



# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Fire and Aviation  
3833 South Development Avenue  
Boise, Idaho 83705-5354  
<http://www.nifc.gov>



December 15, 2011

In Reply Refer To:  
9200 (FA-400) P

EMS Transmission 12/15/2011  
Instruction Memorandum No. FA IM-2012-006, Change 1  
Expires: 09/30/2013

To: State Directors, State Fire Management Officers

From: Assistant Director, Fire and Aviation

Subject: Additional Guidance, Department of the Interior Memorandum 2011-2,  
Wildland Fire Boot Stipend

**Program Area:** Fire management

**Purpose:** The purpose of this Change 1 is to clarify the budget impacts of the boot stipend policy. All other content and directions of FA IM-2012-006 remain unchanged.

**Policy/Action:** Payment of the wildland fire boot stipend, a taxable benefit, in the amount of \$100.00 per calendar year, is authorized for permanent full-time, career-seasonal, and temporary employees who:

- Hold a current incident qualification card with a fitness rating of moderate or arduous, **and**
- Encumber a position that has been approved for special (firefighter) retirement (regardless of appointment type), **and**
- Are primarily employed in one of the following categories:
  - Fire operations supervisor/station manager
  - Fire engine crew (including engine captain, engine operator, and engine crewmember)
  - Fire water tender crew (including fire water tender operator, and fire water tender crewmember)
  - Fire heavy equipment operator (including fire heavy equipment operator, fire bulldozer/tractor plow operator, and firefighters/crewmembers assigned as primary support staff)
  - Helitack crew (including helicopter crew supervisor, assistant, squad leader, and helicopter crewmember)

- Hand crew (including crew supervisor, assistant, squad leader and crewmembers of Type 1 interagency hotshot crews and Type 2 crews)
- Smokejumper
- Alaska fire specialist (Alaska FSS)
- Fuels technician/specialist responsible for implementing prescribed fires (stipends for these positions will be paid with Hazardous Fuels funds)

**Payment Procedures:** Fire and Aviation (FA) will allocate one-time preparedness funding to states based on applicable positions identified on their current implemented resources table. FA does not have any hazardous fuels funds available to allocate, so states will have to cover the fuels portion out of their current state allocations. The work breakdown structure (WBS) LF.SP.B00T0000, will be used when coding for this boot stipend. FA will monitor the implementation of this program.

Procedures for payment of the wildland fire boot stipend and cost accounting code information will be located on FA's budget web page:

[http://web.blm.gov/internal/fire/budget/Reference\\_docs/links/Links.htm](http://web.blm.gov/internal/fire/budget/Reference_docs/links/Links.htm)

Personnel hired under the administratively-determined (AD) authority who hold a current incident qualification card with a fitness rating of moderate or arduous are also eligible for the wildland fire boot stipend. AD employees will receive the stipend at time of payment following their first fire assignment in an Incident Qualification and Certification System (IQCS) position requiring a moderate or arduous fitness rating (as per the PMS 310-1 or agency requirements) in each calendar year. Procedures for payment of the wildland fire boot stipend to eligible AD employees are also located at the website above.

To allow for training attendance and fire assignments as required, employees and supervisors will ensure that wildland fire boots are procured prior to reporting for duty and maintained in a safe and serviceable condition.

**Timeframe:** This IM is effective January 1, 2012, and remains in effect until rescinded or modified.

**Budget Impact:** Impact on the field due to this policy change should be minimal. Savings realized within FA and bureau level fire management initiatives will be allocated to the states to defray the costs of this stipend policy.

**Background:** The National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) wildland fire boot standard has been adopted by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) as appropriate for safe work on the fireline. The NWCG has also concluded that protective footwear is very personal in nature, and can be used by employees off the job site. In October 2011, the Department Of Interior issued *Office of Wildland Fire Coordination Policy Memorandum 2011-2, Department of the Interior Wildland Fire Boot Stipend* authorizing payment of the wildland fire boot stipend.

**Manual/Handbook Sections Affected:** *Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations*, chapter 7.

**Coordination:** This IM was coordinated with the FA Division of Fire Operations, and FA Branch of Human Resources.

**Contact:** Questions may be addressed to David Burley, BLM Incident Business Lead, (208) 387-5420, or Grant Beebe, FA Budget Officer, (208) 387-5161.

