according to the 5-year revision timeframe will use the most recent Interagency Fire Management Plan Template (in Exhibit 2 or as amended) and apply the most recent Service-specific guidance (in Exhibit 3 “FWS Guidance for the Interagency Fire Management Plan Template” or as amended).

While subject to all the requirements, a simple FMP describing wildland fire operations is sufficient for small refuges, hatcheries, wildlife management areas, and waterfowl production areas (WPA) scattered among private lands, where local fire departments will suppress wildfires.

An appropriate management response (AMR) must be determined for any unplanned ignition. The FMP must address a full range of potential wildfires and outline the potential range of AMR strategies and limitations and constraints on tactical operations, local approval needed, etc.

As practicable, development of FMPs should take place on an interagency basis with involvement of local partners, especially those with adjoining boundaries or who provide fire management services through agreements or other approved instruments.

FMPs should describe the approval process and approving official for prescribed fire plans and any other related operational plans as needed. Required elements and components of prescribed fire plans are listed and described in the current version of the Interagency Prescribed Fire Planning and Implementation Procedures Guide.

#### **National Environmental Policy Act Compliance**

As required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Fish and Wildlife Service has procedures for assessing environmental effects of specific Service actions. For actions not categorically excluded, an Environmental Assessment (EA), and if necessary, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is prepared before making any land use decision, including fire management actions. See the Service NEPA guidance in 30 AM 2-3, 550 FW 1-3, and Departmental procedures in 516 DM 1-6; or consult with the Regional Environmental NEPA Coordinator for details on the NEPA process. The NEPA checklist (Exhibit 1) is required to determine whether a Categorical Exclusion or an Environmental Assessment document is necessary for unit project and activity implementation by the Service. The completed NEPA Checklist is to be included with the documentation for any project plan conducted by the Service.

NEPA requirements must be met for all prescribed fires. An environmental assessment must be prepared for each Prescribed Fire Plan unless: (a) the field office's approved FMP or

planning documents and the accompanying environmental document adequately discuss the action; or (b) a categorical exclusion covers the activity.

Categorical exclusions are classes of actions that do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment. Departmental Categorical Exclusions are listed in 516 DM 2, Appendix 1. If exceptions to categorical exclusions apply, under 516 DM 2, Appendix 2, other Department or Service categorical exclusions cannot be used.

Service-specific categorical exclusions are listed in 516 DM 8. Actions included in Service categorical exclusions that may apply to FWS wildland fire activities include:

- Personnel training, environmental interpretation, public safety efforts, and other educational activities, which do not involve new construction or major additions to existing facilities.
- Minor changes in existing master plans, comprehensive conservation plans (CCP), or operations, when no or minor effects are anticipated. Examples could include minor changes in the type and location of compatible public use activities and land management practices.
- The issuance of new or revised site, unit, or activity-specific management plans for public use, land use, or other management activities when only minor changes are planned. Examples include an amended public use plan or fire management plan.
- Fire management activities, including prevention and restoration measures, when conducted in accordance with Departmental and Service procedures.
- The use of prescribed burning for habitat improvement purposes, when conducted in accordance with local and State ordinances and laws.

#### **National Historic Preservation Act Compliance**

Service National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) policy is found in Service Manual Chapters 614 FW 1-5 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines on Historic Preservation.

#### **Other Regulatory Compliance**

Other compliance requirements include Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA), (as amended in 1973), Section 810 of the 1980 Alaska National Interest Land Conservation Act, and Section 118 of the Clean Air Act (as amended in 1990). Additional federal, state and local compliance requirements may also exist.

Exhibit 1: NEPA Compliance Checklist, Form 3-2185

Note: The expiration date on this document shows that it is expired but it has been extended until a new document is completed according to Pat Carter – DC NEPA Specialist.

NEPA COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST

State: Federal Financial Assistance Grant/Agreement/Amendment Number: Grant/Project Name:

This proposal is: is not completely covered by categorical exclusion in 516 DM 2, Appendix ; and/or 516 DM 6, Appendix (check ( / ) one) (Review proposed activities. An appropriate categorical exclusion must be identified before completing the remainder of the Checklist. If a categorical exclusion cannot be identified, or the proposal cannot meet the qualifying criteria in the categorical exclusion, or an extraordinary circumstance applies (see below), an EA must be prepared.)

Extraordinary Circumstances: Will This Proposal (check ( / ) yes or no for each item below):

- Yes No 1. Have significant adverse effects on public health or safety. 2. Have significant adverse effects on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds (Executive Order 13186); and other ecologically significant or critical areas under Federal ownership or jurisdiction. 3. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)]. 4. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks. 5. Have a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects. 6. Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects. 7. Have significant adverse effects on properties listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office, the State Historic Preservation Officer, the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, or a consulting party under 36 CFR 800. 8. Have significant adverse effects on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant adverse effects on designated Critical Habitat for these species. 9. Have the possibility of violating a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment. 10. Have the possibility for a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898). 11. Have the possibility to limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007). 12. Have the possibility to significantly contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).

(If any of the above extraordinary circumstances receive a "Yes" check ( / ), an EA must be prepared.) Yes No This grant/project includes additional information supporting the Checklist.

Concurrences/Approvals:

Project Leader: Date:

State Authority Concurrence: Date: (with financial assistance signature authority, if applicable)

Within the spirit and intent of the Council of Environmental Quality's regulations for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other statutes, orders, and policies that protect fish and wildlife resources, I have established the following administrative record and have determined that the grant/agreement/amendment:

- is a categorical exclusion as provided by 516 DM 6, Appendix 1 and/or 516 DM 2, Appendix 1. No further NEPA documentation will therefore be made. is not completely covered by the categorical exclusion as provided by 516 DM 6, Appendix 1 and/or 516 DM 2, Appendix 1. An EA must be prepared.

Service signature approval:

RO or WO Environmental Coordinator: Date: Staff Specialist, Division of Federal Assistance: Date: (or authorized Service representative with financial assistance signature authority)

FWS Form 3-2185 Revised 02/2004

OMB Control Number 1018-0110 Expiration Date 06/30/2007

**Exhibit 2: Interagency Fire Management Plan Template -Updated September 19, 2007**

Federal wildland fire policy requires that every area with burnable vegetation must have a fire management plan (FMP). Fires in areas without approved FMPs must be suppressed. Each plan will be based on the area's approved land management plan; in the absence of such a plan, the FMP may stand alone. Wildland fire management planning activities and program components (e.g., fuels management, initial response, etc.) for each agency will be coordinated across administrative boundaries.

**Purpose of an FMP** - The fire management planning process and requirements may differ among agencies. However, for all agencies (Forest Service, BIA, BLM, FWS, NPS), a common purpose of a fire management plan is to provide decision support to aid managers in making informed decisions on the appropriate management response (AMR). The FMP includes a concise summary of information organized by fire management unit (FMU) or units.

In addition, for the 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. The Forest Service will have related information in separate fire management reference documents.

Each FMP will evolve over time as new information becomes available, conditions change on the ground and changes are made to land/resource management plans.

