

Chapter 04

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Program Organization & Responsibilities

The FWS Fire Management Handbook incorporates, by reference, all guidance in the [Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations Handbook](#) 04 in addition to the following FWS specific clarifications:

Agency Administrator Responsibilities

Regional Director

- Ensuring that stations conduct prescribed fire use in compliance with National and Regional fire management policies and standards.
- Ensuring Project Leaders are qualified to approve prescribed fire plans.
- Conducting administrative reviews (and reporting review results to the Director within 90 days) of all prescribed fires that:
 - Result in serious or multiple personal injuries; or
 - Are converted to wildfire status that burn significant private or other agency lands; or
 - Result in the issuance of an air quality regulatory Notice-of-Violation from the state, air pollution control district, and/or county.
- Ensuring that emergency stabilization and burned area rehabilitation plans with estimated costs < \$500,000 are consistent with Department and Service policy and guidelines.

Project Leader

- Developing and implementing emergency stabilization and burned area rehabilitation plans.
- Integrating the role and use of fire by establishing fire management direction to meet resource objectives in Comprehensive Conservation Plans (CCP) and Fire Management Plans (FMP).
- Approving or rejecting the Prescribed Fire Burn Plans (RxBPs), and delegating this authority to Refuge Managers on the basis of qualification, experience, and demonstrated ability.
- Ensuring that the RxBPs and the personnel implementing them meet Interagency, Service wide and Regional requirements.
- Reporting all wildfires resulting from prescribed fire actions to the Regional Director within 24 hours of the wildfire declaration.
- Conducting reviews of all prescribed fires that are converted to wildfire status.
- Reporting the review results to the Regional Director within 60 days after the prescribed fire was declared a wildfire.
- Ensuring that prescribed fire personnel are trained in the After Action Review (AAR) process and that they routinely complete AARs after prescribed fire operations.
- Ensure that Burn Bosses (RXB1, RXB2, and RXB3) participate in “refreshers” no less frequently than every 2 years. Refreshers should be designed to ensure that Burn Bosses are kept current on policy and lessons learned from recent escapes, innovations and other learning associated with prescribed fire. These refreshers may take a variety

of forms including (but not limited to) sand table exercises, reviews of recent escapes, staff rides, workshops, mentoring, or interactive web-based exercises.

Fire Management Staff Responsibilities

Refuge Fire Management Officer (FMO)

- Ensuring that the RxBP and the personnel implementing them meet Service wide and Regional requirements.
- Ensuring adequate oversight and status reporting of all prescribed fires.
- Reporting all wildfires resulting from prescribed fires to the Regional Fire Management Coordinator within 12 hours of the wildfire declaration.
- Develop and update fire management plans and associated operational plans for approval by project leaders.

Delegation of Authority

Zone/District Fire Management Officer

In order to effectively perform their duties, the FMO may have certain authorities delegated from the Agency Administrator(s). A sample “Delegation of Authority” can be found at the end of this chapter.

National Fire Leadership Team

The National Fire Leadership Team is established under the guidance and support of the NWRS Leadership Team. The team is established to provide regional input on issues of National importance, to advise the Chief, Fire Management Branch (FMB), and provide leadership, coordination, and guidance in the development and implementation of a safe and effective fire management program within the Service. The team serves as a national clearing house, provides discussion of wildland fire management issues, and recommends actions to improve coordination and integration of regional fire management activities into national direction. The team will be responsible for the following:

- Provide leadership, coordination, and guidance for the Service’s fire management program.
- Identify potential fire management issues, and recommend strategies that will enhance the Service’s ability to safely and effectively manage fire on Service lands.
- Develop and recommend common guidance and business rules as needed to manage fire management activities while recognizing individual regional needs.
- Provide a forum for the exchange of ideas, best management practices, and lessons learned relating to Service fire management activities.
- Provide a forum to discuss budget methodology applications that are consistent with appropriation language authority as well as providing for the collaboration and coordination within FWS and with our interagency partners.
- Form task groups, working teams, or other collections of subject matter experts as needed to deal with specific tasks or long-term issues. These groups or teams will each have a Leader who usually works in the subject matter area with members assigned who may have the subject area as a collateral duty. They will have representation from across the Service, and will provide guidance or operational recommendations to the NFLT.

Sample Delegation for Zone/District Fire Management Officer

The Fire Management Officer for the Arizona Fire District (including: Buenos Aires NWR, San Bernardino NWR, Leslie Canyon NWR, Imperial NWR, Cibola NWR, Bill Williams NWR, Kofa NWR, Havasu NWR, Alchesay-Williams Creek Fish Hatchery Complex) is delegated authority to act on my behalf for the following duties and actions:

1. Provide direction, supervision and leadership to District Fire Management Staff outlined in the attached organization chart.
2. Coordinate with and provide timely and accurate reports to Project Leaders, Deputy Project Leaders, and Appropriate Refuge Managers on all activities of the district and personnel.
3. Responsible for Fire Budget coordination and oversight to assure the fiscal guidelines are adhered to within the District.
4. Coordinate all prescribed fire activities for the district including requests and oversight of funding for Hazardous Fuel and WUI projects.
5. Assure personnel participating in prescribed fire and wildfire operations are fully qualified.
6. Request and Oversee distribution of Severity and Emergency Pre-suppression Funding for District Fire and Aviation.
7. Ensure all district incidents are managed in a safe and cost-effective manner.
8. Oversee the recruitment and hiring of district fire personnel.
9. Responsible for representing the Arizona Fire District in all matters related to the Wildland/Prescribed Fire Management Program with local cooperators and on the Southeast Zone and Central West Zone Boards.
10. Coordinate district fire and prevention activities and provide appropriate program direction and guidance.
11. Provide for management of property records for equipment and supplies purchased with program allocations.
12. Coordinate, proposition, send and order fire and aviation resources in response to current and anticipated district, regional and national fire conditions.
13. Hire emergency firefighters in accordance with Department of Interior "Pay Plan for Emergency Workers."
14. Manage Incident Qualification Certification System and certify Incident Qualification

Cards within the District.

Buenos Aires NWR Refuge Manager

Date

San Bernardino/
Leslie Canyon NWR Refuge Manager

Date

Imperial NWR Refuge Manager

Date

Cibola NWR Refuge Manager

Date

Bill Williams River NWR Refuge Manager

Date

Kofa NWR Refuge Manager

Date

Havasu NWR Refuge Manager

Date

Alchesay-Williams Creek Complex Manager

Date

FWS Region 2 Fire Management Coordinator

Date

Arizona Fire Management District FMO

Date