

## Chapter 10 Preparedness

### Preparedness

Fire preparedness is the state of being ready to provide an appropriate response to wildland fires based on identified objectives. Preparedness is the result of activities that are planned and implemented prior to fire ignitions. Preparedness requires identifying necessary firefighting capabilities and implementing coordinated programs to develop those capabilities. Preparedness requires a continuous process of developing and maintaining firefighting infrastructure, predicting fire activity, implementing prevention activities, identifying values to be protected, hiring, training, equipping, pre-positioning, and deploying firefighters and equipment, evaluating performance, correcting deficiencies, and improving operations. All preparedness activities should be focused on developing fire operations capabilities and on performing successful fire operations.

Preparedness actions are consistent with actions identified in Fire Management Plans and are based on operational plans including Preparedness Plans, Fire Danger Operating Plans (FDOPs), Preparedness Level Plans, Step-up Plans (also called Staffing Plans), and Initial Response Plans.

### Preparedness Plans

Preparedness plans provide management direction given identified levels of burning conditions, fire activity, and resource commitment. Outputs from the FDOP process are used to support decisions found in many components of preparedness plans, including staffing plans, step-up/staffing plans, prevention plans, preparedness levels, dispatch response plans, dispatch response levels, etc. Increasing fire danger and/or fire activity, as well as increased commitment of local, geographic area, and national resources suggests a corresponding change in preparedness actions. These actions will ensure a unit is as prepared as possible to react to new and emerging wildfire incidents.

Actions defined in the various components of preparedness plans must be based on and consistent with the unit's Fire Management Plan. Preparedness plans should include, but are not limited to:

- Initial Response Plan
- Staffing Plan (also known as Step-up Plan) with unit drawdown levels specified at each staffing level
- Fire Prevention Plan (as specified by agency requirements)
- An analysis and decision making process that defines the unit's protocols for publishing a wildfire decision (also called a Decision Support Plan)
- Fire Danger Operating Plan

- 1 • The identification of actions to be taken in response to increasing levels of  
2 fire severity and activity (preparedness level) at the unit level.

#### 4 **Fire Danger Operating Plan**

5  
6 FDOPs use information from decision support tools such as the National Fire  
7 Danger Rating System (NFDRS), the Canadian Forest Fire Danger Rating  
8 System (CFFDRS, used in interior Alaska), the Palmer Drought Index, live fuel  
9 moisture data, monthly or seasonal wildland fire outlooks, seasonal climate  
10 forecasts, and wildland fire risk analyses. FDOPs should be prepared by  
11 individuals trained at the Intermediate NFDRS (S-491) level, and preferably the  
12 Advanced NFDRS level.

13  
14 The FDOP guides the application of information from decision support tools  
15 (i.e. NFDRS, CFFDRS, etc.) at the local level. A FDOP documents the  
16 establishment and management of the local unit fire weather station network and  
17 describes how fire danger ratings are applied to local unit fire management  
18 decisions. FDOPs are generally prepared for local interagency areas; therefore,  
19 interagency involvement throughout the process is essential. Interagency  
20 FDOPs are an integral component of unit fire management plan(s). FDOPs may  
21 be packaged as a stand-alone document or as part of a larger planning effort  
22 (such as a fire management plan).

23  
24 All units will develop and maintain a Fire Danger Operating Plan. Fire Danger  
25 Operating Plans include, but are not limited to, the following components:

- 26 • **Roles and Responsibilities**  
27 Defined for those responsible for maintenance and daily implementation of  
28 the plan, program management related to the plan, and associated training.  
29 Training for development of fire danger rating areas is available through  
30 NWCG-sponsored NFDRS courses.
- 31 • **Fire Danger Rating Inventory**  
32 An inventory of the basic components of the operating plan will include a  
33 description of the dispatch response areas, protection units, administrative  
34 units, fire occurrence, land management objectives, standards, guidelines,  
35 etc. The fire danger rating inventory:  
36 ○ includes identification of fire/ignition issues specific to the area;  
37 ○ incorporates NFDRS fuel models, slope classes (topography, and  
38 weather/climatology into Fire Danger Rating Areas (FDRAs); and  
39 ○ validates the existing weather station network and identifies any  
40 additional weather stations that support fire danger rating needs.  
41 ○ validates that each Remote Automated Weather Station (RAWS)  
42 meets the requirements of the *Interagency Wildland Fire Weather*  
43 *Station Standards and Guidelines* (PMS 426-3);

44  
45

1 • **Operational Procedures**

2 This section establishes the procedures used to gather and process data in  
3 order to integrate fire danger rating information into decision processes.