**Purpose of the Interagency Fire Management Template**- The purpose of the interagency fire management plan template is to provide a framework to facilitate cooperation across administrative boundaries. This template provides the minimum standard for FMP structure and content. The FMP has differing audiences and detail depending upon program complexities, agency need and direction. This template is designed for agency flexibility. Each agency may expand on this common template to meet agency specific needs, and that agency's approved template will dictate the final requirements for a unit's FMP.

*All agencies are required to use Chapters 1, 2, and 3 with the major headings below (in bold). DOI agencies are required to use Chapters 4 and 5, and may opt to add additional chapters or sections if deemed necessary.*

**1. Introduction**

*The intent of this Chapter is to introduce the reader to the area covered by the FMP.*

State the reasons for developing the FMP. Provide a general description of location of the area covered by the FMP with vicinity map and agencies involved. Briefly describe land ownership, significant resources, mission or direction for the area and different management designations (e.g. wilderness, timber harvest areas, research natural areas, cultural/religious areas, habitat management areas) for agencies participating in the planning effort.

**2. Policy, Land Management Planning and Partnerships**

The intent of this Chapter is to establish the linkage between higher level planning documents, legislation and policies and the actions described in the document.

**2.1 Fire Policy**

Identify sources of guidance and direction that relate to actions described in the FMP.

These include:

- national interagency and departmental policy (e.g. National Fire Plan, Departmental manuals)
- agency specific policies (e.g. Handbooks, Manuals, Direction, strategic plans)
- unit specific policies may be included if they exist (e.g. tribal direction, unit specific CFRs)
- compliance and authorities may be included (e.g. NEPA, NHPA, ESA and any programmatic agreements involved).

**2.2 Land/Resource Management Planning (LMP)**

Identify documents that relate to the area covered by the FMP including interagency efforts.

Examples include:

- land management plans,
- habitat management plans,
- resource management plans,
- forest management plans,
- comprehensive conservation plans,
- regional management plans such as the Northwest Forest Plan.

**2.3 Partnerships**

Identify any internal and external fire management partnerships or planning teams that helped you develop this FMP. This information documents the level of cooperation occurring.

Examples include:

- interagency planning teams (e.g. local groups that share boundaries, FPA partners)
- non-federal agencies/departments
- tribal government
- internal interdisciplinary planning teams

**3. Fire Management Unit Characteristics**

The intent of this Chapter is to articulate specific objectives, practices and considerations common to all FMUs and unique to individual FMUs.

The primary purpose of developing FMUs in fire management planning is to assist in organizing information in complex landscapes. The process of creating FMUs divides the landscape into smaller geographic areas to more easily describe physical/biological/social characteristics and frame associated planning guidance based on these characteristics (see

NWCG glossary for the definition of FMU). If possible, FMUs should be developed through interagency efforts and interactions to facilitate common fire management across boundaries.

As a plan is being written, each area will determine the amount of detail located within the area-wide considerations section below (3.1) versus the separate detailed FMUs section (3.2). For example, if an area is of low complexity or small size, then the area-wide description may contain most of the information and little is needed for each FMU. Conversely, large complex landscapes may have few common characteristics and may have most information contained in the FMU specific section.

The following sections provide guidance on what to include in this Chapter.

### 3.1 Area-wide Management Considerations

The intent of this section is to document overall wildland fire management program guidance and characteristics common to all FMUs.

- Describe fire management related goals, objectives, standards, guidelines, and/or desired future conditions as found in the appropriate LMP(s) that apply across all FMUs. Include fire management related goals that may come from non-fire program areas within the LMP or other planning documents.

Examples of these goals, objectives, standards, guidelines, and desired conditions are:

- firefighter and public safety,
  - using fire to restore ecosystem health,
  - use of appropriate management response (AMR),
  - cost containment,
  - desired plant community composition and structure,
  - constraints common to all FMUs (e.g. restrictions on retardant use, preventing spread of invasive species through washing of vehicles)
- Identify area-wide guidance, such as regional initiatives that contain additional fire management goals or objectives (e.g. sage grouse strategies)
  - Describe any common characteristics (e.g. topography, fuels, prevailing winds) that may occur across all FMUs.

### 3.2 Fire Management Unit - Specific Descriptions

The intent of this section is to describe the characteristics of the FMU. The organization of this section is at the discretion of the agency

FMU characteristics must be described. Examples are:

- physical and biological description of FMU (e.g. topographic features, fuel types, special conditions that may result in extreme fire behavior, access, FRCC, high value concerns, special areas),
- jurisdictional boundaries (e.g. adjacent or intermingled federal, private, tribal, state, county ownership),
- communities and other values at risk within and adjacent to FMU,

- fire behavior and weather descriptions (e.g. ERC tables, past fire behavior and perimeter histories, control problems).

FMU management guidance must be described. Examples are:

- FMU specific objectives (e.g. appropriate management response objectives, fire intensity levels, fire frequency concerns),
- FMU specific desired conditions (e.g. desired vegetation conditions),
- description of approved wildland fire management strategies (e.g. AMR, fuels treatments: prescribed fire or mechanical/other treatments allowed, wildland fire use),
- FMU specific guidelines, constraints, or mitigation considerations (e.g. MIST, minimum suppression in special areas, retardant or chemical limitations, etc.),
- Burned area emergency stabilization and rehabilitation considerations if applicable (e.g. seeding requirements or treatments in special areas).

FMU safety considerations must be described. Examples are:

- gas lines,
- power lines,
- mine shafts,
- aviation hazards,
- restricted access due to hazards,
- poisonous plants and venomous animals.

Also, operational information may be detailed or added as an appendix, such as:

- permanent repeater locations, recommendations of successful temporary sites,
- radio frequencies,
- radio 'dead spots',
- communication plan,
- evacuation plan,
- water dip sites,
- helispots,
- remote automated weather stations (RAWS).
- potential fire camp locations for Type 3 to Type 1 organizations

#### **4. Wildland Fire Operational Guidance**

This chapter applies to DOI agencies only. Forest Service guidance is available separately.

The intent of this chapter is to document the procedures used in the area covered by the FMP to implement the wildland fire management program. The following sections 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4 should be addressed either in this section, or a reference should be cited as to where this type of information can be found.

##### 4.1 Appropriate Management Response

Describe or reference program procedures that should be in place for planning and responding to fires. Procedures to be included are dependent on local and interagency agency needs.

Examples include:

- preparedness (including training, qualifications, readiness, detection and aviation),
- cooperative or mutual aid fire management agreements,
- cost apportionment agreements
- protection agreements,
- cross-boundary fire agreements,
- size up, initial response and extended response procedures,
- WFIP and WFSA procedures,
- dispatching/obtaining resources (e.g. interagency dispatch centers, interagency teams, MAC groups),
- prioritizing allocation of resources,
- large fire cost management ,
- processes for complying with regulatory requirements (e.g. smoke, SHPO, ESA)
- public interaction (e.g. information plans, CWPPs) ,
- reporting requirements (forms such as 209s, 1202s),
- records management,
- suppression damage repair.

#### 4.2 Fuels Management

Describe or reference planning and implementation processes for fuels treatments by mechanical, chemical, biological or prescribed fire methods. Procedures to be included are dependent on local needs.

