

**Chapter 04****U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Program Organization & Responsibilities****Introduction**

This document states, references, or supplements policy for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Wildland Fire Management Program. The standards provided in this document are based on current U.S. Department of the Interior and Bureau policy, and are intended to provide fire program guidance. If there is a discrepancy between guidance found in this document and the Service Manual, information contained within this document will be considered authoritative as updates occur on a more frequent cycle than the FW Manual. The intent is to ensure safe, consistent, efficient, and effective fire and aviation operations. This document will be reviewed and updated annually.

**Agency Administrator Roles****Director**

The Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service has overall responsibility for the Service wildland fire management program. The Director will ensure regional fire management activities are formally evaluated.

**Chief, National Wildlife Refuge System**

The National Wildlife Refuge System under the Chief provides leadership for the wildland fire management program. The National Wildlife Refuge System also formally evaluates all regional fire activities at least every five years. The Assistant Director of the National Wildlife Refuge System has delegated the authority to approve the *Fire Management Handbook* and other fire related handbooks as needed to provide guidance to the Chief, Branch of Fire Management.

**Regional Director**

The Regional Director is responsible to the Director for fire management programs and activities within their region. The Regional Director will meet the required elements outlined in the *Management Performance Requirements for Fire Operations* and ensure training is completed to support delegations to line managers and principal acting's. The Regional Director ensures that Refuge Managers/Project Leaders, and or Field Supervisors are qualified to approve prescribed fire plans. Any prescribed fire that is converted to a wildfire, and/or contributes to an air quality violation, and/or significant damage to values outside of FWS boundaries must be reviewed. The appropriate level and scope of the review will be determined by agency policy. The final review results shall be provided to the Regional Director within 90 days.

1 **Regional Chief and Refuge Supervisors**

2 Regional Chiefs and Refuge Supervisors are delegated specific leadership  
3 responsibilities by the Regional Director. They provide oversight and direction,  
4 in coordination with, the Wildland Fire Management Program for the National  
5 Wildlife Refuge System. These responsibilities occur through established lines  
6 of authority as assigned by the Regional Director.

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8 **Project Leader/Refuge Manager**

9 The Project Leader is responsible for the safe and efficient implementation of  
10 fire management activities within their unit, including cooperative activities with  
11 other agencies or landowners, in accordance with delegations of authorities.  
12 The Project Leader, or principal acting, will meet required elements outlined in  
13 the Project Leader/Refuge Manager Performance Requirements.

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15 • Refuge Managers/Project Leaders must meet the performance requirements  
16 which are appropriate for the unit's fire management complexity as  
17 determined by the Refuge Supervisors, in consultation with the Regional Fire  
18 Management Coordinator (RFMC).  
19 • If a Project Leader/Refuge Manager is absent during an incident, the Refuge  
20 Supervisor and RFMC will make an assessment of the Acting Project  
21 Leader/Refuge Manager's capabilities and provide appropriate additional  
22 support. The Refuge Supervisor and RFMC will provide additional fire  
23 management support for the affected refuge as needed.

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25 **Management Performance Requirements for Fire Operations**

PERFORMANCE REQUIRED	FWS Director	Regional Director	Regional Chief / Refuge Supervisor	Project Leader/ Refuge Manager
<i>Policy</i>				
1. Ensure any standards developed are compliant with agency wildland fire policies.	X	X	X	X
2. Ensure use of fire funds is in compliance with department and agency policies.	X	X	X	X
3. Review critical operations and safety policies and procedures, including Interagency Fire Program Management, and <i>Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations</i> "Red Book"		X	X	X

