

## Chapter 8

### Interagency Coordination and Cooperation

#### Introduction

Fire management planning, preparedness, prevention, suppression, restoration and rehabilitation, monitoring, research, and education will be conducted on an interagency basis with the involvement of cooperators and partners. The same capabilities used in wildland fire management will also be used, when appropriate and authorized, on non-fire incidents in the United States, and on both wildland fires and non-fire incidents internationally.

#### National Wildland Fire Management Structure

##### Wildland Fire Leadership Council

The Wildland Fire Leadership Council (WFLC) is a cooperative, interagency body dedicated to achieving consistent implementation of the goals, actions, and policies in the National Fire Plan and the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy. WFLC provides a forum for high-level dialogues between Federal and non-Federal entities to set strategic direction for national fire management.

The Council consists of the Department of Agriculture's Undersecretary for Natural Resources and Environment, the Deputy Undersecretary for Natural Resources and Environment, and the Chief of the U.S. Forest Service; the Department of the Interior's (DOI) Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget, the Directors of the National Park Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Geological Survey; the Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Fire Administration Administrator; the president of the intertribal timber council; two State governors selected from the National Governors Association; a county commissioner serving as a member of the National Association of Counties; a mayor serving as a member of the National League of Cities; a State forester serving at the request of a senior State-elected official; and a fire chief serving at the request of a senior local government-elected official.

The Council is coordinated by the Department of Agriculture's Deputy Undersecretary for Natural Resources and Environment and DOI's Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget.

##### Federal Fire Policy Council

The Federal Fire Policy Council (FFPC) provides a common national Federal agency approach to wildland fire management. The FFPC ensures that wildland fire management policies, programs, activities, and budgets are coordinated and consistent among and between the member agencies and strives for coordinated and consistent policies and programs with non-Federal partner and cooperator agencies. The FFPC sets strategic policy and program direction, provides coordinated recommendations to the Secretaries of Agriculture, the Interior, and Homeland Security and resolves inconsistencies among and between Federal wildland fire programs.

1 The FFPC is accountable and has the authority to:

- 2 • Set the vision and provide leadership for the Federal wildland fire program.
- 3 • Set national Federal strategic wildland fire program goals and priorities.
- 4 • Establish the Fire Executive Council (FEC).

5 The FFPC is responsible to:

- 6 • Provide coordinated Federal wildland fire management policy direction.
- 7 • Resolve policy and program management inconsistencies.
- 8 • Set strategic budget priorities for wildland fire management.
- 9 • Coordinate and communicate with non-Federal entities.

10 The FFPC is composed of the USDA Deputy Under Secretary for National  
11 Resources and Environment; the Chief of the Forest Service and the Deputy  
12 Chief of State and Private Forestry; and for DOI the Assistant Secretaries for  
13 Policy, Management and Budget, Fish and Wildlife and Parks, Indian Affairs,  
14 Land and Minerals Management, and Water and Science; the bureau directors of  
15 the Bureau of Land Management, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the National  
16 Park Service, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the US Geological Survey; the  
17 Deputy Assistant Secretary – Law Enforcement, Security and Emergency  
18 Management; the Assistant Administrator of DHS-US Fire Administration; and  
19 the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) representative.

#### 20 **Fire Executive Council (FEC)**

21 The Fire Executive Council (FEC) provides a common, integrated, and  
22 coordinated Federal agency approach to wildland fire policy, leadership, budget,  
23 and program oversight. Within the broad strategic direction and vision set by the  
24 FFPC, the FEC ensures that the wildland fire management policies, programs,  
25 activities, and budgets are coordinated and consistent among and between the  
26 member agencies. FEC sets policy and program direction for Federal wildland  
27 fire program implementation, provides coordinated recommendations to the  
28 FFPC, and resolves inconsistencies among and between Federal wildland fire  
29 programs. FEC ensures policy and program coordination and integration with  
30 non-fire management programs and activities as well as non-Federal partners  
31 and cooperators.

32 The FEC is accountable and has the authority to:

- 33 • Establish strategic Federal fire program budget direction and priorities.
- 34 • Ensure coordinated Federal policy development.
- 35 • Develop Federal business requirements and priorities.

36 The FEC is responsible and has the authority to:

- 37 • Provide coordinated Federal interagency executive level wildland fire  
38 policy leadership, direction, and program oversight.
- 39 • Provide coordinated recommendations and advice to the FFPC.
- 40 • Provide wildland fire policy and program direction to the Fire Management  
41 Board (FMB).

- 1 • Provide strategic policy and program integration with resource
- 2 management, aviation, and other related program areas.
- 3 • Coordinate and communicate with other non-Federal entities.
- 4 • Set strategic budget direction and recommendations.
- 5 • Establish strategic direction and requirements for wildland fire information
- 6 and technology, wildland fire administrative/business support, scientific and
- 7 research support, and other program areas.
- 8 • Approve wildland fire policy, as appropriate.
- 9 • Resolve policy and program management inconsistencies and differences.
- 10 • Oversee compliance with policy, budget, and program direction.
- 11 • Charter the FMB.
- 12 • Charter the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) along with the
- 13 Intertribal Timber Council, and the National Association of State Foresters.

14 The FEC is composed of the Director and deputy directors, USFS Fire and  
15 Aviation Management (USDA); the Director, OWF; Director, Office of  
16 Aviation Services; fire executives from BLM, NPS, BIA, and FWS (DOI); and  
17 the US Fire Administration Chief, Emergency Support Branch, National Fire  
18 Programs (USDHS-FEMA).

#### 19 **Fire Management Board**

20 The Fire Management Board (FMB) provides a mechanism for coordinated and  
21 integrated Federal wildland fire program management and implementation. The  
22 FMB, taking strategic policy and program direction from the FEC, directs,  
23 coordinates, and oversees the development and implementation of Federal  
24 wildland fire policy and programs to provide consistent and cost-effective  
25 program management.

26 The FMB is accountable and has the authority to:

- 27 • Coordinate Federal program management and oversight.