Examples include:

- processes to identify and prioritize fuels treatments (e.g. consultations with communities, use of community wildfire protection plans - CWPPs), interdisciplinary teams, risk assessments and mitigation plans),
- potential size and scope of vegetation treatments to meet both fire and land management goals,
- procedures for implementing prescribed fire (e.g. requirements for development of burn plan, responsibilities for preparing and approving Rx fires, requirements for safety, qualifications, interagency prescribed fire guidance),
- process for complying with regulatory requirements (e.g. NEPA, smoke, SHPO, ESA) ,
- treatment effects monitoring description,
- reporting requirements (NFPORS) and agency specific systems,
- fuels committees or local coordinating or special interest groups,
- funding processes,

#### 4.3 Emergency Stabilization and Burned Area Rehabilitation

Describe or reference emergency stabilization (ES) and post-fire burned area rehabilitation (BAR) planning and implementation. Use the Departmental Manual (620 DM 3) and agency-specific direction for guidance.

Examples include:

- process and thresholds for determining ES and BAR teams,
- regional coordinator contact information,
- local resource specialist positions that may assist the teams,
- considerations that should be addressed (e.g. values to be protected such as T&E species, cultural concerns, wilderness),
- potential treatments that should be considered (e.g. programmatic plans),
- anticipated post-fire recovery issues,
- allowable actions or local restrictions,
- standardized monitoring protocols,
- requirements for planning,
- funding processes,
- reporting requirements (accomplishment reports and NFORS).

#### 4.4 Prevention, Mitigation and Education

Describe or reference wildland fire prevention, education, and mitigation strategies. Procedures to be included are dependent on local agency needs.

Examples include:

- human caused ignition patterns and problems,
- fire investigation policies and procedures,
- closures/restricted access process,
- burn permit systems,
- law enforcement operating procedures and agreements,
- community involvement,
- Firewise,
- annual meetings with public, other agencies and local fire districts,
- education programs,
- community grant programs and assistance,
- CWPPs,
- memorandum of understanding (MOU),
- funding processes,
- reporting requirements.

### **5. Monitoring and Evaluation**

This chapter applies to DOI agencies only. Forest Service guidance is available separately.

The intent of this chapter is to document processes for determining whether the FMP is being implemented as planned and fire-related goals and objectives are being achieved. Information obtained from monitoring and evaluations is used to update the FMP and land management plans.

Describe monitoring processes that will be used to measure achievement of FMP objectives. Procedures to be included are dependent on local agency needs.

Processes may include:

- fire and non-fire treatment effects monitoring including broader scale long-term monitoring based on fire and land management objectives,
- collaboration with other disciplines for monitoring broader resource management objectives,
- information on annual performance (e.g. annual targets),
- annual process to review and/or update the FMP, including triggers for major revisions.
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**Glossary**

Use NWCG on-line glossary for common terms. Include full definition and references for agency or unit specific terminology.

**Appendices – Optional**

**Exhibit 3: FWS Guidance for the Interagency Fire Management Plan Template**

All new and revised FWS fire management plans will use the September 2007 Interagency Fire Management Plan (FMP) template until this version is revised due to policy change and the Branch provides guidance to adopt a newer version. The FWS Guidance for the Interagency Fire Management Plan Template is intended to refine and/or supplement the Interagency Template to develop FMPs specific to Service lands. It contains the DOI intent and requirements for the five required chapters of the interagency template and FWS guidance, examples, recommendations, and suggested language (*in italics*) for sections in each chapter and for optional appendices.

The emphasis of the new template is to describe goals, objectives, strategies, and operational constraints. New plans may be shorter than older plans due to the ability to reference information contained in policy documents and handbooks. The following considerations apply to fire management planning:

- FWS units are not required to revise current FMPs into the new template until full FMP revisions are needed to meet the Service 5 year revision requirement.
- Annual updates of existing plans do not require conversion of those plans to the new template unless the plan no longer meets the 5-year currency standard.
- Items likely to require annual updates are best placed in appendices (step-up plans, agreements and memorandums of understanding, dispatch/qualification lists, readiness activities, etc. Regions may specify appendices required or follow the outline given in the FWS Guidance to the template...
- A March 2008 policy interpretation of the inter-governmental Wildland Fire Leadership Council allows a wildfire to be managed for more than one objective. New and updated FMPs should include language allowing consideration of potential resource benefits as a factor in selecting and implementing an appropriate management response to a wildfire.

**1.0 Introduction**

The intent of this chapter is to introduce the reader to the area covered by the FMP.

**Chapter 1 – DOI Requirements**

State the reasons for developing the FMP. Provide a general description of location of the area covered by the FMP with vicinity map and agencies involved. Briefly describe land ownership, significant resources, mission or direction for the area and different management designations (e.g. wilderness, timber harvest areas, research natural areas, cultural/ religious areas, habitat management areas) for agencies participating in the planning effort.

**Chapter 1 – FWS Guidance****1.1. Purpose of the Fire Management Plan (FMP)**

*This plan is written to meet Department and Service requirements that every area with burnable vegetation must have an approved FMP.(620 DM 1.4) It enables the Refuge to meet a Service requirement that Refuges review and/or revise FMPs at a minimum of five-year intervals or when significant land use changes are proposed.(621 FW 2)*

*The goal of wildland fire management is to plan and implement actions that help accomplish the mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System, which is to administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and, where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans.*

*This FMP integrates all wildland fire management and related activities within the context of an approved Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP). It defines a program to manage wildland fires and to assure that wildland fire management goals and components are coordinated*

**1.2. General Description of the Area in the Fire Management Plan**

- Location (a vicinity map and a map of the FMP area)
- Total acres
- FWS (and other agency) units included in the FMP
- Land ownership of surrounding lands and/or in-holdings

**Example Table 1: Management Units in the Fire Management Complex**

FWS Management Units within the FMP	Total Acres (Burnable Acres)
National Wildlife Refuge 1	21,498 (18,455)
National Wildlife Refuge 2	2,585 (2,000)
Waterfowl Production Areas	44,032 (25,000)
Wetland Easements	196,462
Federal Fish Hatchery	600 (200)

**1.3. Significant Values to Protect**

- The mission or direction for the lands in the FMP
- Special land management designations (e.g., wilderness, special habitat designation, etc.)
- Short summary of key critical values to protect (e.g., T & E species, species of conservation concern, habitat on flyway, FWS structures, WUI, watersheds, air sheds, recreation)
- Uniqueness of special values of character of the land and associated resources that gives the refuge regional, national, or international significance (i.e., ultra-light training program for migration of whooping cranes)

## 2.0 Policy, Land Management Planning and Partnerships

The intent of this chapter is to establish the linkage between higher level planning documents, legislation and policies and the actions described in the document.

<b>Chapter 2 – DOI Requirements</b>
2.1 Identify sources of guidance and direction that relate to actions described in the FMP.
2.2 Identify documents that relate to the area within the FMP including interagency efforts.
2.3 Identify any internal and external fire management partnerships or planning teams that helped you develop this FMP -- information to document the level of cooperation occurring.

### Chapter 2 - FWS Guidance

#### 2.1. Implementation of Fire Policy

(Summarize how the FMP meets federal interagency, departmental, and agency policy.)