PERFORMANCE REQUIRED	FWS Director	Regional Director	Regional Chief / Refuge Supervisor	Project Leader/ Refuge Manager
Standards, with fire and fire aviation personnel.				
<i>Program Management</i>				
4. Provide a written Delegation of Authority to FMOs giving an adequate level of operational authority. For zoned/area units, ensure all appropriate Agency Administrators have signed the delegation. When applicable, an Inter-refuge Agreement specifying reciprocal responsibilities of the Project Leader/Refuge Manager and the Area/Zone FMO.	X	X	X	X
5. Ensure all fire management activities are supported by a current FMP with documented annual updates and are integrated with an approved Comprehensive Conservation Plan.	X	X	X	X
6. Ensure units have a current safety plan, an active safety committee, and safety program that integrates the fire program.			X	X
7. Ensure investigations and reviews are conducted for incidents, accidents, escaped prescribed fires, and near misses as described in Chapter 18.	X	X	X	X
8. Annually update and review the <i>FWS Line of Duty Death Response Handbook</i> and the <i>Agency Administrator's</i>		X	X	X

<b>PERFORMANCE REQUIRED</b>	<b>FWS Director</b>	<b>Regional Director</b>	<b>Regional Chief / Refuge Supervisor</b>	<b>Project Leader/ Refuge Manager</b>
<i>Guide to Critical Incident Management</i>				
9. Ensure timely follow-up to fire management program reviews.			X	X
10. Ensure master agreements with cooperators are valid and in compliance with agency policies, and Annual Operating Plans are current.		X	X	X
11. Ensure trespass actions are initiated and documented to recover cost of suppression activities, land rehabilitation, and damages to resources and improvements for all human-caused fires where liability can be determined, as per FWS <i>Fire Management Handbook</i> .		X	X	X
12. Ensure Wildland Fire Decision Support System (WFDSS) is used to publish timely decisions and to provide decision support documentation for all fires that escape initial attack or initial response.		X	X	X
13. Convene and participate in annual fire meetings.			X	X
14. Participate as part of in-briefings and post fire closeouts on Type I and Type II fires.				X
15. Provide a written Delegation of Authority, WFDSS analysis, Agency Administrator Briefings to Incident Management Teams				X

PERFORMANCE REQUIRED	FWS Director	Regional Director	Regional Chief / Refuge Supervisor	Project Leader/ Refuge Manager
16. Ensure fire and fire aviation preparedness reviews are conducted annually in all unit offices.				X
17. Ensure resource advisors are identified, trained, and available for incident assignment. Refer to <i>Resource Advisors Guide for Wildland Fire</i> PMS 313, NFES 1813, Jan 2004.				X
18. Personally visit at least one wildland fire each year as available.				X
19. Ensure appropriate management of Social/Political/Media resources and relationships affecting wildland fire.		X	X	X
20. Ensure appropriate risk management, administration, management and oversight of wildland incidents. Ensure Incident Business Analysts, Resource Advisors, and Agency Representative positions are utilized as needed.				X
21. Provide oversight to Emergency Stabilization (ES) and Burned Area Rehabilitation (BAR) processes and procedures.				X
<b>Training / Certification</b>				
22. Ensure only trained, certified fire and non-fire personnel are available to support fire operations at the local, geographic and national levels.	X	X	X	X

<b>PERFORMANCE REQUIRED</b>	<b>FWS Director</b>	<b>Regional Director</b>	<b>Regional Chief / Refuge Supervisor</b>	<b>Project Leader/ Refuge Manager</b>
23. Ensure personnel delegated fire program responsibilities have completed required training.			X	X
<i>Prescribed Fire/Fuels Management</i>				
24. Ensure compliance with National and Regional policies for prescribed fire activities. Conduct periodic reviews of the prescribed fire program.		X	X	X
25. Implement Interagency Prescribed Fire Planning and Implementation Guide.			X	X
26. Ensure Prescribed Fire Plans are approved and meet agency policies.				X
27. Ensure all wildfires resulting from prescribed fire actions are reported to Regional Director within 24 hours of the wildfire declaration.			X	X
28. In the event of a declared wildfire from an escaped prescribed fire, conduct and submit Declared Wildfire Review to National Office with 30 days of wildfire out date.			X	X
29. Ensure Prescribed Fire Plans have been reviewed and recommended by a qualified technical reviewer other than the plan author.				X
30. Review and approve the Agency Administrator Ignition Authorization.				X

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**1 Fire Management Staff Roles**

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**3 National Office**

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**5 Fire Director**

6 The Fire Director is the Chief of the Fire Management Branch in the National  
7 Wildlife Refuge System, and is the Service representative at the National  
8 Interagency Fire Center (NIFC). The Fire Director, through *Service Manual 621*  
9 *FW I*, is delegated authority by the Director to represent the Service on the  
10 National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (NMAC Group). The Fire Director  
11 is responsible for implementing the decisions of the NMAC as they affect U.S.  
12 Fish and Wildlife Service areas. The decisions of the NMAC include the  
13 prioritizing of incidents nationally and the allocation or reallocation of  
14 firefighting resources to meet national priorities.