28 The FMB is responsible for and has the authority to:

- 29 • Provide common, integrated implementation strategies, approaches,
- 30 programs, and oversight for implementing Federal wildland fire policies.
- 31 • Provide Federal wildland fire program strategy, policy, budget, and
- 32 program recommendations to the FEC.
- 33 • Provide recommendations on information and technology requirements,
- 34 priorities, and investments to the Wildland Fire Information and
- 35 Technology Executive Board.
- 36 • Provide recommendations on science and research requirements and
- 37 priorities necessary to support wildland fire program management activities.
- 38 • Identify requirements and recommend priorities for standards necessary to
- 39 ensure interoperability of intergovernmental wildland fire activities and
- 40 operations.
- 41 • Consult with our non-Federal partners.
- 42 • Develop recommendations for interagency wildland fire
- 43 administrative/business support needs.

1 The FMB is composed of the USFS Fire and Aviation Management Assistant  
2 Directors (USDA); the Deputy Director, Office of Wildland Fire (OWF); the  
3 Deputy Director, Office of Aviation Services; the fire directors for BIA, BLM,  
4 FWS, and NPS (DOI); and the Wildfire Program Manager, US Fire  
5 Administration (USDHS-FEMA).

#### 6 **National Wildfire Coordinating Group**

7 The National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) is made up of the USFS,  
8 BIA, BLM, FWS, and NPS; Intertribal Timber Council; U.S. Fire  
9 Administration (USFA); State forestry agencies through the National  
10 Association of State Foresters (NASF); and the International Association of Fire  
11 Chiefs. The mission of the NWCG is to provide leadership in establishing,  
12 maintaining, and communicating consistent interagency standards, guidelines,  
13 and qualifications for wildland fire management. Its goal is to provide more  
14 effective execution of each agency's fire management program. The group  
15 provides a formalized system to agree upon standards of training, equipment,  
16 qualifications, and other operational functions.

#### 17 **Interior Fire Executive Council**

18 The Interior Fire Executive Council (IFEC) provides interagency coordination  
19 and interagency executive-level wildland fire policy leadership, direction, and  
20 program oversight. IFEC is the focal point for discussing wildland fire policy  
21 issues that affect the DOI and provides a forum for gathering the interests of the  
22 DOI bureaus to formulate a DOI recommendation and/or position.

23 The IFEC is composed of the Director, Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) and the  
24 four DOI fire directors and their respective senior executives, as well as the  
25 Director, Aviation Management Directorate, and a representative from United  
26 States Geological Survey (USGS).

#### 27 **Office of Wildland Fire**

28 The Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) is a DOI organization responsible for  
29 managing and overseeing all wildland fire management activities executed by  
30 the bureaus. OWF coordinates the DOI's wildland fire programs and with other  
31 Federal and non-Federal partners, to establish legally and scientifically based  
32 department-wide policies and budgets, and to provide strategic leadership and  
33 oversight, that result in safe, comprehensive, cohesive, efficient, and effective  
34 wildland fire programs for the nation consistent with the bureaus' statutory  
35 authorities and constraints.

36 Information about the OWF and the Federal wildland fire management  
37 organization can be found at <https://www.doi.gov/wildlandfire>.

#### 38 **Multi-Agency Management and Coordination**

##### 39 **National Multi-agency Coordinating Group**

40 National multi-agency coordination is overseen by the National Multi-agency  
41 Coordinating Group (NMAC), which consists of one representative each from  
42 the BLM, FWS, NPS, BIA, FS, NASF, and the USFA, who have been delegated

- 1 authority by their respective agency directors to manage wildland fire operations  
2 on a national scale when fire management resource shortages are probable. The  
3 delegated authorities include:
- 4 • Provide oversight of general business practices between NMAC and  
5 geographic area multi-agency coordination groups (GMAC).
  - 6 • Establish priorities among geographic areas.
  - 7 • Activate and maintain a ready reserve of national resources for assignment  
8 directly by NMAC as needed.
  - 9 • Implement decisions of the NMAC.

10 The NMAC Operating Plan, NMAC correspondence, and other resources and  
11 references are at <https://www.nifc.gov/nicc/administrative/nmac/index.html>.

#### 12 **Geographic Area Multi-Agency Coordinating Groups**

13 Geographic area multi-agency coordination is overseen by geographic area  
14 (state, region) lead administrators or fire managers from agencies that have  
15 jurisdictional or support responsibilities, or that may be significantly impacted  
16 by resource commitments. GMAC responsibilities include:

- 17 • Establish priorities for the geographic area.
- 18 • Acquire, allocate, and reallocate resources.
- 19 • Provide NMAC with National Ready Reserve (NRR) resources as required.
- 20 • Issue coordinated and collective situation status reports.

#### 21 ***NWCG Standards for Interagency Incident Business Management***

22 All Federal agencies have adopted the *NWCG Standards for Interagency*  
23 *Incident Business Management* as the official guide to provide execution of each  
24 agency's incident business management program. Unit offices, geographic  
25 areas, or NWCG may issue supplements as long as policy or conceptual data is  
26 not changed.

27 Since consistent application of interagency policies and guidelines is essential,  
28 procedures in the *NWCG Standards for Interagency Incident Business*  
29 *Management* will be followed. Agency manuals provide a bridge between  
30 manual sections and the *NWCG Standards for Interagency Incident Business*  
31 *Management* so that continuity of agency manual systems is maintained and all  
32 additions, changes, and supplements are filed in a uniform manner.

- 33 • **DOI** – *The Department of the Interior All Hazards-Supplement to the*  
34 *NWCG Standards for Interagency Incident Business Management*  
35 *establishes business management guidelines for the DOI's all-hazards*  
36 *incidents. The DOI Supplement is under revision.*
- 37 • **BLM** – *The NWCG Standards for Interagency Incident Business*  
38 *Management replaces BLM Manual Section 1111.*
- 39 • **NPS** – *Refer to RM-18.*
- 40 • **FWS** – *Refer to Service Manual 621 FW 1, Wildland Fire Management.*
- 41 • **FS** – *Refer to FSH 5109.34.*

## Standards for Cooperative Agreements

### Agreement Standards

Agreements will be comprised of two components: the actual agreement and an operations plan. The agreement will outline the authority and general responsibilities of each party, and the operations plan will define the specific operating procedures.