##### 2.1.1. Federal Interagency Wildland Fire Policy

*This FMP implements these guiding principles of federal wildland fire policy:*

- *Firefighter and public safety is the first priority in every fire management activity.*
- *The role of wildland fire as an essential ecological process and natural change agent has been incorporated into the planning process. Federal agency land and resource management plans set the objectives for the use and desired future condition of the various public lands.*
- *Fire management plans, programs, and activities support land and resource management plans and their implementation.*
- *Sound risk management is a foundation for all fire management activities. Risks and uncertainties relating to fire management activities must be understood, analyzed, communicated, and managed as they relate to the cost of either doing or not doing an activity.*
- *Fire management programs and activities are economically viable, based upon values to be protected, costs, and land and resource management objectives,*
- *Fire management plans and activities are based upon the best available science.*
- *Fire management plans and activities incorporate public health and environmental quality considerations.*
- *Federal, State, tribal, local, interagency, and international coordination and cooperation are essential.*
- *Standardization of policies and procedures among federal agencies is an ongoing objective.*

##### 2.1.2. National Fire Plan

*This FMP meets the policy and direction in the National Fire Plan because it emphasizes the following goals of the 10 Year Comprehensive Strategy and Cohesive Strategy for Protecting People and Sustaining Natural Resources: Improving fire prevention and suppression,*

*reducing hazardous fuels, restoring fire-adapted ecosystems, and promoting community assistance.*

### **2.1.3. Department of Interior (DOI) Fire Policy**

*This FMP incorporates and adheres to DOI policy stated in 620 DM 1 (and in 620 DM2 for Service lands in Alaska) by giving full consideration to the use of wildland fire as a natural process and tool during the land management planning process and by providing for the following:*

*Wildland fires, whether on or adjacent to lands administered by the Department, which threaten life, improvements, or are determined to be a threat to natural and cultural resources or improvements under the Department's jurisdiction, will be considered emergencies and their suppression given priority over other Departmental programs.*

*Bureaus shall cooperate in the development of interagency preparedness plans to ensure timely recognition of approaching critical wildland fire situations, to establish processes for analyzing situations and establishing priorities, and for implementing appropriate management responses to these situations.*

*Bureaus will enforce rules and regulations concerning the unauthorized ignition of wildland fires, and aggressively pursue violators.*

### **2.1.4. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Fire Policy**

*This FMP addresses a full range of potential wildland fires and considers a full spectrum of tactical options (from monitoring to intensive management actions) for appropriate management response (AMR) to meet Fire Management Unit (FMU) objectives. It fully applies procedures and guidelines in the Service Fire Management Handbook and the Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations and affirms these key elements of FWS fire policy:*

- *Firefighter and public safety is the first priority of the wildland fire management program and all associated activities.*
- *Only trained and qualified leaders and agency administrators will be responsible for, and conduct, wildland fire management duties and operations.*
- *Trained and certified employees will participate in the wildland fire management program as the situation requires, and non-certified employees will provide needed support as necessary.*
- *Fire management planning, preparedness, wildfire and prescribed fire operations, other hazardous fuel operations, monitoring, and research will be conducted on an interagency basis with involvement by all partners to the extent practicable.*
- *The responsible agency administrator has coordinated, reviewed, and approved this FMP to ensure consistency with approved land management plans, values to be protected, and natural and cultural resource management plans, and that it addresses public health issues related to smoke and air quality.*

- *Fire, as an ecological process, has been integrated into resource management plans and activities on a landscape scale, across agency boundaries, based upon the best available science.*
- *Wildland fire is used to meet identified resource management objectives and benefits when appropriate.*
- *Prescribed fire and other treatment types will be employed whenever they are the appropriate tool to reduce hazardous fuels and the associated risk of wildfire to human life, property, and cultural and natural resources and to manage our lands for habitats as mandated by statute, treaty, and other authorities.*
- *Appropriate management response will consider firefighter and public safety, cost effectiveness, values to protect, and natural and cultural resource objectives.*
- *Staff members will work with local cooperators and the public to prevent unauthorized ignition of wildfires on our lands.*

#### 2.1.5. Refuge-specific Fire Management Policy

Describe how the FMP meets any unit-specific requirements in the CFRs.

### 2.2. Land / Resource Management Planning

#### 2.2.1. Land/Resource Planning Documents

List CCPs, habitat management plans, regional management plans, etc., that establish the goals, objectives, standards, guidelines, desired future conditions, and constraints detailed in Chapter 3.1.

#### 2.2.2. Compliance with Regulatory Acts

Although not required, short statements or summaries relating to, at minimum, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA), the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA), the Archeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (ARPA) are recommended, and any others pertinent to the FMP area.

*The Service has procedures for assessing environmental effects of specific Service actions. NEPA compliance was accomplished by completion of an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the fire management program in May 2002. After a public comment period, on October 14, 2002 the Refuge Project Leader signed a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), which is in official files at Refuge Headquarters. The project leader has determined that the activities envisioned in this FMP update are similar in scope and effect as those covered by the EA and therefore a new EA is not needed.*

*In conjunction with the 2002 EA, the refuge requested a Biological Assessment from Ecological Services in March 2002. In May of that year, ES concurred with the refuge that actions authorized by the FMP would not have adverse affects.*

*All FMP actions comply with Section 106 of NHPA.*

### 2.3. Fire Management Partnerships

#### 2.3.1. Internal Partnerships

Summarize inter-refuge fire management agreements for Zone FMOs and other intra-Service partnerships. Identify interdisciplinary planning teams that helped develop the FMP.

### 2.3.2. External Partnerships

List information regarding FPA partners, and agreements/MOUs with tribal governments, state and local fire departments, local interagency dispatch offices, collaborative planning efforts, etc. Include any cost-share agreements with partners and cooperators for planned and unplanned ignitions.

## 3.0 Fire Management Unit Characteristics

The intent of this chapter is to articulate specific objectives, practices, and considerations common to all FMUs and unique to individual FMUs.

The primary purpose of developing FMUs in fire management planning is to assist in organizing information in complex landscapes. The process of creating FMUs divides the landscape into smaller geographic areas to more easily describe physical/biological/social characteristics and frame associated planning guidance based on these characteristics. If possible, FMUs should be developed through interagency efforts and interactions to facilitate common fire management across boundaries.

Definition of FMU from NWCG glossary: A Fire Management Unit (FMU) is a land management area definable by objectives, management constraints, topographic features, access, values to protect, political boundaries, fuel types, major fire regime groups, etc. that set it apart from the characteristics of an adjacent FMU. The FMU may have dominant management objectives and pre-selected strategies assigned to accomplish these objectives.

As a plan is being written, each area will determine the amount of detail located within the area-wide considerations section below (3.1) versus the separate detailed FMUs section (3.2). For example, if an area is of low complexity or small size, then the area-wide description may contain most of the information and little is needed in each FMU. Conversely, large complex landscapes may have few common characteristics and may have most information contained in the FMU specific section.