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16 The Fire Management Branch is responsible for providing technical direction  
17 and coordination of fire management planning, policy development, and  
18 procedures service wide.

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**20 Regional Office**

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**22 Regional Fire Management Coordinator (RFMC)**

23 The Regional Fire Management Coordinator provides leadership, direction,  
24 coordination, training, planning, evaluation, and technical guidance for the  
25 region and is available to provide assistance for intra-agency and interagency  
26 wildland fire management needs. The RFMC will meet qualification  
27 requirements established by the service for the position. The RFMC, through  
28 written delegation by the Regional Director, is delegated authority to represent  
29 the region on the GMAC. The RFMC is responsible for implementing the  
30 decisions of the MAC Group as they affect U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service areas.  
31 The decisions of the GMAC include the prioritizing of incidents, Interagency  
32 Master/statewide agreements and the allocation or reallocation of firefighting  
33 resources to meet wildland fire management priorities.

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35 RFMCs will ensure IQCS accounts are established and training records  
36 maintained for Agency Administrators.

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**38 Refuge**

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**40 Zone Fire Management Officer (FMO)**

41 The Fire Management Officer (FMO) is responsible and accountable for  
42 providing leadership for fire management programs at the local level. The FMO  
43 determines program requirements to implement land use decisions through the  
44 Fire Management Plan (FMP) to meet land management objectives. The FMO  
45 negotiates interagency agreements and represents the Agency Administrator on  
46 local interagency fire and fire aviation groups.

- 1 The FMO is responsible for coordinating with the refuge/unit Agency
- 2 Administrator to annually review and update (as required) the unit Fire
- 3 Management Plan to comply with agency policy. An FMO may be assigned to
- 4 provide wildland fire management support to a group of refuges (zone) when
- 5 individually each refuge does not warrant a fulltime FMO.

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7 **Fire Management Staff Performance Requirements for Fire Operations**

PERFORMANCE REQUIRED	Fire Director	RFMC	Zone FMO
<i>Policy</i>			
1. Establishes and manages a safe, effective, and efficient fire program.	X	X	X
2. Ensures that the Fire Management Plan (FMP) reflects the agency commitment to firefighter and public safety, while utilizing the full range of fire management activities available for ecosystem sustainability.		X	X
3. Provides the expertise and skills to fully integrate fire and fire aviation management into interdisciplinary planning efforts.	X	X	X
4. Ensures compliance with work/rest guidelines during all fire and fire aviation activities.	X	X	X
5. Ensures fire and fire aviation policies are understood, implemented, and coordinated with other agencies as appropriate	X	X	X
<i>Program Management</i>			
6. Ensures completion of a Job Hazard Analysis (JHA)/Risk Assessment for fire and fire aviation activities to mitigate risk.		X	X
7. Develop, negotiate, and implement cost share, Service First, and reimbursable protection agreements with cooperators	X	X	X
8. Ensures that the fire and fire aviation management employees understand their role, responsibilities, authority, and accountability.	X	X	X
10. Monitors fire suppression activities to recognize when complexity levels exceed current management capabilities. Increases managerial and operational resources to meet the need.	X	X	X