Any agreement which obligates Federal funds or commits anything of value must be signed by the appropriate warranted contracting officer, certified agreement specialist, and/or delegated signatory official (USFS). Specifications for funding responsibilities should include billing procedures and schedules for payment.

Any agreement that extends beyond a fiscal year must be made subject to the availability of funds. Any transfer of Federal property must be in accordance with Federal property management regulations.

All agreements must undergo periodic joint review; and, as appropriate, revision. Assistance in preparing agreements can be obtained from local or state office fire and/or procurement staff.

All appropriate agreements and operating plans will be provided to the servicing dispatch center. The authority to enter into interagency agreements is extensive.

- **BLM** – *BLM Manual 9200, Departmental Manual 620 DM, the Reciprocal Fire Protection Act, 42 U.S.C. 1856, and the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy and Program Review.*
- **NPS** – *Chapter 2, Federal Assistance and Interagency Agreements Guideline (DO-20), and the Departmental Manual 620 (DM-620). NPS-RM-18, Interagency Agreements, Release Number 1, 02/22/99.*
- **FWS** – *Service Manual, Departmental Manual 620 DM, and Reciprocal Fire Protection Act, 42U.S.C. 1856.*
- **FS** – *FSM 1580 and 5106.2, and FSH 1509.11.*

## Types of Agreements

### Interagency Agreements

Interagency Agreements are used when one Federal agency is in a position to provide materials, supplies, equipment, work, or service of any kind that another Federal agency needs to accomplish its mission.

### Regional/State Cooperative Agreements

Regional and State cooperative agreements shall be developed for mutual assistance. These agreements are essential to the fire management program. Concerns for areawide scope should be addressed through these agreements.

### Local Cooperative Agreements

Local units are responsible for developing agreements with local agencies and fire departments to meet mutual needs for suppression and/or prescribed fire services.

**1 Emergency Assistance**

2 Approved reimbursable agreements are the appropriate and recommended way  
3 to provide emergency assistance. If no agreements are established, refer to your  
4 agency administrator (agency administrator) to determine the authorities  
5 delegated to your agency to provide emergency assistance.

**6 Contracts**

7 Contracts may be used where they are the most cost-effective means of  
8 providing for protection commensurate with established standards. A contract,  
9 however, does not absolve an agency administrator of the responsibility for  
10 managing a fire program.

11 Contracts should be developed and administered in accordance with Federal  
12 acquisition regulations. In particular, a contract should specify conditions for  
13 abandonment of a fire in order to respond to a new call elsewhere.

**14 National Agreements for Wildland Fire Management****15 USDOl and USDA National Agreement for Fire Management**

16 The objectives of the *National Agreement for Fire Management Between the*  
17 *Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), National*  
18 *Park Service (NPS), Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) of the United States*  
19 *Department of the Interior (DOI) and the Forest Service (FS) of the United*  
20 *States Department of Agriculture* are:

- 21 • To provide a basis for cooperation among the agencies on all aspects of  
22 wildland fire management and as authorized in non-fire emergencies.
- 23 • To facilitate the exchange of personnel, equipment (including aircraft),  
24 supplies, services, and funds among the agencies.

**25 DOI, USDA, and DOD Interagency Agreement**

26 The purpose of the *Interagency Agreement for the Provision of Temporary*  
27 *Support During Wildland Firefighting Operations among the United States*  
28 *Department of the Interior, the United States Department of Agriculture, and the*  
29 *United States Department of Defense* is:

- 30 • To establish the general guidelines, terms, and conditions under which the  
31 National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) will request, and Department of  
32 Defense (DOD) will provide, temporary support to NIFC in wildfire  
33 emergencies occurring within all 50 States, the District of Columbia, and all  
34 U.S. territories and possessions, including fires on State and private lands.  
35 This agreement provides the basis for reimbursement of DOD under the  
36 Economy Act.

37 These and other agreements pertinent to interagency wildland fire management  
38 can be found at <https://www.nifc.gov/nicc/logistics/references.htm>.

**39 Elements of an Agreement**

40 The following elements should be addressed in each agreement:

- 1 • The authorities appropriate for each party to enter in an agreement.  
2 Specifically, 42 USC 1856 “incurred cost.”
- 3 • The roles and responsibilities of each agency signing the agreement.
- 4 • An element addressing the cooperative roles of each participant in  
5 prevention, presuppression, suppression, fuels, and prescribed fire  
6 management operations.
- 7 • All mutually approved operations that require reimbursement will be  
8 identified and agreed to by an agreement which is required if participating  
9 parties have a cost-share. The mechanism and timing of the funding  
10 exchanges will be identified and agreed upon.
- 11 • Appropriation limitations – Parties to this agreement are not obligated to  
12 make expenditures of funds or reimbursements of expenditures under terms  
13 of this agreement unless the Congress of the United States of America  
14 appropriates such funds for that purpose by the Counties of \_\_\_\_\_, by the  
15 Cities of \_\_\_\_\_, and/or the Governing Board of Fire Commissioners  
16 of \_\_\_\_\_.
- 17 • Liabilities/waivers – Each party waives all claims against every other party  
18 for compensation for any loss, damage, personal injury, or death occurring  
19 as a consequence of the performance of this agreement unless gross  
20 negligence on any part of any party is determined.
- 21 • Termination procedure – The agreement shall identify the duration of the  
22 agreement and cancellation procedures.
- 23 • A signature page identifying the names of the responsible officials shall be  
24 included in the agreement.
  - 25 ○ **BLM** – Refer to chapter 2, *Agreements with Cooperators (Rangeland*  
26 *Fire Protection Association (RFPA) and Local Fire Department)*.
  - 27 ○ **NPS** – Refer to DO-20 for detailed instructions and format for  
28 *developing agreements*.
  - 29 ○ **FS** – FSM 1580; FSH 1509.11, Chapter 30; FSH 1509.11 Chapter 90;  
30 FSH 6509.11g, Chapter 50.
  - 31 ○ **BIA** – Refer to Notification of Required Use of Cooperative Agreement  
32 Template in response to Office of Inspector General’s Independent  
33 Report on the “Bureau of Indian Affairs Wildland Fire Suppression”  
34 (Memorandum dated September 06, 2013) and Clarification of  
35 Authorities on Implementation of the Wildland Fire Cooperative  
36 Agreement Template (Memorandum dated May 28, 2014).