Chapter 3 – DOI Requirements
3.1 The intent of this section is to document overall wildland fire management program guidance and characteristics common to all FMUs. Describe fire management related goals, objectives, standards, guidelines and/or desired future conditions as found in appropriate LMP(s) that apply across all FMUs. Include fire management related goals that may come from non-fire program areas within the LMP or other planning documents. Identify area-wide guidance, such as regional initiatives that contain additional fire management goals or objectives (e.g. sage grouse strategies). Describe any common characteristics (e.g. topography, fuels, and prevailing winds) that may occur across all FMUs.
3.2. The intent of this section is to describe the characteristics of the FMU. The organization of this section is at the discretion of the agency. FMU characteristics, FMU management guidance, and FMU safety considerations must be described. Also, Operational information may be detailed or added as an appendix. (Examples are given.)

### Chapter 3 – FWS Guidance

It may be important to identify the reasons specific FMUs were identified, if these have to do with wildland fire use, prescribed fire, wilderness boundaries, etc.

#### **3.1. Area Wide Management Considerations**

##### 3.1.1. Management Goals, Objectives, and Constraints in CCPs

List fire management-related goals, objectives, standards, guidelines, desired future conditions and constraints common to all FMUs from CCPs. (Examples of goals that might be in a CCP are listed below.)

- Manage wildfires and fuels to minimize risks to firefighter and public safety.
- Provide for fire as a natural disturbance in wilderness areas.
- Reduce and maintain hazardous fuels in areas adjacent to Wildland-Urban Interface areas at reduced levels to provide for public and firefighter health and safety.
- Where appropriate, use prescribed fire to reduce hazardous fuels and to restore and maintain ecosystem integrity and species habitat.
- Use other treatment types to reduce hazardous fuels where prescribed fire is not appropriate.
- Prevent the further spread of invasive plants.

##### 3.1.2. Management Goals, Objectives, and Constraints from other sources

List additional fire management related goals, objectives, standards, guidelines, desired future conditions and constraints found in documents other than a CCP, such as step-down plans, and the source document for each goal, etc. (Examples of source documents are EAs, treaties or agreements with tribes, local governments, or other entities, State or tribal air quality plans or SIPs, species or habitat conservation plans, regional initiatives, Service manual, etc.)

*These operational standards are found in the Service manual (095 FW 3): (Consider any of the examples below that fit the program for which the FMP is being written.)*

- *An initial action and an appropriate management response is required for every wildfire on or threatening our lands.*
- *The range of appropriate management responses to wildfires may include direct or indirect attack of high and/or low intensities, or surveillance and monitoring to ensure fire spread will be limited to a designated area.*
- *When specifically addressed in approved FMPs, we can use naturally ignited wildland fires to accomplish resource management objectives.*
- *Surveillance is an appropriate management response to a wildfire if so designated in an approved FMP or selected through an appropriate decision support process.*
- *If a wildland fire changes so it will not meet objectives listed in operational plans such as a prescribed fire plan, it must be declared a wildfire, receive an appropriate management response, and have a new strategy selected through a new analysis process with a decision support tool.*

- *Wildfires in wilderness or other special reserved areas will receive an appropriate management response that includes consideration of wilderness values and completion of a minimum tool analysis in support of the AMR.*

**Cost effectiveness.**

*Maximizing the cost effectiveness of any fire operation is the responsibility of all involved, including those who authorize, direct, or implement those operations. Cost effectiveness is the most economical use of the resources necessary to accomplish project/incident objectives. Accomplishing these objectives safely and efficiently will not be sacrificed for the sole purpose of “cost saving.” Care will be taken to ensure that expenditures are commensurate with values to be protected. Many factors outside of the biophysical environment may influence decisions, including those of the social, political, economic realms.*

The Wildland Fire Decision Support System (WFDSS) or other required wildfire decision support tool will be used for analysis of intergrated risk and cost management.

**3.1.3. Common Characteristics of the Fire Management Units**

Describe common characteristics of FMUs. (Example topics include climate/weather, cultural resources, vegetation/habitats, wildlife/species of conservation concern, fuels and fire behavior, fire history, fire effects (summary), wildland-urban interface, safety issues, etc).

***Example Table 2. Fire Management Units***

FMU Name	AMR Strategy	Acres (Burnable)	Fuel Models
A - West Refuge	Suppression	50,300 (42,300)	
B - East Refuge	Full range of AMR	140,111 (125,000)	

**3.2. West Refuge FMU**

(Note: This section uses *West Refuge* in sub-headings **only as an example**. For nine FMUs, each would be described as below, starting with FMU #1 in 3.2 and ending with FMU #9 in 3.10. The bullets are examples of the kind of information to consider in the sub-section.)

Summarize past wildfire occurrence and hazardous fuels treatments (10 years) and the range of typical fire and project size and complexity. If data is not available by FMU, include this information in the overview sections of 4.1 and 4.2.

**3.2.1. West Refuge FMU Characteristics**

- Location and vicinity map (map in appendix – consider identifying WUI on maps)
- Acres and burnable acres, (by ownership if applicable.)
- Adjacent ownership and jurisdiction, potential for cross-boundary fires and their consequences
- Vegetation/habitat types, fuel models, and burnable acres
- Factors that affect fire management (topography, soils, access, fire effects, etc.)
- LANDFIRE vegetation descriptions/information (if validated)

**3.2.2. West Refuge FMU Values to Protect**

- WUI - Communities at Risk (CARs), Communities of Interest (COIs), etc.,
- FWS structures and facilities including campgrounds, trails, visitor facilities

- Air quality (Class I or non-attainment areas, and sensitive receptors)
- T&E or special status species
- Cultural and natural resources (historic structures, timber, roost trees, etc.)
- Specially Designated Areas (Wilderness, Wild & Scenic River, joint-management areas)
- Mines, oil and gas wells, and power lines and rights-of-ways,
- Structures/values lacking defensible space or adequate water supply for protection

### 3.2.3. West Refuge FMU Management Guidance

- FMU-specific AMR Objectives and Constraints-examples below:  
Manage wildfires to meet fuels and habitat objectives.  
Ensure protection of facilities near the river.  
Manage wildfires to benefit migratory bird habitat.  
Manage wildfires to benefit threatened and endangered species habitat.
- Hazardous Fuels Treatment Objectives, Treatment Types, and Targets (if extensive, format at 3.2.4 and bump Safety Considerations to 3.2.5)
- Desired Future Vegetation Conditions
- Pre-Identified Management Action Points/Considerations – examples below:  
Refuge road 29 is a defensible fuel break.  
Compartment 23 is graze and a potential fuel break.  
In general, fires will be managed with a full range of AMR alternatives when ERCs/KBDIs are below this level: \_\_\_\_\_
- FMU-specific constraints – examples below:  
Aerial retardants and foams will not be used within 300 feet of any waterway.  
No camp with more than 40 people is allowed in wilderness areas.  
Use of mechanized equipment in wilderness may be subject to a minimum tool analysis.  
Ground disturbed by suppression activities will be repaired to pre-incident condition to the best extent possible.  
Use of heavy equipment must be approved by the Agency Administrator except in cases of immediate threat to life and safety of firefighters, members of the public, or infrastructure and homes when the Agency Administrator cannot be reached by the Incident Commander, FMO, fire officer or dispatch office.  
Heavy equipment use will be closely monitored in designated areas to minimize impacts on cultural resources.