<b>PERFORMANCE REQUIRED</b>	<b>Fire Director</b>	<b>RFMC</b>	<b>Zone FMO</b>
11. Monitors fire season severity predictions, fire behavior, and fire activity levels. Takes action to ensure safe, efficient, and effective operations.	X	X	X
12. Ensures that master agreements with cooperators and operational plans (e.g., Annual Operating Plans, dispatch, preparedness, prevention) are valid and in compliance with agency policy.	X	X	X
13. Ensures use of fire funds is in compliance with department and agency policies.	X	X	X
14. Ensures that fire severity funding is requested, used, and documented in accordance with agency standards.	X	X	X
15. Ensures a process is established to communicate fire information to public, media, and cooperators.	X	X	X
16. Convenes and participates in annual fire meetings. Specifically address management controls and critical safety issues.	X	X	X
17. Oversees pre-season preparedness review of fire and fire aviation program.	X	X	X
18. Initiates, conducts, and/or participates in fire program management reviews and investigations.	X	X	X
19. Personally participates in periodic site visits to individual incidents and projects.		X	X
20. Ensures that transfer of command occurs as per appendix D on incidents.		X	X
21. Ensure the proper level of management complexity is assigned to all incidents		X	X
22. Ensures that incoming personnel and crews are briefed prior to fire and fire aviation assignments.		X	X
23. Ensures a WFDSS analysis is completed, updated, approved, and certified as necessary.		X	X
24. Works with cooperators, groups, and individuals to develop and implement processes and procedures for providing fire safe communities within the wildland urban interface.	X	X	X
25. Ensures unit is capable of wildfire cause determination.	X	X	X

<b>PERFORMANCE REQUIRED</b>	<b>Fire Director</b>	<b>RFMC</b>	<b>Zone FMO</b>
26. Annually updates and reviews the FWS <i>Line of Duty Death Response Handbook</i> and the <i>Agency Administrator's Guide to Critical Incident Management</i> .	X	X	X
27. Ensures that fire season severity predictions, weather forecasts, fire behavior predictors, and fire activity levels are monitored and communicated daily to all employees (hard copy, web page, email, radio, or fax).		X	X
28. Uses current National, Geographic, and Local Mobilization Guides and ensures standards are followed.	X	X	X
29. Ensures all job related accidents/incidents resulting in, or having the potential to cause fatalities, injuries, illnesses, property or environmental damage are reported and/or investigated. All such reports are electronically submitted through the Safety Management Information System (SMIS), Safenet or Safecom as appropriate.		X	X
<b><i>Planning</i></b>			
30. Develops and/or updates fire management plans and associated operational plans for approval by project leaders and regional fire and refuge staff (as determined by the region). Annually review FMPs per Service policy.			X
31. Responsible for the coordination of RAWs maintenance, sensor calibration, and oversight of daily inputs.			X
<b><i>Training</i></b>			
32. Organizes trains, equips, and directs a qualified work force. Ensures that only trained and qualified personnel are assigned to fire and fire aviation duties. Establishes and implements performance review process(es).		X	X
<b><i>Prescribed Fire and Fuels</i></b>			
33. Ensures compliance with Service and Regional policy for prescribed fire activities. Provides periodic reviews of the prescribed fire program.	X	X	X

PERFORMANCE REQUIRED	Fire Director	RFMC	Zone FMO
34. Reports all wildfires resulting from prescribed fires to the Regional Fire Management Coordinator within 12 hours of the wildfire declaration.			X

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**National Fire Leadership Team**

The National Fire Leadership Team (NFLT) 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.

**Delegation of Authority**

**Regional Fire Management Coordinator**

In order to effectively perform their duties, a RFMC must have certain authorities delegated from the Regional Director. This delegation is normally

1 placed in the regional office supplement to agency manuals. This Delegation of  
2 Authority should include:

- 3 • Serve as the Regional Director's authorized representative on geographic  
4 area coordination groups, including MAC groups.
- 5 • Coordinate and establish priorities on uncommitted fire suppression  
6 resources during periods of shortages.
- 7 • Coordinate logistics and suppression operations regional-wide.
- 8 • Relocate agency pre-suppression/suppression resources within the region  
9 based on relative fire potential/activity.
- 10 • Correct unsafe fire suppression activities.
- 11 • Direct accelerated, aggressive initial attack when appropriate.
- 12 • Enter into agreements to provide for the management, fiscal, and  
13 operational functions of combined agency operated facilities.
- 14 • Suspend prescribed fire activities when warranted.
- 15 • Give authorization to hire Emergency Firefighters in accordance with the  
16 DOI Pay Plan for Emergency Workers.
- 17 • Approve emergency fire severity funding expenditures not to exceed the  
18 agency's annual authority.