## 37 Operating Plans

38 Operating plans (OP) are a subsidiary document to an agreement and shall be  
39 reviewed, updated, and approved prior to the fire season. The plan may be  
40 amended after a major incident as part of a joint debriefing and review. The plan  
41 shall contain detailed, specific procedures which will provide for safe, efficient,  
42 and effective operations.

### 43 General Elements of an Operating Plan

44 The following items should be addressed in the OP:



- 1 • **Mutual Aid**  
2 The OP should address that there may be times when cooperators are  
3 involved in emergency operations and unable to provide mutual aid. In this  
4 case, other cooperators may be contacted for assistance.
- 5 • **Command Structure**  
6 The Incident Command System (ICS) will be used to manage all fires under  
7 Federal jurisdiction. Unified command should be used, as appropriate,  
8 whenever multiple jurisdictions are involved, unless one or more parties  
9 request a single agency incident commander (IC). If there is a question  
10 about jurisdiction, fire managers should mutually decide and agree on the  
11 command structure as soon as they arrive on the fire; agency administrators  
12 should confirm this decision as soon as possible. Once this decision has  
13 been made, the incident organization in use should be relayed to all units on  
14 the incident as well as dispatch centers. In all cases, the identity of the IC  
15 must be made known to all fireline and support personnel.
- 16 • **Communications**  
17 In mutual aid situations, a common designated radio frequency identified in  
18 the OP should be used for incident communications. All incident resources  
19 should utilize and monitor this frequency for incident information, tactical  
20 use, and changes in weather conditions or other emergency situations. In  
21 some cases, because of equipment availability/capabilities,  
22 departments/agencies may have to use their own frequencies for tactical  
23 operations, allowing the “common” frequency to be the link between  
24 departments. All department/agencies must change to a single frequency or  
25 establish a common communications link as soon as feasible. Clear text  
26 should be used. Avoid personal identifiers such as names. The  
27 “Communications” paragraph in the OP shall meet Federal  
28 Communications Commission (FCC) requirements for documenting shared  
29 use of radio frequencies.
- 30 • **Distance/Boundaries**  
31 Responding and requesting parties should identify any mileage limitations  
32 from mutual boundaries where “mutual aid” is reimbursable or non-  
33 reimbursable. Also, for some fire departments, the mileage issue may not be  
34 one of initial attack “mutual aid” or “reimbursable assistance,” but of  
35 mutual assistance. In this situation, you may have the option to make it part  
36 of this agreement or identify it as a situation where the request would be  
37 made to the agency having jurisdiction, which would then dispatch the fire  
38 department.
  - 39 ○ **BLM** – *Agreements/OPs with DOD, best practices (including UXO*  
40 *protocols) are located on the BLM Fire Operations website*  
41 *[https://doimspp.sharepoint.com/sites/blm-fa/fire-](https://doimspp.sharepoint.com/sites/blm-fa/fire-operations/SitePages/Miscellaneous.aspx?web=1)*  
42 *[operations/SitePages/Miscellaneous.aspx?web=1](https://doimspp.sharepoint.com/sites/blm-fa/fire-operations/SitePages/Miscellaneous.aspx?web=1).*

- 1 • **Time/Duration**  
2 Responding and requesting parties should identify time limitations (usually  
3 24 hours) for resources in a non-reimbursable status and reimbursable rates  
4 when the resources are in a reimbursable status.
- 5 • **Qualifications/Minimum Requirements**  
6 *NWCG Standards for Wildland Fire Position Qualifications* (PMS 310-1),  
7 outlines the minimum requirements for training, experience, physical fitness  
8 level, and currency standards for wildland fire positions, which all  
9 participating agencies have agreed to meet for national mobilization.
  - 10 ○ During initial action, all agencies (Federal, State, local and Tribal)  
11 accept each other's standards. Once jurisdiction is clearly established,  
12 then the standards of the agency(s) with jurisdiction prevail.
    - 13 ▪ **BLM/BIA** – *BLM/BIA may accept the standards of any local*  
14 *cooperator through the duration of an incident when the*  
15 *cooperator has a current cooperative fire response agreement*  
16 *with BLM/BIA, and the cooperator is in compliance with the*  
17 *agreement. Personnel from agencies that do not subscribe to*  
18 *the NWCG qualification standards may be used on agency-*  
19 *managed fires and must only be assigned to duties*  
20 *commensurate with their competencies, qualifications, and*  
21 *equipment capabilities.*
  - 22 ○ Prior to the fire season, Federal agencies should meet with their State,  
23 local, and Tribal agency partners and communicate the qualification/  
24 certification standards that will apply to the use of local, non-Federal  
25 firefighters during initial action on fires on lands under the jurisdiction  
26 of a Federal agency.
  - 27 ○ The Geographic Area Coordinating Group (GACG) should determine  
28 the application of PMS 310-1 qualification/certification standards for  
29 mobilization within the geographic area.
  - 30 ○ On a fire where a non-Federal agency is also an agency with legal  
31 jurisdiction, the standards of that agency apply.
  - 32 ○ The OP should address qualification and certification standards  
33 applicable to the involved parties.
- 34 • **Reimbursement**  
35 Reimbursement will be based on actual expenditures. If suppression tactics  
36 cross jurisdictional boundaries, refer to the cost share agreement (must be  
37 an agreement between participating parties) for reimbursement methods.  
38 Vehicles and equipment operated under the Federal excess property system  
39 will only be reimbursed for maintenance and operating costs.
- 40 • **Cooperation**  
41 The OP will be used to identify how the cooperators will share expertise,  
42 training, and information on items such as prevention, investigation,  
43 communication plans, safety, training, ICS, and the integration of resources.