4 The network of fire weather stations whose observations are used to  
5 determine fire danger ratings is identified. Station maintenance  
6 responsibilities and schedules are defined.

- 7 ○ NFDRS offers several choices of fuel model and output to the user.  
8 Distinct selections of fuel model and index/component are appropriate  
9 for different management decisions (such as internal readiness or  
10 industrial and public restrictions). The choice of NFDRS fuel model  
11 and index or component used to determine fire danger ratings to  
12 support particular decisions is explained in this section.
- 13 ○ NFDRS requires periodic management in order to produce appropriate  
14 results that are applied in a timely manner. Some daily observation  
15 variables (such as state of the weather) must be manually validated  
16 and published daily. This procedure is essential for the calculation of  
17 daily and forecasted NFDRS outputs in the Weather Information  
18 Management System (WIMS) and ensures weather data storage in the  
19 National Interagency Fire Management Integrated Database  
20 (NIFMID). These efforts are coordinated with the local National  
21 Weather Service fire weather meteorologists and Geographic Area  
22 Coordination Center (GACC) predictive services meteorologists to  
23 provide timely forecasted NFDRS outputs. Observed (today) and  
24 forecasted (tomorrow) NFDRS outputs are communicated daily. Live  
25 fuel moisture model inputs (such as herbaceous vegetation type/stage,  
26 season code, greenness factor) are adjusted seasonally in WIMS  
27 (<http://fam.nwcg.gov/fam-web/>) at appropriate times. Decision points  
28 are determined through analysis using FireFamily Plus and reviewed  
29 and adjusted annually or more often as appropriate in WIMS.

30 • **Climatic Breakpoints and Fire Business Thresholds**

31 Climatological breakpoints and fire business thresholds are established to  
32 provide NFDRS-based decision points for all appropriate management  
33 responses in a Fire Danger Rating Area (FDRA). Climatological  
34 breakpoints are points on the cumulative distribution of one fire  
35 weather/danger index computed from climatology without regard for  
36 associated fire occurrence/business. For example, the value of the 90th  
37 percentile ERC is the climatological breakpoint at which only 10 percent of  
38 the ERC values are greater in value. Climatological percentiles are used for  
39 budgetary decisions by federal agencies.

- 40 ○ BLM - 80th and 95th percentiles
- 41 ○ FWS/NPS/FS - 90th and 97th percentiles

42  
43 It is important to identify the period or range of data analysis used to determine  
44 the agency percentiles. The percentile values for 12 months of data will be  
45 different from the percentile values for the fire season. Year round data should

1 be used for percentiles for severity-related decisions, and percentiles based on  
2 fire season data should be used for staffing levels and adjective fire danger  
3 rating.

4  
5 It is equally important to recognize that these agency-specific climatological  
6 percentiles represent a method to describe a point during the year with respect to  
7 fire weather/danger indices computed from historical weather only.  
8 Climatological percentiles do not incorporate the correlation of fire occurrence  
9 data.

10  
11 Fire business thresholds are values of one or more fire weather/fire danger  
12 indices that have been statistically related to occurrence of fires (fire business).  
13 Generally, the threshold is a range of weather/fire danger values where fire  
14 activity has significantly increased or decreased. Assuming that a  
15 comprehensive FireFamilyPlus analysis of historical weather and fire occurrence  
16 data is completed, fire business thresholds are expected to more closely predict  
17 large and/or multiple fire activity than climatological breakpoints.

