

1 **Chapter 1**  
 2 **Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy and Doctrine**  
 3 **Overview**

4 **Scope**

5 The U.S Fish and Wildlife Service (Service or FWS) Fire Management  
 6 Handbook (FMH) incorporates, by reference, all guidance in the [Interagency](#)  
 7 [Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations](#) (aka Redbook; National Fire  
 8 Equipment System (NFES) #2724) Chapter 1 in addition to the following  
 9 Service specific clarifications:

10 The FMH is a program reference guide that defines the implementation  
 11 standards, requirements and procedures of the wildland fire management  
 12 program for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. To minimize duplication, the  
 13 FMH references, instead of restating, interagency standards, requirements and  
 14 procedures for wildland fire management in the Redbook and other policy and  
 15 guidance reference documents. The Fire Management Handbook and Redbook  
 16 provide guidance for implementing safe and effective fire and fire aviation  
 17 operations.

18 The 2021 Fire Management Handbook replaces the 2020 version of this  
 19 handbook.

20 **Policy and Guidance Affecting Service Fire Management Operations**

21 **Federal** – Department of Interior (DOI) and the Service adhere to Federal  
 22 Wildland Fire Management Policy and Guidance. Most documents can be found  
 23 at the [National Wildfire Coordinating Group \(NWCG\) Website](#) including:

- 24     ▪ *Guidance for Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Management*  
 25         *Policy (2009).*
- 26     ▪ *Review and Update of the 1995 Federal Wildland Fire Management*  
 27         *Policy January 2001*
- 28     ▪ *Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy and Program Review, Final*  
 29         *Report, December 18, 1995.*
- 30     ▪ *National Interagency Mobilization Guide (NFES 2092).*
- 31     ▪ *National Incident Management System (NIMS) Wildland Fire*  
 32         *Qualification System Guide (NWCG Publication Management System*  
 33         *(PMS) 310-1)*
- 34     ▪ *Prescribed Fire Complexity Rating System Guide (NWCG PMS 424,*  
 35         *NFES 2474).*
- 36     ▪ *Smoke Management Guide for Prescribed and Wildland Fire (NWCG*  
 37         *PMS 420-2, NFES 1279).*

- 1       ▪ *Interagency Prescribed Fire Planning and Implementation Procedures*  
2       *Guide (NWCG PMS 484).*
- 3       **Departmental** – The Service adheres to Departmental policy documented in  
4       the [Departmental Manual](#) and guidance transmitted through memo or email.  
5       Most interagency policy is incorporated directly or by reference into the  
6       Departmental Manual.
- 7       **Service** – The [Fish and Wildlife Service Directives System](#) contains the current  
8       policy and management directives that affect the daily activities of the Service  
9       and its employees. The Directives system consists of the Service Manual,  
10      Director's Orders, and National Policy Issuances. The [Fish and Wildlife Service](#)  
11      [Manual](#) describes the structure and functions of the Service's organizational  
12      units, documents re- delegations of the Director's authority, and prescribes the  
13      policies and procedures for administrative activities and program operations.  
14      We use it to communicate instructions and provide guidance in administrative  
15      and program operations. The Service Manual is the primary source of  
16      information on organizational structure, authority to function, policy, and  
17      general procedures. Director's Orders are limited to temporary policy,  
18      procedures, delegations of authority, emergency regulations, special  
19      assignments of functions, and initial functional statements on the establishment  
20      of new organizational units. These policies are necessarily broad and generally  
21      require management discretion or judgment in their implementation. They  
22      represent the Director's expectations of how the Service and its employees will  
23      act in carrying out their official responsibilities. These policies are often  
24      supplemented with guidance distributed by memo or email.
- 25      **Service Fire Management Handbook** – The Fire Management Handbook is  
26      incorporated by reference into the Service Manual (621 FW 1) and is designed  
27      to meet the intent stated above.
- 28      **Service Fire Business Guide** – The Fire Business Guide provides Service  
29      standardized fire business guidance for the Fire Management Program, and  
30      contains specific business rules, definitions, and standard operating procedures  
31      to ensure consistent accounting and reporting requirements set forth by the  
32      Service, DOI, and Congress.