



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Washington, D.C. 20240

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Memorandum

To: Regional Directors, Regions 1-7
Manager, California/Nevada Operations Office

From: *Acting* Director *Kenneth Stansell*

Subject: Results of National Prescribed Fire Review

The Service experienced a significant increase in prescribed fire escapes in FY06 including one that resulted in the turnover of 2 employees. In response, the National Fire Leadership Team and the Fire Management Branch chartered a work group of FMOs and Regional Prescribed Fire Specialists to review the individual Prescribed Fire Reviews to identify commonalities and potential mitigation actions that could be taken to improve prescribed fire planning and operations in the future.

The completed review is attached for your use, and identifies a number of areas where prescribed fire planning and operations can be improved. In general, the review team found existing policy and guidance adequate, but that there is a need to reemphasize adhering to that policy and guidance as well as integrating the Lesson's Learned and Best Practices from past prescribed fires into prescribed fire planning and implementation.

The attached action plan has been developed to improve prescribed fire planning and operations as a result of the review. Line officers, administrators and fire management staff are responsible for ensuring the actions assigned to them are carried out by the assigned deadline. Contact Fire Management Branch Deputy Chief John Segar (208-387-5976) if you have questions or problems relating to the action plan.

Prescribed Fire is a critical hazardous fuel reduction and habitat management tool, but the safety of the public and our employees is, and must continue to be, our highest priority. The near-misses experienced this year serve as reminder that fire management and prescribed fire have significant risks, but that these risks can be managed. The take home message from the review should be the best way to improve our prescribed fire planning and operations is to adhere to existing policy and guidance, and to communicate and utilize the Lessons Learned and Best Practices developed as a result of the significant prescribed fire experience and expertise within the Service.

Attachments

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