#### 18 19 **Staffing Level**

20 The Staffing Level is used to make daily internal fire operations decisions. The  
21 Staffing Level is the daily staffing of initial response resources, as opposed to  
22 the number of resources dispatched to an incident (see Initial Response Plan). A  
23 unit can operate with anywhere from 3 to 9 levels of staffing. Most units  
24 typically use 5 (1,2,3,4,5) or 6 (1,2,3L,3H,4,5) levels. Staffing Level is a direct  
25 output of the danger rating processor (WIMS) and is based on one of the  
26 following:

- 27 • NFDRS (Burning Index, Energy Release Component, Spread Component,  
28 or Ignition Component)
- 29 • Keetch-Byram Drought Index

30  
31 Staffing levels only consider fire danger, while Preparedness Levels incorporate  
32 additional items, such as number of fires, incident management teams assigned,  
33 and resources committed.

#### 34 35 **Adjective Fire Danger Rating**

36 Adjective Fire Danger Rating (low, moderate, high, very high, extreme) is based  
37 on the NFDRS index or component used to compute staffing level and the  
38 ignition component (the probability that a firebrand would cause a wildland  
39 fire). It is a general description of fire danger for the purpose of informing the  
40 public. Adjective ratings are computed automatically in the WIMS based on  
41 NFDRS parameters provided by local fire managers.

42  
43 Climatological breakpoints and fire business thresholds are developed with  
44 NFDRS software, such as FireFamilyPlus, and are applied in the NFDRS  
45 processor, (WIMS), to determine daily staffing levels and adjective ratings.

**1 Preparedness Level Plans**

2

3 Preparedness Level Plans are required at the national, state/regional, and local  
4 levels. These plans address the five Preparedness Levels (1-5) and provide  
5 management direction based on identified levels of burning conditions, fire  
6 activity, and resource commitment/availability. Preparedness Level Plans may  
7 be developed by a state/regional office for agency-specific use.

8

9 Refer to the *National Interagency Mobilization Guide* and GACC Mobilization  
10 Guides for more information on Preparedness Level Plans.

11

**12 Step-up Plans**

13

14 Step-up Plans, (also called Staffing Plans), are designed to direct incremental  
15 preparedness actions in response to increasing fire danger. Each Step-up Plan  
16 should address the unit's chosen number of Staffing Levels, and the  
17 corresponding planned actions that are intended to mitigate those changing fire  
18 danger conditions. The Step-up Plan should be based on analysis completed as  
19 part of the unit's FDOP, and should be included as part of the FDOP.

20

21 The Step-up Plan describes escalating responses that are pre-approved in the  
22 FDOP and fire management plan. A Step-up Plan should also include  
23 supplemental preparedness actions. Supplemental preparedness actions are  
24 designed to enhance the unit's fire management capability during short periods  
25 (one burning period, Fourth of July, or other pre-identified events) where normal  
26 staffing cannot meet initial attack, prevention, or detection needs.

27

28 The difference between step-up and severity is that step-up actions are  
29 established in the unit FDOP and/or fire management plan and implemented by  
30 the unit when those pre-identified conditions are experienced. Severity is a  
31 longer duration condition that cannot be adequately dealt with under normal  
32 staffing, such as a killing frost converting live fuel to dead fuel or drought  
33 conditions. Severity is discussed later in this chapter.

34

35 Supplemental preparedness actions identified in the fire management plan or  
36 FDOP should include, but are not limited to, the following items:

- 37 ● Management direction and considerations;
- 38 ● Fire prevention actions, including closures/restrictions, media messages,  
39 signing, and patrolling;
- 40 ● Prepositioning suppression resources;
- 41 ● Cooperator discussion and/or involvement;
- 42 ● Safety considerations: safety message, safety officer;
- 43 ● Augmentation of suppression forces;

- 1 • Support function: consideration given to expanded dispatch activation,  
2 initial attack dispatch staffing, and other support needs (procurement,  
3 supply, ground support, and communication);
- 4 • Support staff availability outside of fire organization;
- 5 • Communication of Fire Weather Watch and Red Flag Warning conditions;
- 6 • Fire danger/behavior assessment;
- 7 • Briefings for management and fire suppression personnel;
- 8 • Fire information - internal and external;
- 9 • Multi-agency coordination groups/area command activation;
- 10 • Prescribed fire direction and considerations; and
- 11 • Increased detection activities.