Signed by:  
Howard Hedrick, acting  
Assistant Director, Fire and Aviation

Authenticated by:  
Erin K. Maskalick  
Records Management Specialist

1 Attachment:

1 - DOI Memorandum 2012-2, Wildland Fire Boot Stipend (2 pp)

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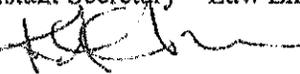
# United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

OCT 14 2011

## Memorandum

To: Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs  
Director, Bureau of Land Management  
Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Director, National Park Service

From: Kim A. Thorsen, Deputy Assistant Secretary – Law Enforcement, Security, and  
Emergency Management 

Subject: Office of Wildland Fire Coordination Policy Memorandum 2011-2  
Department of the Interior Wildland Fire Boot Stipend

The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) recently settled an arbitration case with the Federal Indian Service Employees (FISE) regarding the purchase of wildland fire boots. During the proceedings, the attorney for FISE wrote to the Assistant Secretary for Occupational Safety and Health in the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), contending "... the Department of the Interior pays for these boots for the wildland firefighters employed by the National Park Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (almost all of whom are non-Indian) while it forces the predominately American Indian firefighting crews who work alongside them to pay for their own boots." The FISE asked the DOL to "escalate this to the Secretarial level and ask Secretary Solis to contact Secretary Salazar directly" for "prompt attention" and an "immediate response" from the Department of the Interior (DOI) to their complaint.

The National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) establishes wildland fire standards for use by the bureaus and the NWCG Wildland Fire Boot standard has been adopted by each bureau as appropriate for safe work on the fireline. The NWCG concluded that protective footwear is very personal in nature and can be used by employees off the job site. Therefore, appropriate boots should be a condition of employment for firefighting positions. Boots should be purchased by the employee prior to employment.

Within the DOI, guidelines for purchasing boots for firefighters have indeed varied by bureau. However, the bureaus and Office of Wildland Fire, in consultation with the USDA Forest Service, have reached a consensus on the appropriate level and mechanism for providing financial assistance to all employees who, as a condition of employment, are required to purchase wildland fire boots. Our new policy will allow a \$100.00 per year stipend to qualified firefighters as described in the attachment. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Kirk Rowdabaugh, 202-606-3447.

Attachment: Office of Wildland Fire Coordination Policy Memorandum 2011-2,  
Department of the Interior Wildland Fire Boot Stipend

**Office of Wildland Fire Coordination Policy 2011-2**  
**Wildland Fire Boot Stipend**

**Purpose:**

To provide Departmental guidance to the bureaus and offices on the payment of a yearly stipend to employees for wildland fire boots.

**Background:**

The National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) establishes wildland fire standards for use by the bureaus, and the NWCG Wildland Fire Boot standard has been adopted by each bureau as appropriate for safe work on the fireline. The NWCG has also concluded that protective footwear is very personal in nature and can be used by employees off the job site. Therefore, appropriate boots should be a condition of employment for firefighting positions and should be purchased by the employee prior to employment.

**Scope:**

This policy applies to all bureaus and offices within the Department, and to all employees, regardless of their employment status.

**Time Frame:**

This policy is effective January 1, 2012 and remains in effect until rescinded or modified.

**Policy:**

The payment of a one-hundred dollar (\$100.00) per year stipend is authorized for employees holding a valid Incident Qualification Card with a Fitness Rating of moderate or arduous, and who, as a condition of employment, are required to purchase wildland fire boots that satisfy the standards described in the *Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations* and the *Wildland Fire and Aviation Program Management and Operations Guide (BIA)*. Validity of the Incident Qualification Card is determined by the Fitness Expiration date on the card.

Personnel hired under the Administratively-Determined (AD) authority who qualify will receive the stipend at time of payment following their first fire assignment in an IQCS qualified position requiring an arduous or moderate fitness rating in each calendar year. DOI bureaus and offices will follow established payment processes for disbursement of stipends for all other personnel assigned to wildland fires.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Kim A. Thorsen  
Deputy Assistant Secretary  
Law Enforcement, Security and Emergency Management

\_\_\_\_\_  
10/14/11  
Date

**Distribution:**

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