- 1 • **Agency Reviews and Investigations**
- 2 OPs should describe processes for conducting agency specific reviews and
- 3 investigations as well as describe processes for accident notifications to the
- 4 appropriate fire managers, line officers, and dispatch/coordination centers.
- 5 • **Dispatch Centers**
- 6 Dispatch centers will ensure all resources know the name of the assigned IC
- 7 and announce all changes in incident command. Geographic area
- 8 mobilization guides, zone mobilization guides, and local mobilization
- 9 guides should include this procedure as they are revised for each fire
- 10 season.
- 11 **Fiscal Responsibility Elements of an Operating Plan**
- 12 OPs should address the following:
- 13 • The level of communication required with neighboring jurisdictions
- 14 regarding the management of all wildland fires.
- 15 • The level of communication required with neighboring jurisdictions
- 16 regarding suppression resource availability and allocation, especially for
- 17 wildland fires with objectives that include benefit.
- 18 • Identify how to involve all parties in developing the strategy and tactics to
- 19 be used in preventing wildland fire from crossing the jurisdictional
- 20 boundary, and how all parties will be involved in developing mitigations
- 21 which would be used if a wildland fire does cross jurisdictional boundaries.
- 22 • Jurisdictions, which may include State and private lands, should identify the
- 23 conditions under which wildland fire may be managed to achieve benefit,
- 24 and the information or criteria that will be used to make that determination
- 25 (e.g., critical habitat, hazardous fuels, and land management planning
- 26 documents).
- 27 • Jurisdictions will identify conditions under which cost efficiency may
- 28 dictate where suppression strategies and tactical actions (e.g., it may be
- 29 more cost effective to put the containment line along an open grassland than
- 30 along a mid-slope in timber) are taken. Points to consider include loss and
- 31 benefit to land, resource, social and political values, and existing legal
- 32 statutes.
- 33 • The cost-sharing methodologies that will be utilized should wildfire spread
- 34 to a neighboring jurisdiction in a location where fire is not wanted.
- 35 • The cost-share methodologies that will be used should a jurisdiction accept
- 36 or receive a wildland fire and manage it to create benefit.
- 37 • Any distinctions in what cost-share methodology will be used if the reason
- 38 the fire spreads to another jurisdiction is attributed to a strategic decision,
- 39 versus environmental conditions (weather, fuels, and fire behavior), or
- 40 tactical considerations (firefighter safety, resource availability) that preclude
- 41 stopping the fire at jurisdictional boundaries. Examples of cost-sharing
- 42 methodologies may include but are not limited to the following:
- 43 ○ When a wildland fire that is being managed for benefit spreads to a
- 44 neighboring jurisdiction because of strategic decisions, and in a

- 1 location where fire is not wanted, the managing jurisdiction shall be  
 2 responsible for wildfire suppression costs.
- 3 ○ In those situations where weather, fuels, or fire behavior of the  
 4 wildland fire precludes stopping at jurisdiction boundaries cost-share  
 5 methodologies may include but are not limited to:
- 6 a) Each jurisdiction pays for its own resources – fire suppression  
 7 efforts are primarily on jurisdictional responsibility lands.
- 8 b) Each jurisdiction pays for its own resources – services rendered  
 9 approximate the percentage of jurisdictional responsibility, but not  
 10 necessarily performed on those lands.
- 11 c) Cost share by percentage of ownership.
- 12 d) Cost is apportioned by geographic division. Examples of  
 13 geographic divisions are divisions A and B (using a map as an  
 14 attachment); privately owned property with structures; or specific  
 15 locations, such as campgrounds.
- 16 e) Reconciliation of daily estimates (for larger, multi-day incidents) –  
 17 this method relies upon daily, agreed-to, cost estimates, using  
 18 incident action plans or other means to determine multi-agency  
 19 contributions. Reimbursements can be made upon actuals.
- 20 The percentage for how to apply actuals can be based on estimates, but actuals  
 21 must be used when final settlement is completed.

## 22 **All-Hazards Coordination and Cooperation**

24 All-hazards is defined by NWCG as an incident, natural or manmade, that  
 25 warrants action to protect life, property, environment, and public health or  
 26 safety, and to minimize disruptions of government, social, or economic  
 27 activities. Wildland fire is one type of all-hazards incident. All-hazards incidents  
 28 are managed using a standardized national incident management system and  
 29 response framework.

## 30 **Stafford Act Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance**

31 The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Public  
 32 Law 93-288, as amended) establishes the programs and processes for the Federal  
 33 Government to provide disaster and emergency assistance to States, local  
 34 governments, Tribal nations, individuals, and qualified private non-profit  
 35 organizations. The provisions of the Stafford Act cover all hazards, including  
 36 natural disasters and terrorist events. In response to, or in anticipation of, a  
 37 major disaster or emergency as defined by the act, the President “may direct any  
 38 Federal agency, with or without reimbursement, to utilize its authorities and the  
 39 resources granted to it under Federal law (including personnel, equipment,  
 40 supplies, facilities, managerial, technical, and advisory services) in support of  
 41 State and local assistance efforts.”

- 42 • **BIA** – Refer to chapter 6 for the Stafford Act Amendment Tribal Disaster  
 43 Assistance.

1 **Homeland Security Act**

2 The *Homeland Security Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-296)* established the  
3 Department of Homeland Security (DHS) with the mandate and legal authority  
4 to protect the American people from the continuing threat of terrorism. In the  
5 act, Congress also assigned DHS as the primary focal point regarding natural  
6 and manmade crises and emergency planning.

7 **Homeland Security Presidential Directive-5**

8 *Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD-5), Management of Domestic*  
9 *Incidents, February 28, 2003*, is intended to enhance the ability of the United  
10 States to manage domestic incidents by establishing a single, comprehensive  
11 national incident management system. HSPD-5 designates the Secretary of  
12 Homeland Security as the Principal Federal Official (PFO) for domestic incident  
13 management and empowers the Secretary to coordinate Federal resources used  
14 in response to or recovery from terrorist attacks, major disasters, or other  
15 emergencies in specific cases.

16 **National Response Framework**

17 Federal disaster relief and emergency assistance are coordinated by the Federal  
18 Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) using the National Response  
19 Framework (NRF). The NRF, using the National Incident Management System  
20 (NIMS), establishes a single, comprehensive framework for the management of  
21 domestic incidents. The NRF provides the structure and mechanisms for the  
22 coordination of Federal support to State, local, and Tribal incident managers;  
23 and for exercising direct Federal authorities and responsibilities.