### 3.2.4. West Refuge FMU Safety Considerations

- High voltage transmission lines from nuclear power plant,
- Unexploded ordnance (UXO),
- Mountainous terrain limits radio communications,
- Hazards from poisonous plants, venomous animals, predatory animals,
- Illegal dump sites, illegal drug operations

#### 4.0 Wildland Fire Operational Guidance

The intent of this chapter is to document the procedures used in the area covered by the FMP to implement the wildland fire management program. The following sections 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4 should be addressed either in this section, or a reference cited as to where this type of information can be found.

<b>Chapter 4 – DOI Requirements</b>
4.1 Describe or reference program procedures that should be in place for planning and responding to fires. Procedures to be included are dependent on local, agency and interagency needs. (Examples are given.)
4.2 Describe or reference planning and implementation processes for fuels treatment by mechanical, chemical, biological, or prescribed fire methods. Procedures to be included are dependent on local needs. (Examples are given.)
4.3 Describe or reference emergency stabilization (ES) and post-fire burned area rehabilitation (BAR) planning and implementation. Use the Department Manual (620 DM 3) and agency specific-direction for guidance. (Examples are given.)
4.4. Describe or reference wildland fire prevention, education, and mitigation strategies. Procedures to be included depend on local agency needs. (Examples are given.)

#### **Chapter 4 – FWS Guidance**

By general reference, incorporate the Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations, chapters 07-18, (hereafter called the Red Book). Reference chapters as needed.

#### **4.1. Appropriate Management Response**

##### **Summarize past wildfire occurrence (10 years) and the range of typical fire size and complexity if not done in the FMU sections.**

*Structural fire suppression is the responsibility of local governments. We may assist with exterior structural protection activities under formal Fire Protection Agreements that specify mutual responsibilities, including funding. (Red Book 01-3)*

##### **4.1.1. AMR Direction**

Summarize past wildfire occurrence (10 years) and the range of typical fire size and complexity.

##### **General AMR Direction**

*Evaluation and selection of an appropriate management response to a wildfire will include consideration of risks to public and firefighter safety, threats to the values to protect, costs of various mitigation strategies and tactics, and potential resource benefits. (Refer to FMU section(s) for specifics.)*

*Wildfires will be staffed or monitored during active burning periods as needed to ensure that appropriate mitigation actions can be made to protect values threatened.*

*All wildfires will be supervised by a qualified incident commander (IC) responsible to*

- *Assess the fire situation and make a report to dispatch as soon as possible.*
- *Use guidance in this FMP or a delegation of Authority to determine and implement an appropriate management response.*
- *Determine organization, resource needs, strategy and tactics.*
- *Brief incoming and assigned resources on the organization, strategy and tactics, weather and fire behavior, LCES, seasonal and historic ERCs, and radio frequencies.*
- *Order resources needed for the AMR through the designated dispatch office.*
- *Manage the incident until relieved or the incident is under control.*

The FMP and a delegation of authority can provide a general strategy to an IC, who has discretion to select and implement appropriate tactics within the limits described for the FMU(s), including when and where to use minimum impact suppression tactics (MIST) unless otherwise specified. All resources, including mutual aid resources, will report to the IC (in person or by radio) and receive an assignment prior to tactical deployment.

#### **General AMR Constraints**

If there are more than one set of AMR constraints listed in the FMU sections, include here a complete list of constraints on AMR in the FMP area.

#### **Interagency Operations**

Describe coordination of actions with local VFDs, state organizations, and other federal agencies – and reference local MOUs and agreements that are included in appendices.

#### 4.1.2. Preparedness

For step-up plans, units should use an index (ERC, BI, KBDI, or Canadian) that best represents a typical fire season. If drought/other causes actual conditions to not be “typical,” consider a table with different indices for different conditions: i.e., typical and extreme.

(Consider reference to training and certification requirements in corresponding Red Book.)

Consider the examples below as potential topics for this section.

- Fire season
- Seasonal readiness activities (consider table in appendix – see example table 3 )
- Fire weather station information,
- Fire Danger Indices and Step-Up plan (appendix) response to escalating burning conditions,
- Effect of regional/national preparedness levels (activity and resource commitment),
- Cache and supply levels (appendix)

#### 4.1.3. Detection

Describe refuge unit and cooperator detection capabilities and limitations.

#### 4.1.4. Dispatch, Initial Response and Initial Attack

Describe local dispatch operations and initial attack resources typically dispatched, and any specific issues or problems for an IAIC. (Reference appendix with local and interagency communications frequencies.)

#### 4.1.5. Extended Attack and Large Fire Management

Describe unit-specific process for handling fires beyond IA -- completing incident analysis and planning and related checklists at various times, delegations of authority, incoming briefings, etc. Details in this section should be proportional to the probability of large, long duration, or costly wildfires. (Consider reference to Incident Management information in corresponding Red Book Chapter.)

#### 4.1.6. Aviation Operations

Summarize the unit's aviation use or aviation program plan, if any. At minimum, state the following:

*All fire-related aviation operations will follow applicable guidelines of the DOI National Business Center - Aviation Management Directorate.*

#### 4.1.7. Reviews and Investigations

*Reviews and investigations are used by wildland fire and aviation managers to assess and improve the effectiveness and safety of organizational operations. Brief descriptions of various reviews and associated procedures and requirements, including those for serious wildland fire accidents, entrapments, and fire trespass are listed in the corresponding Red Book Chapter.*

*Incident Commanders and Single Resource Bosses will ensure AARs take place in a timely manner and that any significant issues are brought to the attention of the Zone FMO or Agency Administrator.*

#### 4.1.8. Reports

Describe responsibility for daily reporting, individual fire reports, and annual reports if applicable.

*The refuge staff will contact the Zone FMO, who will complete and file an Individual Fire Report in the Fire Management Information System (FMIS) e following types of fires within 10 days of a fire being declared out:*

- *All wildfires on FWS and FWS-protected lands.*
- *Wildfires threatening our lands on which we take action.*
- *All escaped prescribed fires, where a wildfire declaration is made.*
- *All false alarms.*

An FMIS fire report is required regardless of who takes action -- a FWS engine, cooperator, or contractor. When FWS take or assist in initial attack off our lands, the agency with jurisdiction at the point of origin will file a report. The refuge must also file a report to document the FWS support action and to support potential billing to non-federal entities for trespass fires.

#### 4.2. Hazardous Fuels Management

Note: If within the FMP area, no prescribed fires are planned, there is no intent to report non-fire vegetation treatments as hazardous fuels treatments, and there is no expenditure of hazard

fuels project funds, this section is not needed, other than for any low complexity debris burning.

**Summarize past treatments (10 years) and the typical range of size and complexity if not done in the FMU sections 3.2 and following.**

4.2.1. Prescribed Fire Program for Hazardous Fuels and Habitats

Incorporate by reference the Interagency Prescribed Fire Planning and Implementation Procedures Reference Guide, the corresponding chapter of the FWS Fire Management Handbook and Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations.

4.2.1.1. Program Overview

List objectives for prescribed fire use for hazardous fuels and habitat management, if not given in chapter 3. Give examples of the range of typical prescribed fire complexity and size. Summarize historic and expected prescribed fire and hazardous fuels activity (in WUI/non-WUI if possible).

