



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Umatilla
National
Forest

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Reply to:

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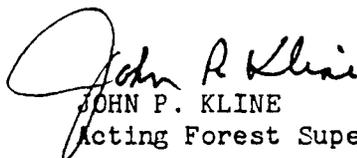
Wilderness Prescribed Natural Fire Implementation Process
Forest Plan Appendix D

To:

Files

In the process of developing the Wilderness Prescribed Natural Fire Implementation Plans, a review of the Forest Plan directions was made for use of all prescribed natural fire. The review was informal, consisting of document study and many discussions among Ron Cox (Wilderness Specialist), Marty Gardner (Wilderness Fire Planning), Lyle Jensen and Michael Hampton (Forest Planning), John Roberston (Fire Management) and others through the course of the planning effort. Forest Plan desired future conditions, objectives, and standards and guidelines were examined for appropriate use of prescribed natural fire. The review group also studied the need for change in direction in the use of prescribed natural fire. The group concluded that sufficient direction is currently available in the Forest Plan to conduct a prescribed natural fire program on the Forest's wildernesses and other areas. The group further found that no Forest Plan decisions need to be changed. I concur with these findings and conclusions.

WO Amendment 5100-91-10 and FSM 5142.2 provide for direction for implementation of a prescribed natural fire program. However, this direction also states that the 10 implementation items must be a part of the Forest Plan prior to initiation of the prescribed natural fire program. Several means for incorporating the direction were considered including: adding a reference to the national direction into the Plan, placing the direction in the Plan appendices, or adding the required items into the Forest's Fire Management Action Plan (a part of the Forest Plan). I have decided to add an Appendix D - Prescribed Natural Fire Implementation Process - to the Forest Plan to clarify the national implementation intent. This change will make the process clearly visible and will implement the WO and FSM direction. A copy of the new appendix is attached.


JOHN P. KLINE
Acting Forest Supervisor

Enclosure



APPENDIX D

PRESCRIBED NATURAL FIRE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

INTRODUCTION:

Throughout the Forest Planning process, the value and importance of prescribed fire, including natural fire, has been recognized and its use planned. Management intent and direction for use of prescribed fire is described in the appropriate Forest-wide Standards and Guidelines and most management areas in the Plan.

As a result of several national reviews, fire was reaffirmed as necessary and beneficial to wildlands. The reviews also affirmed that prescribed natural fire programs should continue. However, the reviews resulted in changes in implementing direction for prescribed natural fire, as defined in WO Amendment 5100-91-10 and FSM 5142.2. The new policy directed that ten key items will be addressed in the development and implementation of a prescribed natural fire program.

PROCEDURES:

The following are the implementation instructions and requirements for a prescribed natural fire program on the Umatilla National Forest:

Prescribed Natural Fire Program:

A prescribed natural fire program, for areas where prescribed natural fire is allowed, will have approved implementation direction in the First Management Action Plan specific for that area. The direction will address, as a minimum, the following items:

- a. Description (including a map) of the area where prescribed natural fires are allowed.
- b. Fire history of the area, including the role of natural fire.
- c. Objectives to be achieved by prescribed natural fire and identification of acceptable outcomes.
- d. General discussion of the required skills, qualifications, and organization necessary to implement and manage a prescribed natural fire program. This will include, but not be limited to, specialists necessary to meet resource management objectives.
- e. General Funding requirements.
- f. Interagency and intraagency coordination, including joint planning and review where fires may cross multiagency boundaries.
- g. Process to "inform and involve" both internal and external audiences.
- h. Identification of fuel treatment measures needed to reduce hazard fuels in support of the prescribed natural fire program, including identification of areas or developments that need protection from fire. Also include a map indicating those areas where management ignited prescribed fires may be considered.
- i. Analysis and decision process that provides for: 1) identification of local approval authority, 2) identification of evaluation criteria for the initial "go/no go" decision to declare a wildfire from a natural ignition, 3) a risk assessment (risks involved and potential effects), 4) provisions for daily validation that the fire is within prescription, and 5) timely decision by the line officer to designate an ignition as a prescribed natural fire or wildfire.

- j. Process for development of a Prescribed Natural Fire Burn Plan.

Management Ignited Fires Supporting the Prescribed Natural Fire Program:

In some cases management ignited fires may be necessary to support a prescribed natural fire program. Wilderness implementation plans and Forest Service policy allows management ignited (planned ignition) fires. Forest Service Manual 2324 specifies the conditions which must be met (See Plan page 4-143):

To achieve wilderness management objectives, the use of management ignited fires may be used. Criteria that must be met (FSM 2300) before using management ignited fires:

- a. The use of prescribed fire or other fuel treatment measures outside of wilderness is not sufficient to achieve fire management objectives within wilderness.
- b. Management ignited fire will involve additional site-specific environmental analysis and public notification.
 - 1. An interdisciplinary team of resource specialists has evaluated and recommended to the Deciding Officer the proposed use of prescribed fire.
 - 2. Publics and others have been involved in the decision.
- c. Documentation indicates that lightning caused fires cannot be allowed to burn because they will pose serious threats to life and/or property within wilderness or to life, property, or natural resources outside of wilderness.

The Fire Management Action Plan will indicate on a map areas where management ignited fires may be considered inside the wilderness boundary.