24 **National Incident Management System**

25 HSPD-5 directed that the DHS Secretary develop and administer a National  
26 Incident Management System (NIMS) to provide a consistent, nationwide  
27 approach for Federal, State, and local governments to work effectively and  
28 efficiently together to prepare for, respond to, and recover from domestic  
29 incidents, regardless of cause, size, or complexity. To provide for  
30 interoperability and compatibility among Federal, State, and local capabilities,  
31 NIMS will include a core set of concepts, principles, terminology, and  
32 technologies covering ICS; multi-agency coordination systems; unified  
33 command; training; identification and management of resources (including  
34 systems for classifying types of resources); qualifications and certification; and  
35 the collection, tracking, and reporting of incident information and incident  
36 resources.

37 **Emergency Support Function Annexes**

38 Emergency Support Function (ESF) Annexes are the components of the NRF  
39 that detail the mission, policies, structures, and responsibilities of Federal  
40 agencies. They are utilized for coordinating resource and programmatic support  
41 to the States, Tribes, and other Federal agencies or other jurisdictions and  
42 entities during incidents of national significance. Each ESF Annex identifies the  
43 ESF coordinator and the primary and support agencies pertinent to the ESF.  
44 USDA-FS and USFA are the co-coordinators of ESF #4 – Firefighting. USDA-

1 FS coordinates at the national and regional levels with FEMA, State agencies,  
 2 and cooperating agencies on all issues related to response activities. USFA  
 3 coordinates with appropriate State agencies and local fire departments to expand  
 4 structural firefighting resource capacity in the existing national firefighting  
 5 mobilization system and provides information on protection of emergency  
 6 services sector critical infrastructure.

7 The ESF primary agency serves as a Federal executive agent under the federal  
 8 coordinating officer to accomplish the ESF mission. The ESF support agencies,  
 9 when requested by the designated ESF primary agency, are responsible for  
 10 conducting operations using their own authorities, subject-matter experts,  
 11 capabilities, or resources. USDA-FS is the primary agency for ESF #4 –  
 12 Firefighting.

- 13 • **FS** – Reference FSM 1594

14 Other NRF USDA-FS and DOI responsibilities are:

| ESF Support Annex  | USDA-FS Role            | DOI Role |
|--|-------------------------|----------|
| #01 Transportation   | Support                 | Support  |
| #02 Communications   | Support                 | Support  |
| #03 Public Works and Engineering                                 | Support                 | Support  |
| #04 Firefighting   | Coordinator and Primary | Support  |
| #05 Emergency Management   | Support                 | Support  |
| #06 Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Housing, and Human Services | Support                 | Support  |
| #07 Logistics Management and Resources Support                   | Support                 | Support  |
| #08 Public Health and Medical Services                           | Support                 | Support  |
| #09 Search and Rescue  | Support                 | Primary  |
| #10 Oil and Hazardous Materials Response                         | Support                 | Support  |
| #11 Agriculture and Natural Resources                            | Primary                 | Primary  |
| #12 Energy   |                         | Support  |
| #13 Public Safety and Security                                   | Support                 | Support  |
| #14 Cross-Sector Business and Infrastructure                     | Support                 |          |
| #15 External Affairs   | Support                 | Support  |

#### 15 **National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan**

16 The National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (NCP,  
 17 40 CFR 300) provides the organizational structure and procedures for preparing  
 18 for and responding to discharges of oil and releases of hazardous substances,  
 19 pollutants, and contaminants. The NCP is required by section 105 of the  
 20 Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of

1 1980 (CERCLA), 42 U.S.C. 9605, as amended by the Superfund Amendments  
2 and Reauthorization Act of 1986 (SARA), P.L. 99–499, and by section 311(d) of  
3 the Clean Water Act (CWA), 33 U.S.C. 1321(d), as amended by the Oil  
4 Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA), P.L. 101–380. The NCP identifies the national  
5 response organization that may be activated in response actions to discharges of  
6 oil and releases of hazardous substances, pollutants, and contaminants in  
7 accordance with the authorities of CERCLA and the CWA. The NCP specifies  
8 responsibilities among the Federal, State, and local governments and describes  
9 resources that are available for response and provides procedures for involving  
10 State governments in the initiation, development, selection, and implementation  
11 of response actions, pursuant to CERCLA. The NCP works in conjunction with  
12 the NRF through Emergency Support Function 10 – Oil and Hazardous Material  
13 Response.

#### 14 **Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act**

15 The *Post-Katrina Emergency Reform Act of 2006 (Public Law 109-295)*  
16 amended the Homeland Security Act. This law established the FEMA  
17 Administrator as responsible for managing the Federal response to emergencies  
18 and disasters, and for reporting directly to the President. The Secretary of  
19 Homeland Security is the principal Federal official but has no direct authority  
20 for response or coordination. This law also amends the Stafford Act to allow  
21 FEMA, in the absence of a specific request or Presidential declaration, to direct  
22 other Federal agencies to provide resources and support where necessary to save  
23 lives, prevent human suffering, or mitigate severe damage.

#### 24 **Presidential Policy Directive-8**

25 *Presidential Policy Directive-8 (PPD-8), National Preparedness, March 30,*  
26 *2011*, is intended to strengthen all-of-nation preparedness. PPD-8 directs the  
27 Secretary of Homeland Security to develop a national preparedness goal and a  
28 national preparedness system in coordination and consultation with other  
29 Federal departments and agencies, State, local, Tribal, and territorial  
30 governments, private and non-profit sectors, and the public. The national  
31 preparedness system is comprised of:

- 32 • National planning frameworks for the prevention, protection, mitigation,  
33 response to, and recovery from national threats. These frameworks are  
34 similar and complementary to the NRF.
- 35 • Corresponding Federal interagency operational plans.
- 36 • Guidance for the national interoperability of personnel and equipment.
- 37 • Guidance for business, community, family, and individual preparedness.

