

1 **Chapter 17**
2 **Prescribed Fire**
3 **Fuels Management**

4
5 **Introduction**

6 An updated version of the 2006 The Hazardous Fuels Reduction (HFR)
7 Programs within the Department of the Interior (DOI) and the Forest Service
8 (FS) have the purpose of reducing hazardous fuels (HF), and risks to human
9 communities while improving the health of the land. To ensure these programs
10 are coordinated, common priorities for fuel treatments have been established
11 which follow these guidelines.

12
13 The DOI and FS along with other federal, state, tribal, and local partners will
14 work to ensure effective HFR treatment efforts are collectively planned and
15 implemented. These efforts will be consistent with the direction provided in:

- 16 • Restoring Fire -Adapted Ecosystems on Federal Lands- A Cohesive
17 Strategy - (Federal Cohesive Strategy)
- 18 • Western Governors Association - A Collaborative Approach for Reducing
19 Wildland Fire Risks to Communities and the Environment - 10 Year
20 Comprehensive Strategy

21
22 **Policy**

23 The DOI and FS both use the following guides as policy.

24
25 Interagency Prescribed Fire Planning and Implementation Procedures Guide (IA
26 RX Fire 2008 Guide) was issued by the National Wildland Fire Coordinating
27 Group (NWCG) on August 6, 2008. The IA RX Fire guide provides consistent
28 interagency policy, establishes common terms and definitions, and
29 identifies standardized procedures, specifically associated with the planning and
30 implementation processes for of prescribed fire. These procedures meet

31
32 Some programmatic differences are identified in the following agency specific
33 documentation and serve as agency specific direction.

- 34 • BLM - Refer to (IM No. OF&A 2009-014)
- 35 • FWS - Refer to Fire Management Handbook
- 36 • NPS - Refer to RM 18
- 37 • FS - Refer to FSM 5140

38
39 Policy, project planning and implementation priorities and standards common to
40 all policy DOI and FS:

- 41 • The safety of firefighters and the public is the number one priority when
42 planning and implementing HFR treatment projects.
- 43 • All HFR treatment projects will have plans that contain measurable
44 objectives.

- 1 • All HFR treatment projects will comply with NEPA and all other regulatory
2 requirements described in the 2003 Interagency Strategy.
- 3 • All HFR management projects will be tracked and progress will be reported
4 within required timeframes.
- 5 • All HFR treatment projects will be monitored to determine if treatment
6 objectives were met and to document weather, fire behavior, fuels
7 information and smoke dispersion. Evaluation reports are to be completed
8 and maintained in the project file. All HF treatment projects will support
9 resource management objectives as identified in their agency specific Land
10 Use Plans.

11 **Reporting HFR Accomplishment**

12 The HF module of the National Fire Plan Operations and Reporting System
13 (NFPORS) has been developed and is the national interagency standard in DOI
14 for submitting proposed projects for ~~the~~ approval, tracking accomplishments of
15 the program, reporting performance, measuring accomplishments and
16 accountability.

17 **DOI Policy Regarding Planned HF Treatments Burned in a Wildfire**

18 Acres burned in a wildfire may only be reported in NFPORS as prescribed fire if
19 all the following conditions are met:

- 20 • The area burned was in a pre-existing NFPORS treatment unit
- 21 • NEPA is complete
- 22 • The planned objectives were met
- 23 • The accomplishment is approved by a Regional Fuels Specialist

24 FS provides direction for reporting accomplishment from unplanned ignitions in
25 the annual budget advice and by Washington Office interim direction letters.

26 **Prescribed Fire during Preparedness Levels 4 and 5**

27 Implementation of prescribed fires and approval at national preparedness Levels
28 4 and 5 is restricted. (See NFES 2092 *National Mobilization Guide* Sections
29 26.3.4 Preparedness Level 4 and 26.3.5 Preparedness Level 5)

30 **Federal *Wildland Fire Management Policy*. – Agencies Assistance**

31 It has long been the intent of congress that the, “Interior Agencies and Forest
32 Service should not charge each other for personnel and other resources” when
33 providing assistance in conducting hazardous fuel treatments.

34 The ~~guide and prescribed fire plan template~~ DOI agencies have agreed not to
35 crossbill each other for fuels management assistance. Assistance to or from the
36 FS, unless arranged otherwise, requires a local agreement, so that funds can be
37 accessed electronically at http://www.nife.gov/fire_policy transferred between
38 agencies. Informal agreements may be made where assistance is provided on a
39 “quid pro quo” basis, where one agency provides assistance for another agency’s

1 project and then in turn is the recipient of assistance from the other agency on a
2 project of their own.

3

4 ~~The IA RX Fire Guide describes what is minimally acceptable~~Fuels
5 management projects are considered regular planned land management activities
6 as opposed to emergency activities; therefore, offices have the right to turn
7 down requests from other offices to assist in fuels management activities.
8 Offices should not consider providing personnel and resources at the expense of
9 their own target accomplishments, and no office should be placed in a position
10 of subsidizing another office's fuels management activities.

11

12 ~~Hazard pay for Prescribed Fire planning and implementation. Agencies may~~
13 ~~choose to provide more restrictive standards and~~ **Implementation**
14 ~~Current policy direction, but must adhere to these minimums. All personnel~~
15 ~~involved in the~~ is that hazard pay will not be paid for any prescribed fire. Under
16 certain circumstances, environmental differential may be warranted. Offices
17 should contact their servicing personnel office with specific questions.

18 • FS - is proposing to allow hazard pay for prescribed fire, consequently, this
19 may change this year. If it does, this will not accurately reflect the current
20 policy.

21

22 **Use of Contractors for Prescribed Fire Implementation**

23 Agencies can contract to conduct all or part of the ~~planning and implementation~~
24 ~~process must of~~ prescribed fire operations and/or all or part of mechanical
25 treatments for HFR projects.

26

27 If a contractor is actively involved in igniting, holding, or mopping up an agency
28 prescribed fire, a Contracting Officer's Authorized Representative (COAR) or
29 Project Inspector (PI) will be on the site (exceptions can be made for late stage
30 mop up and patrol) to ensure that specific agency additional standards and or
31 supplemental guidance are followed. Please see the burn objectives are being
32 met and that the terms of the contract are adhered to. The agency specific
33 additional guidance; administrator and/or FMO will determine the qualifications
34 required for the agency representative (COAR or PI).

35 • ~~BLM – IM OF&A 2008 – 026~~

36 • ~~FWS – Fire Management Handbook~~

37 • ~~FS – FSM 5140 for direction~~

38 • ~~NPS – RM 18~~

39

40 **Use of Pay Plan for Casual Firefighters for the Hazardous Fuel** 41 **Reduction Fuels Program**

42 Refer to the ~~Department of the Interior (DOI)~~ Pay Plan for Emergency Workers
43 for information regarding the use of emergency workers for hazardous fuel
44 reduction projects ~~on Departmental lands.~~ Refer to the ~~Forest Service~~ **FS** Pay
45 Plan for Emergency Workers for information regarding the use of emergency
46 workers for hazardous fuel reduction projects ~~on national forests.~~

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2 **Activation of Contingency Resources**

3 In the event an agency activates the contingency resources in their burn plan,
4 sending units should respond and support the requesting agency immediately, to
5 ensure that the public and firefighter safety are not compromised.