12

### 13 **Initial Response Plans**

14

15 Initial response plans, also referred to as run cards or preplanned response plans,  
16 specify the fire management response (e.g. number and type of suppression  
17 assets to dispatch) within a defined geographic area to an unplanned ignition,  
18 based on fire weather, fuel conditions, fire management objectives, and resource  
19 availability.

20

21 Fire Management Officers will ensure that initial response plans (e.g. run cards,  
22 preplanned response) are in place and provide for initial response commensurate  
23 with guidance provided in the Fire Management Plan and Land/Resource  
24 Management Plan. Initial response plans will reflect agreements and annual  
25 operating plans, and will be reviewed annually prior to fire season. Initial  
26 response plans may be modified as needed during fire season to reflect the  
27 availability of national, repositioned, and/or severity resources.

28

### 29 **Fire Danger PocketCard for Firefighter Safety**

30

31 Fire Danger PocketCards provide, through a graphical interpretation of daily fire  
32 danger, a means for firefighters to understand the fire potential for a given local  
33 area during any day of the fire season. Interagency PocketCards are encouraged  
34 in areas where multiple agencies share fire suppression responsibilities. Fire  
35 Danger PocketCards must adhere to the NWCG standard located at:  
36 <http://fam.nwcg.gov/fam-web/pocketcards/default.htm>

37

38 PocketCards can be updated as frequently as needed by downloading the  
39 additional weather observations, amending the Fire Family Plus database, and  
40 running new cards. PocketCards based on stations with a dataset of 10 years or  
41 less should be updated annually, while cards with more data (10 years or more)  
42 should be updated every other year.

43

- 1 Compliance with the standard, including quality, currency, and application of  
2 the PocketCard, is the responsibility of the local fire management unit.
- 3 • **BLM-** *BLM units will maintain Fire Danger PocketCards and ensure they*  
4 *are available to all personnel.*
  - 5 • **FS-** *Obtain Regional certification for Fire Danger PocketCards. Distribute*  
6 *PocketCards to each fireline supervisor on Type 3, 4, and 5 wildfires.*  
7 *Update and post the cards per the NWCG standard published on the*  
8 *website referenced above. Units have the option to do more frequent*  
9 *updates if they choose to do so.*

10

## 11 **National Predictive Services Fire Potential Outlooks and Advisories**

12

### 13 **National Wildland Significant Fire Potential Outlook**

14 The National Wildland Significant Fire Potential Outlook is prepared and  
15 distributed by NICC on the first day of each month. The report consists of  
16 outlooks for the next four months, divided into one month plus one month plus  
17 two month periods. Maps for each period display areas of below normal,  
18 normal, and above normal significant fire potential. The second (one month)  
19 and third (two months) periods will also show trends of increasing/decreasing to  
20 and from above and below normal. A brief synopsis of the current and predicted  
21 national situation is included in the report. National Wildland Significant Fire  
22 Potential Outlooks utilize information from individual GACC Predictive  
23 Services units, as well as other sources of climate, weather and fire danger data.  
24 The outlook will be posted on the first day of each month to the NICC  
25 Predictive Services webpage.

26

### 27 **7-Day Significant Fire Potential Outlook**

28 The 7-day Significant Fire Potential Outlook provides a week-long projection of  
29 fuels dryness, weather, fire potential, and firefighting resources information. It  
30 is issued daily when a Geographic Area is at Preparedness Level 2 or higher (not  
31 including support-only periods). Each Geographic Area's Predictive Services  
32 unit will determine whether to produce a morning or afternoon routine issuance.  
33 Issuance times for each Area's outlook can be found in the Geographic Area  
34 Mobilization Guide and/or in its National Weather Service/Predictive Services  
35 Annual Operating Plan.

36

37 All the Geographic Area outlooks are viewable from  
38 <http://psgeodata.fs.fed.us/7day/>. The outlooks produced by the 11 Geographic  
39 Area Predictive Services units are consolidated into a National 7-day Significant  
40 Fire Potential map located at: <http://psgeodata.fs.fed.us/staticmap.html>.

41

### 42 **Fuel and Fire Behavior Advisories**

43 Predictive Services and Coordination staff at all levels should be involved with  
44 the issuance of any fuels/fire behavior advisories covering a large percentage of

1 their Geographic Area(s) so that they can carefully consider both the content  
2 and intended audience of the messages.