#### 38 **All-Hazards Coordination and Cooperation**

39 In an actual or potential incident of national significance that is not encompassed  
40 by the Stafford Act, the President may instruct a Federal department or agency,  
41 subject to any statutory limitations on the department or agency, to utilize the  
42 authorities and resources granted to it by Congress. In accordance with  
43 Homeland Security Presidential Directive-5, Federal departments and agencies  
44 are expected to provide their full and prompt support, cooperation, available

1 resources, consistent with their own responsibilities for protecting national  
2 security. Personnel assigned to all-hazards incidents may only perform duties  
3 within agency policy, training, and capability.

4 **NWCG Role in Support, Coordination, and All-Hazards Response by**  
5 **Wildland Fire Agencies**

6 NWCG has established guidelines to define NWCG's role in the preparedness  
7 for, coordination of, and support to all-hazards incidents.

8 ***General All-Hazards Guidelines for NWCG***

- 9 • NIMS is the foundation of all response. NWCG principles, procedures, and  
10 publications will comply with and support NIMS. NWCG expects that all  
11 local, State, and Federal response agencies and organizations will comply  
12 with NIMS.
- 13 • NWCG uses the NIMS definition of "all-hazards" (includes wildland fire):  
14 Describing an incident, natural or manmade, that warrants action to protect  
15 life, property, environment, and public health or safety, and to minimize  
16 disruptions of government, social, or economic activities.
- 17 • NWCG recognizes FEMA's role in overseeing the development,  
18 implementation, and maintenance of NIMS, which includes ICS and its  
19 components (forms, core competencies, training, qualifications, standards,  
20 etc.).
- 21 • NWCG accepts the components of NIMS and will develop an endorsement  
22 process and additional qualifications requirements for positions having  
23 specific wildland fire application.
- 24 • NWCG recognizes and supports the use of position-specific qualifications  
25 from other NIMS-compliant disciplines (law enforcement, structure fire,  
26 hazmat, etc.).
- 27 • NWCG supports the ongoing development and maintenance of wildland fire  
28 systems to be adaptable for all-hazards response.
- 29 • NWCG expects that all wildland fire personnel engaged in all-hazards  
30 response, whether at the national, regional, or local level, will base actions  
31 on both NWCG and agency policies, standards, doctrine, and procedures.
- 32 • NWCG member agencies ensure all personnel responding to all-hazards  
33 incidents are properly trained, equipped, and qualified for their assigned  
34 position.
- 35 • NWCG encourages all wildland fire agencies and personnel to receive  
36 appropriate preparedness training, focusing on general knowledge of all-  
37 hazards response, disaster characteristics, and the effects from these events  
38 on citizens and responders.
- 39 • NWCG encourages all wildland fire agencies and personnel to consider  
40 appropriate risk mitigation measures (e.g., vaccinations, personal protective  
41 equipment [PPE], etc.) prior to responding to all-hazards incidents.
- 42 • NWCG coordinates with member agencies to ensure accountability of  
43 wildland fire personnel during all-hazards response.



## 1 USFS All-Hazards Guiding Principles and Doctrine

2 The Forest Service has developed doctrine, known as the *Foundational Doctrine*  
3 *for All-Hazard Response*, outlining the guiding principles, roles, and  
4 responsibilities of the agency during all-hazards response. Forest Service  
5 responders and leadership are expected to follow this doctrine, established to  
6 help ensure the safest response conditions possible.

7 The following principles encompass the guidelines, roles, and responsibilities  
8 established in this doctrine:

- 9 • The intent of Forest Service all-hazards response and support is to protect  
10 human life, property, and at-risk lands and resources *while imminent threats*  
11 *exist*.
- 12 • Personnel should be prepared and organized to support all-hazards  
13 responses by providing trained personnel to utilize their inherent skills,  
14 capabilities, and assets, without requiring significant advanced training and  
15 preparation. Support to cooperators requiring wildland resources will be  
16 consistent with employee core skills, capabilities, and training.
- 17 • As incidents move from the *response phase* to the *recovery phase*, there  
18 should be a shift to demobilizing agency resources.
- 19 • Within all-hazards response environments, agency personnel may encounter  
20 situations in which there is an imminent threat to life and property outside  
21 of their agency's jurisdiction. These environments include scenarios ranging  
22 from being first on scene at a vehicle accident to committing agency  
23 resources to protect a local community. Leaders are therefore expected to  
24 use their judgment and respond appropriately.
- 25 • Wildland resources deployed to all-hazards responses will understand the  
26 dynamic and complex environment and utilize their leadership, training, and  
27 skills to adapt, innovate, and bring order to chaos.
- 28 • Leaders are expected to operate within the incident organizational structure  
29 encountered on all-hazards responses. When such structure is absent,  
30 leaders will utilize NIMS principles to assure safe and effective utilization  
31 of agency resources.
- 32 • Leaders are expected to operate under existing policies and doctrine under  
33 normal conditions. On all-hazards responses, fire and aviation business and  
34 safety standards may have to be adapted to the situation to successfully  
35 accomplish the mission. When conflicts occur, employees will use their  
36 judgment, weigh the risk versus gain, and operate within the intent of  
37 agency policy and doctrine.
- 38 • All-hazards response will be focused on missions that we perform  
39 consistently and successfully. Workforce assignments will be directed  
40 toward the core skills developed through our existing training and  
41 curriculum.
- 42 • Agency employees will be trained to operate safely and successfully in the  
43 all-hazards environment. Preparedness training will focus on gaining  
44 general knowledge of all-hazards response, disaster characteristics, as well  
45 as the effects from these events on citizens and responders.