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#### 20 **Zone Fire Management Officer**

21 In order to effectively perform their duties, the FMO may receive a Delegation  
22 of Authority (DOA) outlining the operational and administrative fire  
23 management duties. All Unit Agency Administrators within a Zone should  
24 consider signing a single Zone Fire Management delegation. A sample  
25 "Delegation of Authority" can be found on the FWS Fire Operations Policy and  
26 Guidance SharePoint site.

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#### 28 **Inter-refuge Agreements**

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30 Inter-Refuge Agreements may be used when FMOs provide fire management  
31 oversight to multiple refuges. This is in addition to the Delegation of Authority  
32 from the Project Leaders/Refuge Managers to the FMO, and further defines the  
33 roles and expectations between the FMO and Refuges. An example can be  
34 found on the FWS Fire Operations Policy and Guidance SharePoint site.

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#### 36 **Fire Duty Officer**

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38 Fire Management Officers are responsible to provide Fire Duty Officer (FDO)  
39 coverage during periods of predicted incident activities. FDO responsibilities  
40 may be performed by any individual delegated the authority, either written or  
41 verbal, from the FMO. The duties for FDOs include:

- 42 • Monitor unit incident activities for compliance with FWS safety policies.
- 43 • Coordinate and set priorities for unit preparedness activities, incident  
44 response and resource allocation.

- 1 • Keep Agency Administrators and resources informed of the current and
- 2 expected situation.
- 3 • Plan for and implement actions required for future needs.
- 4 • Document decisions and actions.
- 5 • It is recommended FDOs not fill ICS functions.

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### 7 **Fire Severity Funding**

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9 Service specific fire severity funding guidance can be found in Chapter 10 of the  
10 FWS Fire Management Handbook, and the Fire Business Handbook, Severity  
11 Subactivity.

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### 13 **Daily Fire Report**

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15 During the “National Fire Season” as identified by the National Interagency  
16 Coordination Center in Boise, ID (NICC), each field unit within the Refuge  
17 System will report all wildland fire occurrence and fire status daily to their local  
18 dispatch office and Regional Office. Additionally, each Region will establish  
19 procedures to gather fire information and coordinate with their respective  
20 geographic area coordination centers as necessary. Field units will report the  
21 status of large fires separately on form ICS-209 to the local dispatch centers  
22 with copies furnished to the RFMCs. Include weekend fire activity on  
23 Monday’s report unless there is significant fire activity.

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### 25 **Individual Fire Report**

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27 An Individual Fire Report must be completed in the Fire Management  
28 Information System (FMIS) for the following types of fires within 15 days after  
29 the fire is declared out:

- 30 • All wildland fires on Service lands;
- 31 • Support Actions;
- 32 • Fires suppressed on other lands under an agreement;
- 33 • All false alarms; and
- 34 • Natural Outs (by natural out definition).

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36 Reports are required regardless of who takes action, e.g., force account,  
37 cooperator, or contractor. When actions are taken on a cooperative fire, the  
38 agency having jurisdiction over the land on which the wildfire occurs will file a  
39 complete report and prepare a limited version to record and bill for assistance  
40 when necessary.

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**Fish and Wildlife Service Use of Wildland Fire Decision Support System**

FWS follows interagency policy regarding use of WFDSS. Standards for when WFDSS will be used are found in Chapter 11 of the *Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations*.

Documentation of all other wildfires in WFDSS is at the discretion of the local unit. All fires in Alaska will have WFDSS initiated by the Protection Agency.