3

#### 4 **Local Unit Seasonal Tracking**

5

6 As identified in the FMP and/or FDOP, each unit may select, and compare to  
7 normal, the current value and seasonal trend of one or more of the following  
8 indicators which are most useful in predicting fire season severity and duration  
9 in its area. FireFamilyPlus (FFP) is the recommended software to produce these  
10 products:

11

- 12 • NFDRS (or CFFDRS) index values (ERC, BI);
- 13 • Palmer Drought or Keetch-Byram Drought Index;
- 14 • 1000-hour fuel moisture , 100-hour fuel moisture;
- 15 • Live fuel moisture , Growing Season Index;

16

17 The seasonal trend of each selected indicator is graphically compared to normal  
18 and all-time worst. This comparison is updated regularly and posted in dispatch  
19 and crew areas. The mechanism for comparing and displaying these items  
20 should be the PocketCard (strongly recommended) and FFP graphs, which have  
21 been developed and used at the local unit to inform and educate firefighters on  
22 local conditions. PocketCards and FFP graphs should use the same index and  
23 fuel model to display information so that the two can be easily compared.

24

25 Local seasonal trends or assessments maybe compiled at the state/regional level  
26 to assist GACC predictive services and augment their assessments. Assessments  
27 should be reviewed periodically throughout the fire season and revised when  
28 significant changes in key indicators occur.

29

#### 30 **Management Actions for Noncompliant Remote Automated Weather** 31 **Stations (RAWS)**

32

##### 33 **Noncompliance report**

34 A weekly report from Wildland Fire Management Information (WFMI) weather  
35 module displays Remote Automated Weather Stations (RAWS) that are more  
36 than 1 year and 45 days past their annual maintenance date. Fire weather  
37 stations are to be maintained annually per Interagency Wildland Fire Weather  
38 Station Standards & Guidelines (PMS 426-3). The report is widely distributed  
39 by email and available at <http://raws.fam.nwcg.gov/nfdrs.html>. If a RAWS is on  
40 the report, it has either not had annual maintenance, or the documentation for  
41 annual maintenance has not been completed in WFMI. Data from these RAWS  
42 should not be used or used with caution.

43

44

45

## 1 **Portable RAWS**

2 Fire managers should ensure that locally held portable RAWS are maintained  
3 prior to use; non-maintained portable RAWS will not be activated for data  
4 processing through WFMI weather.

5

- 6 • *BLM- Refer to Chapter 2 for more guidance.*

7

## 8 **Fire Severity Funding**

9

10 Fire severity funding is the authorized use of suppression operations funds  
11 (normally used exclusively for suppression operations and distinct from  
12 preparedness funds) for extraordinary preparedness activities that are required  
13 due to:

- 14 • Preparedness plans (Fire Management Plan, Fire Danger Operating Plan,  
15 annual operating plan, etc.) indicate the need for additional  
16 preparedness/suppression resources. The plan(s) should identify thresholds  
17 for severity needs.
- 18 • Anticipated fire activity will exceed the capabilities of local resources.
- 19 • Fire seasons that either start earlier or last longer than planned in the fire  
20 management plan.
- 21 • An abnormal increase in fire potential or danger not planned for in existing  
22 preparedness plans.

23

24 The objective of fire severity funding is to mitigate losses due to extraordinary  
25 conditions by supplementing suppression response capability and provide for  
26 increased wildfire prevention activities.

27

28 When resources acquired through the approved fire planning process (e.g.  
29 NFMAS, IIAA, FPA) are insufficient to meet the extraordinary need, additional  
30 resources may be requested through the severity funding process.

31

32 Fire severity funding is not intended to:

- 33 • raise preparedness funding levels to cover differences that may exist  
34 between funds actually appropriated and those identified in the fire planning  
35 process, or
- 36 • mitigate threats to Threatened and Endangered Species habitat,  
37 wildland/urban interface, or other values identified in Land Use/Resource  
38 Management Plans.