*All prescribed fires must comply with NEPA requirements. An EA must be prepared for each Prescribed Fire Plan unless: (a) the field office's approved FMP or planning documents and the accompanying environmental document adequately discuss the action; or (b) a categorical exclusion covers the activity. (621 FW 2)*

4.2.1.2. Effect of National and Regional Preparedness Levels

Describe effect of regional and national preparedness levels on project implementation.

*Prescribed fires may be ignited during National Preparedness Level 4 or 5 as specified in the National Interagency Mobilization Guide.*

4.2.1.3. Project Planning

(Reference the interagency guide for required Burn Plan elements.) Describe responsibilities for initiating a project(s), assigning a Burn Boss, and plan development, review and approval. Include summary of pertinent local studies of fire history, fire and habitat, fire effects, if applicable and not included in section 3.1.3.

4.2.1.4. Project Implementation

*Cooperators, contractors, and casual hires (AD) may be used to implement prescribed fires. ADs must meet FWS standards. Cooperators, such as members of Volunteer Fire Departments, must have appropriate qualifications certified by their agency. Those who supervise FWS employees during prescribed fires must meet FWS standards.*

*A prescribed fire must be declared a wildfire by those identified in the burn plan when that person(s) determines that the contingency actions have failed or are likely to fail and cannot be mitigated by the end of the next burning period. An escaped prescribed fire must be declared a wildfire when the fire has spread outside the project boundary, or is likely to do so, and cannot be contained by the end of the next burning period. A prescribed fire can be converted to a wildfire for reasons other than an escape. An appropriate management response will be made to such incidents and a formal analysis using a required wildfire decision support tool will be undertaken when needed. The Agency Administrator will be notified of an escaped prescribed fire.*

*The public will be informed of prescribed fires through news releases, interpretive messages, and educational programs. Individual prescribed fires should not be conducted without informing those agencies and members of the public likely to be impacted.*

*We use a low complexity debris burn plan for debris disposal projects. The FMO will review the complexity of planned projects to ensure use of the plan is consistent with its intent.*

#### 4.2.1.5. Smoke Management

Review the Smoke Management and Air Quality section of the Red Book. State that any smoke sensitive areas that could be impacted by projects such as non-attainment areas, transportation corridors, Class I Areas, schools, etc., will be identified in prescribed fire burn plans. Describe efforts to comply with State and local air quality regulations including permitting, modeling and reporting requirements. Identify those smoke management techniques that will be applied to minimize the amount of smoke produced and/or minimize the impact to smoke sensitive areas (reference the Smoke Management Guide for Prescribed and Wildland Fire 2001 Edition). If needed, provide details and applicable forms in an appendix.

#### 4.2.1.6. After Action and Escaped Fire Reviews

*The Burn Boss will ensure an informal After Action Review (AAR) is conducted for each operational period on a prescribed fire.*

*All prescribed fires declared a wildfire will have an investigative review initiated by the Agency Administrator. The level and scope of the review will be determined by policy and procedures of the Red Book and the FWS Fire Management Handbook.*

#### 4.2.1.7. Reports

(Describe responsibility for applicable daily, project, and annual reports.)

*Burn Plans will specify information to be included in a project file. The Burn Boss will ensure this information is provided to the Agency Administrator and/or Zone Fire Management Officer as specified. This includes documenting conditions and fire behavior during the prescribed fire to assess how well actual fire characteristics fit those predicted, documenting any unanticipated difficulties encountered during implementation, and assessing how well the fire accomplished the intended objectives.*

*The Burn Boss will complete an Individual Fire Report in FMIS with the Zone FMO. This report must be filed electronically within 10 days of it being declared out.*

#### 4.2.2. Non-fire Hazardous Fuels Treatment Program

Describe the non-fire hazardous fuels program including planning and implementation. Summarize historic/future non-fire fuels treatments (by WUI/non-WUI if possible). Give the range of project size and complexity and annual/ten year targets/limits, if established. Incorporate by reference and summarize local (formal/informal) agreements, Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs), etc.

#### 4.2.3. Processes to Identify Hazardous Fuels Treatments

Describe processes used to identify hazardous fuels treatments -- HMPs, refuge committees, risk assessments, collaborative meetings and treatment plans, CWPPs or equivalent, etc.

### 4.3. Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation

Summarize any previous ES and BAR treatments, their effectiveness, and costs.

*Repair of damage resulting for AMR activities will be completed before crews and resources are released from assignment to the incident.*

*Rehabilitation and restoration efforts will be undertaken to protect and sustain ecosystems, public health, safety, and to help communities protect infrastructure. Natural recovery is the preferred ES or BAR treatment.*

Note: From here, this section of the FMP needs to address only situations where natural recovery is not likely to be viable -- Describe or reference the process to be used to develop any needed ES and BAR plans and the specific anticipated post-wildfire ES and BAR issues these plans will likely consider; Describe the relationship between these issues and approved management plans (e.g., fire damage to desert bighorn sheep guzzlers in the Coot Creek watershed -- desert bighorn sheep management requires artificial water sources in this watershed [HMP]); and identify which actions allowable in policy (620 DM 3.7.M [ES] or 620 DM 3.8.M [BAR]) apply and will be used to address the anticipated issues (e.g., repair or replacement of fire damaged guzzlers [BAR]).

### 4.4. Prevention, Mitigation and Education

#### 4.4.1. Prevention/ Mitigation

Describe the common occurrences of human-caused wildfires, assess the problems they potentially pose (or have posed in the past), and relate to local fire prevention plans. Describe activities in prevention/mitigation, including those coordinated with other agencies. Reference increased activities which might take place as weather and fuel conditions move from average to above average to severe (which may be in the FMP step-up plan).

*The objective of fire prevention activities is to prevent human-caused wildfires.*

*The inadvertent or intentional ignition of wildland fuels by humans is illegal. We will investigate all human-caused wildfires at the earliest possible time. The investigation may range from a documented determination of cause by the initial attack crew to criminal investigation by a qualified arson investigator.*

#### 4.4.2. Education

*Our outreach goal is to enhance knowledge and understanding of wildland fire management policies and practices through internal and external communication and education.*

Summarize and reference local activities. Include community assistance activities (school programs, fairs, mailers, annual public meetings and cooperative activities, signing, wildfire coordinating councils, etc.), and grant programs.

### 5.0 Monitoring and Evaluation

The intent of this chapter is to document processes for determining whether the FMP is being implemented as planned and fire-related goals and objectives are being achieved. Information obtained from monitoring is used to update the FMP and land management plans

**Chapter 5 - DOI Requirements**

Describe monitoring processes that will be used to measure achievement of FMP objectives. Procedures to be included are dependent on local agency needs. Processes may include fire and non-fire treatment effects monitoring including broader scale long-term monitoring based on fire and land management objective, collaboration with other disciplines for monitoring broader resource management objectives, information on annual performance (e.g. annual targets), annual process to review and/or update the FMP, including triggers for major revisions.

**Chapter 5 – FWS Guidance****5.1. Fire Management Plan****5.1.1. Annual FMP Review**

Describe responsibility for annual FMP review/update. Regions may develop a checklist for use within each region.

