

INDIAN AFFAIRS MANUAL

Part 90
Chapter 3

Wildland Fire Management
Preparedness

Page 1

1.1 Purpose. The intent of this chapter is to document Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) policy, authorities, and responsibilities related to the Wildland Fire Preparedness program. The Preparedness program ensures the Bureau has sufficient capability for providing safe and cost-effective fire response using appropriate safety practices, strategic planning, human resource management, equipment and infrastructure, contracts, and agreements when wildland fires occur.

1.2 Scope. This policy applies to all Tribal and individually held trust and restricted Indian lands under BIA jurisdiction and to all Indian Affairs (IA) programs and staff involved in the wildland fire management of these lands. This policy may also apply to entities carrying out activities on behalf of BIA under contracts or agreements if expressly agreed to in the contracts or agreements, or if the requirement to abide by such policy is otherwise required by law.

1.3 Policy. It is the policy of IA to maintain firefighter and public safety as the first priority in every fire management activity; and to ensure its Wildland Fire program complies with all IA and Departmental policies and procedures, and with national interagency guidance and regulatory requirements.

1.4 Authority.

A. Statutes and Regulations.

- 1) 42 U.S.C. §§ 1856 – 1856e, Reciprocal Fire Protection Agreements – Protection of United States Property
- 2) 43 U.S.C. § 1469, Employment and compensation of personnel to perform work occasioned by emergencies
- 3) P.L. 103-177, American Indian Agricultural Resource Management Act of 1993
- 4) P.L. 108-278, Tribal Forest Protection Act of 2004
- 5) 25 CFR 163.28, Fire management measures

B. Guidance.

- 1) 296 Departmental Manual (DM) 1, Fire Protection and Assistance
- 2) 620 DM 1 - 7: Wildland Fire Management

INDIAN AFFAIRS MANUAL

Part 90
Chapter 3

Wildland Fire Management
Preparedness

Page 2

- 3) The National Strategy: The Final Phase in the Development of the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy, April 2014

C. Handbooks.

- 1) Federal Wildland Fire Qualifications Supplement, January 2019
- 2) Guidance for Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy, February 2009
- 3) Incident Response Pocket Guide, current version
- 4) Interagency Fire Program Management (IFPM) Qualifications Standards and Guide, October 2017
- 5) Interagency Prescribed Fire Planning and Implementation Guide, July 2017
- 6) Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations (Red Book), current version
- 7) Interagency Standards for Wildland Fire Modules Operations, March 2019
- 8) Interagency Wildland Fire Weather Station Standards and Guidelines, March 2019
- 9) National Interagency Mobilization Guide, current version
- 10) National Wildfire Coordination Group (NWCG) Standards for Helicopter Operations (PMS 510), May 2019
- 11) NWCG Standards for Interagency Incident Business Management, PMS 902 (Yellow Book), April 2018
- 12) NWCG 310-1 Wildland Fire Qualifications System Guide
- 13) Prescribed Fire Complexity Rating System Guide, July 2017
- 14) Standards for Interagency Hotshot Crew Operations, January, 2016

INDIAN AFFAIRS MANUAL

Part 90
Chapter 3

Wildland Fire Management
Preparedness

Page 3

1.5 Responsibilities.

- A. **Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs (AS-IA)** is responsible for discharging the duties of the Secretary with the authority and direct responsibility to protect and preserve Indian trust assets.
- B. **Director, BIA** is responsible for:
- 1) discharging the duties of the AS-IA with the authority and direct responsibility to protect and preserve Indian trust assets; and
 - 2) fulfilling the responsibilities identified in chapter six of the Red Book.
- C. **Deputy Bureau Director (DBD), Field Operations, BIA** is responsible for:
- 1) ensuring that all fire management programs are comprised of adequate resources and personnel to implement safe and effective wildfire suppression activities;
 - 2) determining and establishing Line Authority for program implementation through Regional Directors; and
 - 3) coordinating wildland fire management activities with other Federal, state, and non-government fire protection agencies.
- D. **DBD, Office of Trust Services (OTS)** is responsible for:
- 1) coordinating wildland fire management activities with other Federal, state, and non-government fire protection agencies; and
 - 2) fulfilling the responsibilities identified in chapter six of the Red Book.
- E. **Chief, Division of Forestry & Wildland Fire Management (DFWFM), OTS** is responsible for providing overall direction to the BIA Wildland Fire Management program.
- F. **Chief, Branch of Wildland Fire Management (BWFM)** is responsible for:
- 1) providing leadership in protecting life, property, and ecosystems from damage by wildfires, and assisting in enhancing ecosystem health, integrity, and diversity through the use of fire;
 - 2) establishing national policy, guidance, and standards;
 - 3) maintaining functional oversight and interagency coordination for all fire and aviation programs;

INDIAN AFFAIRS MANUAL

Part 90
Chapter 3

Wildland Fire Management
Preparedness

Page 4

- 4) administering, at a minimum, one preparedness review and one fiscal accountability review in two separate regions every year with an end result assuring all regions have a fiscal and budget accountability review at least once every five years;
- 5) providing technical assistance to regions and field-level units (in coordination with regional offices);
- 6) consolidating all regional Wildland Fire program statistical data submissions to summarize and report for the Bureau-wide Wildland Fire program; and
- 7) fulfilling responsibilities identified in chapter six of the Red Book.