39

## 40 **Typical Uses**

41 Severity funds are typically used to:

- 42 • Increase prevention activities;
- 43 • Temporarily increase firefighting staffing;
- 44 • Pay for standby;

- 1 • Preposition initial attack suppression forces;
- 2 • Provide additional aerial reconnaissance; and
- 3 • Provide for standby aircraft availability.

4

#### 5 **Authorization**

6 Authorization to use severity funding is provided in writing based on a written  
7 request with supporting documentation. Authorization is on a line item basis  
8 and comes with a severity cost code. Agencies will follow their administrative  
9 procedures for issuing severity cost codes. Authorization is provided for a  
10 maximum of 30 days per request; however, regardless of the length of the  
11 authorization, use of severity funding must be terminated when abnormal  
12 conditions no longer exist. If the fire severity situation extends beyond the 30-  
13 day authorization, the State/Region must prepare a new severity request.

14

#### 15 **State/Regional Level Severity Funding**

16 Each fiscal year the national office will provide each state/region with funding  
17 and a severity cost code for state/regional short-term severity needs (e.g. wind  
18 events, cold dry front passage, lightning events, and unexpected events such as  
19 off road rallies) that are expected to last less than one week. Expenditure of  
20 these funds is authorized by the state/regional directors at the written request of  
21 the Agency Administrator. State/regional directors are responsible and  
22 accountable for ensuring that these funds are used only to meet severity funding  
23 objectives and that amounts are not exceeded. The national office will notify the  
24 state/regional director, state/regional budget officer, and the state/regional FMO  
25 when the severity cost code is provided.

- 26 • **BLM**- Refer to Chapter 2 and the *BLM Fire Operations Website* for  
27 *additional short-term severity guidance.*
- 28 • **FWS** –Refer to the *Fire Management Handbook Chapter 10* for *additional*  
29 *short-term severity guidance.*
- 30 • **NPS** - Parks have the authority to approve “Step-up” actions only, as  
31 *defined in their fire management plan. Regional offices approve severity*  
32 *(long term - up to 30 days) for parks up to \$100,000 per severity event.*
- 33 • **FS** - Severity funding direction is found in *FSM 5190.*

34

#### 35 **National Level Severity Funding**

36 National Agency Fire Directors or their delegates are authorized to allocate fire  
37 severity funding under specific conditions stated or referenced in this chapter.  
38 Expenditure of these funds is authorized by the appropriate approving official at  
39 the written request of the state/regional director. Approved severity funding will  
40 be used only for the preparedness activities and timeframes specifically outlined  
41 in the authorization, and only for the objectives stated above.

- 42 • **BLM**- Refer to Chapter 2 and the *BLM Fire Operations Website* for  
43 *additional national severity guidance.*
- 44 • **NPS**- National office approves all requests over \$100,000.

- 1 • *FWS- Additional information may be found on the FWS Sharepoint site.*  
2

### 3 **Appropriate Severity Funding Charges**

4

#### 5 **Labor**

6 Appropriate labor charges include:

- 7 • Regular pay for non-fire personnel;  
8 • Regular pay for seasonal/temporary fire personnel outside their normal fire  
9 funded activation period;  
10 • Overtime pay for all fire and non-fire personnel;

11

12 Severity funded personnel and resources must be available for immediate initial  
13 attack regardless of the daily task assignment. Severity funded personnel and  
14 resources will not use a severity cost code while assigned to wildfires. The  
15 wildfire firecode number will be used.

16

#### 17 **Vehicles and Equipment**

18 This includes:

- 19 • GSA lease rate and mileage;  
20 • Hourly rate or mileage for Agency owned vehicles; and  
21 • Commercial rentals and contracts.

22

#### 23 **Aviation**

24 This includes:

- 25 • Contract extensions;  
26 • The daily minimum for call when needed (CWN) aircraft;  
27 • Preposition flight time; and  
28 • Support expenses necessary for severity funded aircraft (facility rentals,  
29 utilities, telephones, etc.).

30

#### 31 **Travel and Per Diem**

32 Severity funded personnel in travel status are fully subsisted by the government  
33 in accordance with their agency regulations. Costs covered include:

- 34 • Lodging;  
35 • Government provided meals (in lieu of per diem);  
36 • Airfare (including returning to their home base);  
37 • Privately owned vehicle mileage (with prior approval); and  
38 • Other miscellaneous travel and per diem expenses associated with the  
39 assignment.