- 1 • Specific operational skills will be facilitated through NIMS, working with  
2 the responsible agencies who supply the technical specialists who, in turn,  
3 provide the specific skill sets. The Forest Service will not train or equip to  
4 meet every hazard.
- 5 • Wildland employees are expected to perform all-hazards support as directed  
6 within their qualifications and physical capabilities. All employees have the  
7 right to a safe assignment. The employee may suspend his or her work  
8 whenever any environmental condition—or combination of condition—  
9 become so extreme that an immediate danger is posed to employee health  
10 and safety that cannot be readily mitigated by the use of appropriate,  
11 approved protective equipment or technology.
- 12 • Acceptable risk is risk mitigated to a level that provides for reasonable  
13 assurances that the all-hazards task can be accomplished without serious  
14 injury to life or damage to property.
- 15 • All-hazards, incident-specific briefing and training will be accomplished  
16 prior to task implementation. This preparation will usually occur prior to  
17 mobilization where incident description, mission requirements, and known  
18 hazards are addressed. Key protective equipment and associated needs for  
19 these all-hazards tasks that wildland employees do not routinely encounter  
20 or perform will be identified. This will be done—and be in place—prior to  
21 task implementation.
- 22 • Agency employees will be provided with appropriate vaccinations,  
23 credentials, and PPE to operate in the all-hazards environment to which  
24 they are assigned.
- 25 • Additional information can be found in the Forest Service *Foundational*  
26 *Doctrine for All-Hazard Response* at [https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-](https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/fire/ibp/all-hazard)  
27 [land/fire/ibp/all-hazard](https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/fire/ibp/all-hazard).

#### 28 **Incident Management Teams – All-Hazards and Other Non-Wildland**

29 Different entities have developed incident management teams (IMT) based on  
30 ICS core competencies under NIMS. Federal agencies with IMTs include the  
31 U.S. Coast Guard, the EPA, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection  
32 Service (APHIS), DOI's NPA and FWS, and others. In addition, many States  
33 and metropolitan areas have developed all-hazards IMTs (AHIMT). AHIMT  
34 consists of personnel from various disciplines (fire, rescue, emergency medical,  
35 hazardous materials, law enforcement, public works, public health, and others)  
36 trained to perform the functions of the command and general staff at the type 3  
37 level. AHIMTs are often sponsored or administered by a State or local  
38 emergency management agency and may be type 2 or type 3 level (based on the  
39 FEMA National Qualification System or other recognized qualification system).  
40 All-hazards IMTs have been used to support wildland fire operations in different  
41 ways, including: 1) managing a fire incident with the support of key wildland  
42 fire positions supporting command and general staff; 2) independently  
43 supporting activities under direction of a wildland fire IMT (e.g., coordinating  
44 evacuation/re-entry of a jurisdictional area); and 3) supporting a Geographic

- 1 Area Coordination Center (GACC) or other entity (e.g., managing a  
2 mobilization center).
- 3 Many different entities that sponsor an AHIMT or other non-wildland fire IMT  
4 have requested that their personnel be allowed to “shadow” (sometimes referred  
5 to as “field training” or “field mentoring”) wildland fire IMT positions during  
6 incidents. The primary purpose of shadowing is to gain insight to complex  
7 incident management. All shadowing events should be coordinated with the  
8 receiving GACCs and the IC at an incident.
- 9 • **DOI** – refer to <https://www.doi.gov/emergency/plans-and-policies>

## 10 **International Wildland Fire Coordination and Cooperation**

### 11 **U.S. – Mexico Cross Border Cooperation on Wildland Fires**

12 In April 2015, the DOI and USDA signed a wildfire protection agreement with  
13 Mexico. The agreement has two purposes:

- 14 • To enable wildfire protection resources originating in the territory of one  
15 country to cross the United States-Mexico border in order to suppress  
16 wildfires on the other side of the border within the zone of mutual  
17 assistance (10 miles/16 kilometers) in appropriate circumstances.
- 18 • To give authority for Mexican and U.S. fire management organizations to  
19 cooperate on other fire management activities outside the zone of mutual  
20 assistance.

21 National operational guidelines for this agreement are located at  
22 <https://www.nifc.gov/nicc/logistics/references.htm>. These guidelines cover  
23 issues at the national level and also provide a template for those issues that need  
24 to be addressed in local operating plans. The local operating plans identify how  
25 the agreement will be implemented by the GACCs (and zone coordination  
26 centers) that have dispatching responsibility on the border. The local operating  
27 plans will provide the standard operational procedures for wildfire suppression  
28 resources that could potentially cross the U.S. border into Mexico.

### 29 **U.S. – Canada, Reciprocal Forest Firefighting Arrangement**

30 Information about United States – Canada cross border support is located at  
31 <https://www.nifc.gov/nicc/logistics/references.htm>. This policy guidance was  
32 determined by an exchange of diplomatic notes between the U.S. and Canada in  
33 1982 and provides operational guidelines for the Canada – U.S. Reciprocal  
34 Forest Fire Fighting Arrangement. These guidelines are updated yearly.

### 35 **U.S. – Australia/New Zealand Wildland Fire Arrangement**

36 Information about United States – Australia and United States – New Zealand  
37 support is located at <https://www.nifc.gov/nicc/logistics/references.htm>. This  
38 link provides a copy of the arrangements signed between the U.S. and the states  
39 of Australia, and between the U.S. and the country of New Zealand for support  
40 during severe fire seasons. It also contains the annual operating plans (AOPs)  
41 that provides more detail on the procedures, responsibilities, and requirements  
42 used during activation.

**1 International Non-wildland Fire Coordination and Cooperation****2 International Disasters Support**

3 Federal wildland fire employees may be requested through the FS to support the  
4 U.S. Government's (USG) response to international disasters by serving on  
5 Disaster Assistance Response Teams (DARTs). A DART is the operational  
6 equivalent of an ICS team used by the U.S. Agency for International  
7 Development's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) to provide an on-  
8 the-ground operational capability at the site of an international disaster. Prior to  
9 being requested for a DART assignment, employees will have completed a  
10 weeklong DART training course covering information about:

- 11 • USG agencies charged with the responsibility to coordinate USG responses  
12 to international disaster.
- 13 • The purpose, organizational structure, and operational procedures of a  
14 DART.
- 15 • How the DART relates to other international organizations and countries  
16 during an assignment. Requests for these assignments are coordinated  
17 through the FS International Programs, Disaster Assistance Support  
18 Program (DASP).
- 19 • DART assignments should not be confused with technical exchange  
20 activities, which do not require DART training.

21 More information about DARTs can be obtained at the FS International  
22 Program's website, [https://www.fs.usda.gov/about-agency/international-](https://www.fs.usda.gov/about-agency/international-programs)  
23 [programs](https://www.fs.usda.gov/about-agency/international-programs).