**Final Wildland Fire Record**

The final wildland fire project record may include the following:

- FMIS data entry
- Narrative
- WFDSS
- Incident Action Plan(s)
- Daily weather forecasts and spot weather forecasts    Cumulative fire map showing acreage increase by day
- Total cost summary
- Monitoring data (Wildland Fire Observation Records)
- Critique of fire projections on Incident Action Plan

**Physical Fitness and Conditioning**

Employees serving in wildland fire positions that require a fitness rating of arduous as a condition of employment are authorized one hour of duty time each work day for physical fitness conditioning. Employees not having a fitness rating of arduous as a condition of employment, but who are required by a Critical Performance element or other written agreement to maintain an arduous level, will be authorized three hours per week of duty time for physical fitness condition. All other wildland firefighting personnel holding qualifications requiring ratings of moderate or arduous may be authorized, by their supervisor, up to three hours per week of duty time for fitness conditioning. Prior to any duty time being allowed for physical fitness conditioning, employees and supervisors must agree, in writing, what physical conditioning activities the employee will engage in, and when and where they will occur. Activities outside of the agreement will not be authorized or allowed. A combination of activities designed to increase both physical strength and aerobic fitness, while minimizing the possibility of physical injury, should be utilized.

**Training****Agency Administrator Training**

The qualification standards identified in the *Interagency Fire Program Management Qualification Standards* are required, in conjunction with specific

- 1 agency requirements, when filling vacant fire program positions, and as an aid in  
 2 developing Individual Development Plans (IDPs) for employees.
- 3 • Refuge Managers/Project Leaders with Service lands under their jurisdiction  
 4 which require the development and maintenance of a Fire Management Plan  
 5 must attend either the National Advanced Fire and Resource Institute  
 6 (NAFRI) or a locally sponsored Fire Management Leadership course, or  
 7 may, upon concurrence of the RFMC, attend the Agency Administrator  
 8 Workshop for Prescribed Fire course which is hosted by the National  
 9 Interagency Prescribed Fire Training Center (PFTC).
  - 10 • Field supervisors who may approve prescribed fire plans must attend the  
 11 NAFRI sponsored Fire Management Leadership Course (NFML) or upon  
 12 concurrence of the RFMC, must attend either the Agency Administrator  
 13 Workshop at PFTC or a Local Fire Management Leadership course (LFML).
  - 14 • Regional Chiefs, Regional Refuge Supervisors, and Refuge  
 15 Managers/Project Leaders must complete periodic refresher training as  
 16 determined by their supervisor in consultation with the RFMC. Refresher  
 17 training options may include attending fire management training/workshops,  
 18 trainee experiences, or mentoring.
  - 19 • Guidance for use of the agency qualification for Agency Administrators  
 20 (AADM) can be found in the FWS Fire Management Handbook.

21  
 22 **Fire Management Officer Training**

23 All Fire Management Officers (FMO) are required to attend the M-581,  
 24 Interagency Fire Program Management course, either as a student or as a  
 25 member of the instructor cadre. If attending as an instructor, the FMO must be  
 26 present for the entire course.

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 28 **FWS Firefighter General Training Requirements**

	One-Time Training	Annual Training	Recurring Training
<b>Agency permanent, career seasonal, &amp; temporary firefighters</b>	Hazardous Materials-First Responder Awareness Level	Blood Borne Pathogens (online – DOI Learn)	First Aid /CPR (every 2 years)
	B3: Combination Helicopter/Airplane Safety (Classroom/Online)	RT-130 Annual Fireline Safety Training	B3: Combination Helicopter/Airplane Safety Refresher (every 3 years)
	Hazardous Materials (see 242 FW 6 Table 6-4)	Hazardous Materials (see 242 FW 6 Table 6-4)	Defensive Driving (every 3 years)
<b>AD &amp; EFF</b>	<b>Required Training</b>		
	First Aid/CPR	Defensive driving (if operating GOV)	

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**1 Fish and Wildlife Service Specific Qualifications**

- 2 Guidance regarding agency-specific qualifications that are not contained in the  
3 PMS 310-1 can be found in the *Federal Qualifications Supplement to the PMS*  
4 *310-1*. For qualifications with agency standards which exceed minimums  
5 established in the PMS 310-1, refer to the FWS Fire Management Handbook.  
6