40

#### 41 **Prevention Activities**

42 These include:

- 43 • Funding Prevention Teams (Preventions teams will be mobilized as  
44 referenced in the *National Mobilization Guide*, Chapter 20)

- 1 • Implementing local prevention campaigns, to include community risk
- 2 assessments, mitigation planning, enforcement, outreach, and education
- 3 • Augmenting patrols
- 4 • Note: Non-fire funded prevention team members should charge base 8 and
- 5 overtime to the severity cost code for the length of the prevention activities
- 6 assignment. Fire funded personnel should charge overtime only to the
- 7 severity cost code for the length of the prevention activities assignment.

8

### 9 **Inappropriate Fire Severity Funding Charges**

- 10 • To cover differences that may exist between funds actually appropriated
- 11 (including rescissions) and those identified in the fire planning process
- 12 • Administrative surcharges, indirect costs, fringe benefits
- 13 • Equipment purchases
- 14 • Purchase, maintenance, repair, or upgrade of vehicles
- 15 ○ *FWS/NPS- Severity-related repair and maintenance of FWS and NPS*
- 16 *vehicles and equipment may be funded by severity because FWS and*
- 17 *NPS do not have a use rate covering these charges. These charges*
- 18 *must be approved by the National Office.*
- 19 • Purchase of radios
- 20 • Purchase of telephones
- 21 • Purchase of pumps, saws, and similar suppression equipment
- 22 • Aircraft availability during contract period
- 23 • Cache supplies which are normally available in fire caches
- 24 • Fixed ownership rate vehicle costs
- 25 • Incident Only Emergency Equipment Rental Agreements (EERAs) may not
- 26 be used for severity activities or hazardous fuels projects. Equipment that
- 27 has been solicited under competitive pre-season I-BPAs may be used on
- 28 nationwide fire suppression, all-hazard incidents, and severity activities.
- 29 Long term rehabilitation projects require a separate solicitation for
- 30 equipment.

31

### 32 **Interagency Requests**

33 Agencies working cooperatively in the same geographic area must work  
34 together to generate and submit joint requests, to minimize duplication of  
35 required resources, reduce interagency costs, and to utilize severity funded  
36 resources in an interagency manner. However, each agency should request  
37 funds only for its own agency specific needs. The joint request should be routed  
38 simultaneously through each agency's approval system, and the respective  
39 approving official will issue an authorization that specifies allocations by  
40 agency.

41

### 42 **Requesting Fire Severity Funding**

43 Each agency has established severity funding request protocols. The completed  
44 and signed request is submitted from the state/regional director to the

- 1 appropriate approving official as per the sequence of action outlined below.
- 2 Authorizations will be returned in writing.
- 3 Severity funding request information for all agencies can be found at
- 4 [http://www.nifc.gov/policies/pol\\_severity\\_funding.html](http://www.nifc.gov/policies/pol_severity_funding.html)

5

6 **Sequence of Action and Responsible Parties for Severity Funding Requests**

Action	Responsible Party
Identify and develop severity funding request.	Unit FMO
Review, modify, and approve (or reject) request. Forward to state/regional office.	Unit Agency Administrator
Review, modify, and approve (or reject) unit request. Add state/regional needs and consolidate. Forward to state/regional director for approval within 48 hours.	State/Regional FMO
Review, modify, and approve (or reject) request. Forward to the appropriate National Fire Director/approving official within 48 hours. Notify the fire budget staff.	State/Regional Director
Review, modify, and approve (or reject) the request within 48 hours. Issue written authorization with a severity cost code.	Appropriate National Fire Director/Approving Official
Establish severity cost code in the appropriate finance system within 24 hours.	Applicable National Finance System
Notify unit office(s) and state/regional budget lead upon receipt of authorization.	State/Regional FMO
Execute severity cost code. Ensure that project expenditures are only used for authorized purposes.	Unit Office
Maintain severity files, including requests, authorizations, and summary of expenditures and activities.	Unit/State/Regional/ National Offices

7

8 **Labor Cost Coding For Severity Funded Personnel**

- 9 Fire preparedness personnel outside their normal activation period, employees
- 10 whose regular salary is not fire funded, and Administratively Determined (AD)
- 11 employees hired under an approved severity request should charge regular time
- 12 and approved non-fire overtime to the severity suppression operations
- 13 subactivity and the requesting office’s severity cost code.

