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Additional MAFFS-equipped aircraft mobilized to assist with wildfires

Boise, Idaho, July 6, 2021 – The USDA Forest Service has activated an additional military C-130 aircraft equipped with Modular Airborne Firefighting Systems (MAFFS) to join two others battling western wildfires. The aircraft is from the Nevada Air National Guard's 152nd Airlift Wing. The three MAFFS-equipped aircraft are operating out of McClellan Airbase in Sacramento and assisting the USDA Forest Service and other wildland fire agencies with aerial fire suppression.

Having military C-130s that can be converted into airtankers provides a critical "surge" capability that can be used to bolster wildfire suppression efforts when commercial airtankers are fully committed or not readily available. The initial activation of MAFFS-equipped military aircraft on June 25 was a month earlier than in 2020 and the earliest activation of MAFFS-equipped aircraft in a decade.

The C-130 aircraft are equipped with the U.S. Forest Service's MAFFS, which can drop up to 3,000 gallons of fire retardant in less than 10 seconds across a quarter-mile line. The system slides into the back of the military aircraft, and retardant is released through a nozzle on the rear left side. In addition to the 152nd Airlift Wing, MAFFS program aircraft are from the California Air National Guard's 146th Airlift Wing, Air Force Reserve Command's 302nd Airlift Wing, Peterson AFB, Colorado and the Air National Guard's 153rd Airlift Wing, Cheyenne, Wyoming.

The National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) is the nation's support center for wildland firefighting. Eight different agencies and organizations are part of NIFC including, the Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, National Weather Service, U.S. Fire Administration, and the National Association of State Foresters.

For more information on Modular Airborne Firefighting Systems, visit: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/fire/planes/maffs>.

For background photos and videos of the MAFFS program, visit: www.dvidshub.net/feature/MAFFSAEG.

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