*This FMP will be reviewed annually and updated as needed, upon local agency administrator approval. Revisions of FMPs with Regional review and concurrence are required every five years and following completion of a new (or significantly revised) CCP or habitat management plan.*

**5.1.2. Fire Management Plan Terminology**

*Terms in the FMP are defined in the National Wildfire Coordinating Group glossary, located at <http://www.nwcg.gov/pms/pubs/glossary/index.htm> . Any terms used not in the glossary are defined below.*

**5.2. Treatment Effectiveness**

Describe objectives and protocols for prescribed fire monitoring, fire effects monitoring, and any non-fire effects monitoring.

**5.3.****FWS guidance for Appendices**

(Include plans and documents to review and/or update annually. Optional examples are listed below in no particular order. Regions may specify requirements and organization.)

- Maps
- Staff Responsibilities, Fire Qualifications and Directory/call-up list
- Fire Danger Indices and Preparedness Step-up Plan
- Fire Equipment/vehicle list and Fire Cache
- Annual Fire Readiness Activities (Example table 3)
- Local Agreements and MOUs
- Radio frequencies used in Fire Management Operations
- Delegation of Authority to Incident Commander
- Annual Review Checklist (Regional-specific)
- Other, as needed – Smoke Management, Procedures/Burn plan for debris burns, etc.

- **Wildfire/Mitigation Treatment History Appendix** (1) update ten year fire and treatment history and changes in expected fire behavior and risk to nearby WUI areas and (2) identify any major discrepancies between the wildland fire management priorities and protection policies of neighboring state, local, tribal agencies and public and private interests that may adversely impact joint operations in these nearby WUI areas..
- **Authorities appendix.** A list of authorities for wildland fire management is not a required element of the 2007 interagency FMP template or the FWS guidance. However, when FMPs are stand-alone documents, with no associated NEPA document, including the list of authorities that follows below should be considered.

**Example Table 3: Annual Fire Readiness Activities (for Refuge, Complex or Zone)**

Activities – Complete during month	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Meet PL/RMs for annual work plan treatments	X											
Update Interagency AOPs	X											
Schedule Medical Tests and other pre-hire requirements										X		
Complete Annual Fire Physicals										X		
Report Dates for Seasonal Workforce			X									
Winterize Equipment										X		
Inventory Fire Engine and Cache		X										
Training Analysis			X							X		
Annual Refresher Training			X									
Fitness Testing			X									
Pre-Season Engine Preparation			X									
Weigh Engines to verify GVW			X									
Prepare Prescribed Fire Plans			X									
Review and Update Fire Management Plan				X								
Prepare Pre-season Risk Analysis			X									
Weather Station Maintenance										X		

Authorities for Wildland Fire Management

The following statutes authorize and provide the means for managing wildland fires on FWS lands or threatening FWS lands and on adjacent lands:

**A. Protection Act of September 20, 1922** (42 Stat. 857; 16 U.S.C. 594) Authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to protect, from fire, lands under his/her jurisdiction and to cooperate with other Federal agencies, States, or owners of timber.

**B. Economy Act of June 30, 1932** (47 Stat. 417; 31 U.S.C. 1535). Authorizes Federal agencies to enter into contracts and agreements for services with each other.

**C. Reciprocal Fire Protection Act of May 27, 1955 as amended by the Wildfire Suppression Assistance Act of 1989** (69 Stat. 66, 67; 42 U.S.C. 1856a)(102 Stat. 1615). Authorizes reciprocal fire protection agreements with any fire organization for mutual aid with or without reimbursement and allows for emergency assistance in the vicinity of agency facilities in extinguishing fires when no agreement exists.

**D. National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966, as amended by the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997 and the Refuge Recreation Act of 1962.**(80 Stat. 927)(16 U.S.C. 668dd-668ee)(16 U.S.C. 460k-460k4). Governs the administration and use of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

**E. Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of December 18, 1971.** (88 Stat. 668; 43 U.S.C. 1601). Alaska Natives' lands are to continue to receive forest fire protection from the United States at no cost until they become economically self-sufficient.

**F. Disaster Relief Act of May 22, 1974.** (88 Stat. 143; 42 U.S.C. 5121). Authorizes Federal agencies to assist State and local governments during emergency or major disaster by direction of the President.

**G. Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of October 29, 1974 et seq.** (88 Stat. 1535; 15 U.S.C. 2201) as amended. Authorizes reimbursement to State and local fire services for costs incurred in firefighting on Federal property.

**H. Federal Grants and Cooperative Act of 1977.** (Pub. L. 95-244, as amended by Pub. L. 97-258, September 13, 1982. 96 Stat. 1003; 31 U.S.C. 6301-6308). Eliminates unnecessary administrative requirements on recipients of Government awards by characterizing the relationship between executive agencies and contractors, States and local governments and other recipients in acquiring property and services in providing U.S. Government assistance.

**I. Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of December 2, 1980.** (94 Stat. 2371, 43 U.S.C. 1602-1784). Designates certain public lands in Alaska as units of the National Park, National Wildlife Refuge, Wild and Scenic Rivers, National Wilderness Preservation, and National Forest systems resulting in general expansion of all systems. Any contracts or agreements with the jurisdictions for fire management services listed above that were previously executed will remain valid.

**J. Supplemental Appropriation Act of September 10, 1982.** (96 Stat. 837). Authorizes Secretary of the Interior and Secretary of Agriculture to enter into contracts with State and

local government entities, including local fire districts, for procurement of services in pre-suppression, detection, and suppression of fires on any unit within their jurisdiction.

**K. Wildfire Suppression Assistance Act of 1989.** (Pub. L. 100-428, as amended by Pub. L. 101-11, April 7, 1989). Authorizes reciprocal fire protection agreements with any fire organization for mutual aid with or without reimbursement and allows for emergency assistance in the vicinity of agency facilities in extinguishing fires when no agreement exists.

#### **Other Policy References**

1. Wildland Fire Leadership Conference Call Notes, March 24, 2008 “Modifying Guidance for Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Policy (AMR), published on the Internet at <http://www.forestsandrangelands.gov/leadership/meetings/index.shtml>
2. Departmental Manual, 620 DM 1-3, Wildland Fire Management, General Policy and Procedures; Wildland Fire Management, General Policy and Procedures – Alaska; and Burned Area Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation.
3. United States Fish and Wildlife Service Manual sections 095 FW 3 Emergency Preparedness and Response -- Wildland Fire Management, 241 FW 7 Wildland Fire Safety, 232 FW 6 Training Standards for Wildland and Prescribed Fire Operations, 621 FW 1 Wildland Fire Policies and Responsibilities, 621 FW 2 Fire Management Planning, and 621 FW 3 Prescribed Fire.
4. United States Fish and Wildlife Service Fire Management Handbook
5. Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations, also known as the “Red Book.”
6. Interagency Prescribed Fire Planning and Implementation Procedures Reference Guide, September 2006
7. National Wildlife Refuge System Wildland Fire Management Strategic Plan (May 2006)
8. Wildland Fire Use Implementation Procedure Reference Guide, May 2005
9. A Collaborative Approach for Reducing Wildfire Risks to Communities and the Environment: 10-Year Strategy Implementation Plan (December 2006)
10. National Fire Plan (September 2001) and Healthy Forest Initiative (August 2002)