14

- 15 Fire preparedness personnel should charge their regular planned salary (base-
- 16 eight) to their budgeted subactivity using their home unit’s location code.
- 17 Overtime associated with the severity request should be charged to the severity
- 18 suppression operations subactivity and the requesting office’s severity cost code.

19

- 20 Regular hours worked in suppression operations will require the use of the
- 21 appropriate fire subactivity with the appropriate firecode number. Overtime in
- 22 fire suppression operations will be charged to the suppression operations
- 23 subactivity with the appropriate firecode number.

24

1 Employees from non-federal agencies should charge their time in accordance  
2 with the approved severity request and the appropriate local and statewide  
3 agreements. An interagency agreement for reimbursement must be established.  
4 The Interagency Agreement for Fire Management can be used as a template.

5

#### 6 **Documentation**

7 The state/regional and national office will document and file accurate records of  
8 severity funding activity. This will include complete severity funding requests,  
9 written authorizations, and expenditure records.

10

#### 11 **Severity Funding Reviews**

12 State/regional and national offices should ensure appropriate usage of severity  
13 funding and expenditures. This may be done as part of their normal agency fire  
14 program review cycle.

15

### 16 **Fire Prevention/Mitigation**

17

#### 18 **Wildland Fire Cause Determination & Fire Trespass**

19 Refer to Chapter 18 for guidance.

20

#### 21 **Wildland Fire Mitigation and Prevention**

22 Fire programs are required to fund and implement unit level Fire Prevention  
23 Plans by completing a wildland mitigation/prevention assessment. The purpose  
24 of this is to reduce unwanted human caused ignitions, to reduce damages and  
25 losses caused by unwanted wildland fires, to reduce unnecessary risk to  
26 firefighters, and to reduce the suppression costs of wildland fires. As weather  
27 and fuel conditions move from average to above average or severe, and/or  
28 human activity increases, mitigation and prevention activities must be  
29 strengthened to maintain effectiveness.

30

31 Prevention includes education (sign posting plans, school programs, radio and  
32 news releases, recreation contacts, local business contacts, exhibits), industrial  
33 program monitoring (timber, mining, power line maintenance operations),  
34 reconnaissance patrols, and other activities to prevent the occurrence of  
35 unwanted human caused fires.

- 36 • **BLM**-Refer to the *BLM Wildland Fire Prevention, Education and*  
37 *Mitigation Planning Guide* available at:  
38 [http://www.blm.gov/nifc/st/en/prog/fire/fuelsmgmt/fire\\_prevention\\_and.html](http://www.blm.gov/nifc/st/en/prog/fire/fuelsmgmt/fire_prevention_and.html)
- 39 • **NPS**- Only units that experience more than an average of 26 human caused  
40 fires per ten-year period are required to develop a fire prevention plan.
- 41 • **FS** -Refer to *FSM 5110 and 5300*.

42

43

44

45

**1 Professional Liability Insurance**

2

3 Public Law 110-161 provides for reimbursement for up to one half of the cost  
4 incurred for professional liability insurance (including any administrative  
5 processing cost charged by the insurance company) for temporary fire line  
6 managers, management officials, and law enforcement officers.

7

8 To qualify for reimbursement, “temporary fire line managers” must meet one of  
9 the following three criteria:

- 10 ● Provide temporary supervision or management of personnel engaged in  
11 wildland fire activities;
- 12 ● Provide analysis or information that affects a supervisor’s or manager’s  
13 decision about a wildland fire;
- 14 ● Direct the deployment of equipment for a wildland fire, such as a base camp  
15 manager, an equipment manager, a helicopter coordinator, or an initial  
16 attack dispatcher.
  - 17 ○ *DOI* – see *Personnel Bulletin No. 08-07, March 20, 2008*
  - 18 ○ *FS* – refer to <http://fsweb.asc.fs.fed.us/HRM/benefits/PLI.php>