G. Regional Directors are responsible for:

- 1) contracting (when feasible) protection services with other Federal agencies, Tribes, states, local, and private entities for trust lands wildfire protection services pursuant to NWCG standards, existing statutes, solicitor's opinions, regulations, and constraints governing utilization of appropriations;
- 2) ensuring that all fire management programs are comprised of adequate resources and personnel to implement safe and effective wildfire suppression activities;
- 3) IA Wildland Fire program leadership, coordination, and management within their region;
- 4) consolidating region-wide Wildland Fire program statistical data and submitting it annually to the BIA National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC);
- 5) providing training, oversight, and information to fire programs within their region and coordinating activities with other Wildland Fire programs and cooperators;
- 6) assuring adherence to the IFPM Qualifications Standards and Guide requirements for fire program management staff;
- 7) ensuring each fire program within their region has a preparedness review conducted annually;
- 8) reviewing and validating severity requests for BWFM approval;
- 9) ensuring the Remote Automated Weather Stations (RAWS) are maintained annually; and
- 10) fulfilling responsibilities identified in chapter six of the Red Book.

H. Agency Superintendent is responsible for:

- 1) ensuring that every wildland firefighter, fireline supervisor, and fire manager takes the appropriate actions to be compliant with established standards and safe firefighting practices;

INDIAN AFFAIRS MANUAL

Part 90
Chapter 3

Wildland Fire Management
Preparedness

Page 5

- 2) developing, implementing, and evaluating wildland fire management activities for their local unit;
- 3) ensuring that facilities and equipment meet Occupational Safety and Health Administration and National Fire Protection Association standards;
- 4) ensuring that facilities and equipment are maintained in a safe and operable condition;
- 5) maintaining an approved and current Wildland Fire Management Plan (WFMP) which complies with requirements listed in chapter nine of the Red Book;
- 6) developing and approving a Fire Danger Operating Plan (FDOP) which complies with chapter 10 of the Red Book;
- 7) ensuring the local unit has a current Fire Danger PocketCard which complies with chapter 10 in the Red Book, and is provided to each local and non-local fire management personnel working on the local unit; and
- 8) fulfilling the responsibilities identified in chapter six of the Red Book.

1.6 Definitions.

The "Glossary of Wildland Fire Terminology" (PMS 205) contains many definitions for terminology used by wildland fire management agencies and is located at:
<https://www.nwcg.gov/glossary/a-z>.

1.7 Standards and Requirements. This section identifies the standards and requirements that have general and continuing applicability to wildland fire activities under the jurisdiction of the AS-IA.

A. Standards.

1. IA will work with other Federal wildland fire agencies, and other cooperating agencies, to provide uniform application of interagency policies and guidelines.
2. Currently approved interagency and IA planning processes, funding mechanisms, training and qualification standards, operational procedures, values-to-be-protected methodologies, and public education programs for all fire management activities will be used.
3. IA will ensure that Wildland Fire programs are managed and provided oversight by a Regional or Agency FMO (the individual may serve multiple units within a region).

INDIAN AFFAIRS MANUAL

Part 90
Chapter 3

Wildland Fire Management
Preparedness

Page 6

B. Requirements.

1. Permanent positions that are fully funded by the Wildland Fire Preparedness program must execute 80 percent or more of their duties performing wildland fire management related duties.
2. Permanent positions that perform more than 50 percent and less than 80 percent of the duties related directly to fire preparedness activities will be funded to the extent of the seasonal limits or 13 pay periods, whichever is greater.
3. Wildland Fire management programs must have an approved WFMP, which must be in conformance with the local unit-approved Resource Management Plan (RMP). In the absence of a RMP, the WFMP will stand-alone (further guidance is located in the Red Book, chapter nine).
4. A WFMP is non-expiring and will remain in effect until a new plan is approved. An updated WFMP is required if it is determined the current WFMP no longer reflects Tribal goals and objectives, or wildland fire management policy.
5. All fire records, including the Individual Final Fire Report, will be managed according to established IA records retention and disposal policies.
6. The BIA's casual payment program will be administered in compliance with the annual Department of the Interior (DOI) Personnel Bulletin for Administratively Determined Pay Plan for Emergency Workers and its attachment(s).

Approval

Darryl LaCounte

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4/08/20

Darryl LaCounte
Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs

Date