

Salmon-Challis National Forest Fire Management Plan – 2007



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AA.	Lightning Plan	Error! Bookmark not defined.

Salmon-Challis National Forest Fire Management Plan 2006

Prepared by - _____ Date: _____
Kurt C Werst
Forest Fire Management Officer

Reviewed by - _____ Date: _____
Kurt Werst
Forest Fire Management Officer

Reviewed by - _____ Date: _____
Larry Svalberg
Forest Fire Staff Officer

Approved - _____ Date: _____
William A. Wood
FOREST SUPERVISOR

SECTION I – INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose of this Plan

This plan is also based on and complies with the requirement that Fire Management Plans must be developed for all areas subject to wildland fires as required by the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy and Program Review, the Wildland and Prescribed Fire Management Policy and Implementation Procedures Reference Guide, Managing Impacts of Wildfires on Communities and the Environment, and Protecting People and Sustaining Resources in Fire Adapted Ecosystems – A Cohesive Strategy (FSM 5101, 5103, and 5108).

The Salmon and Challis National Forests were combined administratively in 1995 but still operate under the existing Land and Resource Management Plans (LRMP) for both Forests. A joint LRMP will be developed during the ongoing revision process. The purpose of this plan is to achieve the land and resource management objectives set forth in both Forest Plans.

1. Fire Management Plan Amendment Process

As part of the future and ongoing development of this Fire Management Plan (FMP), there will be reviews, and lessons learned from After Action Reviews (AAR). When a change in this plan is indicated the Forest Fire Staff or Forest Fire Management Officer will recommend the needed changes to the Forest Supervisor. The Forest Leadership Team and the Fire Management Group will review and comment on the proposed change. Once the change is approved, the FMP will be updated, followed by direction to the Leadership Team and Fire Management Group on those changes and implementation procedures.

B. Collaboration

The Salmon National Forest conducted an active public involvement program throughout the forest planning process. Federal, State, and local agencies were informed and consulted. Individual forest users and interest groups, as well as other interested persons, had an opportunity to participate. This process started on October 4, 1985 with the publishing of the letter of intent and culminated with the closing of the comment period on the Draft EIS on January 31, 1986. A total of 729 pieces of input were received and considered.

The Challis National Forests also conducted an active public involvement program that included opportunities for both written and oral comments from the general public as well as other federal, state and local agencies. 633 separate letters were received on the DEIS and numerous verbal comments received at 5 public meetings. Comments received by November 29, 1985 were considered.

Custer and Lemhi counties have both completed County Fire Mitigation plans that identify fire hazard mitigation priority areas. These plans are updated annually. This plan update process provides the opportunity for collaboration between the Forest Service and local entities interested in fuel reduction in interface areas.

All proposed projects intended to reduce the threat of wildland fire hazards would comply the National Environmental Policy Act, which includes public involvement and

has provisions for Collaboration. The public has the opportunity to comment on all proposals including those that would have an effect on fire hazards.

Any future amendments to the Forest Plans that affect Fire Management, such as an amendment to allow fire use out-side wilderness, would include a collaborative process.

This FMP is the result of the iterative process of refinement that has occurred over the years since both LRMPs were signed. Resource specialists have collaborated with the Fire Management organization to develop plans that are responsive to resource specialist concerns. As an example, operating procedures for fire suppression in wilderness has undergone major changes over the past four years.

C. The Link to Policy

This plan is based on and in compliance with the following policies.

- ✚ **Wildland and Prescribed Fire Management Policy, Implementation Procedures and Reference Guide, August 1998**
- ✚ **Federal Review and Update of the 1995 Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy and Program Review, January 2001**
- ✚ Wildland Fire Use Implementation Procedures Reference Guide (May, 2005)
- ✚ **Forest Service Handbook (FSH) 5109**
- ✚ **Forest Service Manual (FSM) 5100**

D. The Link to Land and Resource Management Planning

This plan is a detailed program of action to carry out fire management policies to achieve resource management and fire protection objectives as defined in the Salmon and Challis National Forest LRMP. The authorities to manage wildland fires for resource benefit and to suppress unwanted wildland fires within The Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness (FC-RONRW) are derived from these LRMPs. Specific LRMP language specific to fire suppression, fire use and fuels management can be found in appendix xxx of this document.

E. Authorities

FSM 5101 describes the authority for fire management activities on National Forest System Lands.

FSM 5108 lists pertinent references for guidance on the minimum standards and procedures for wildland fire management. FSM 5109.19 describes the content of a Fire Management Plan.

Since this plan tiers to the Final Environmental Impact Statements and Records of Decision that form the legal basis of the LRMPs of both Forests, it thereby complies with the requirements of the National Environmental Protection Act.

This plan also complies with the following Acts and Decisions through the underlying Forest Plan Environmental Impact Statements, Records of Decision and resulting Land and Resource Management Plan, both in their original forms and as amended:

- ✚ The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA): by assigning Resource Advisors to protect cultural resources.

- ✦ **The Endangered Species Act (ESA):** through the emergency consultation process when Threatened or Endangered species or their habitats are threatened by wildland fire.
- ✦ **The Clean Water Act:** through the assignment of Resource Advisors who provide input to water related issues.
- ✦ **The Central Idaho Wilderness Act:** through line officer and wilderness specialist coordination.
- ✦ **PACFISH:** through the Forest Plans as amended.
- ✦ **The National Forest Management Act:** through the Forest Plans.
- ✦ **The 1964 Wilderness Act:** as refined by the Central Idaho Wilderness Act Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness (FC-RONRW)
- ✦ **Multiple Use and Sustained Yield Act of 1960:** through Forest Plans.
- ✦ **National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969:** through Forest Plans and amendments
- ✦ **Forest Rangeland Resources Planning Act (RPA) of 1974:** through Forest Plans
- ✦ **National Forest Management Act (NFMA) of 1976:** through Forest Plans

SECTION II – RELATIONSHIP TO LRMP AND FIRE POLICY

A. Salmon and Challis Land and Resource Management Plans

This plan implements the decisions regarding fire and fuels management made in the following documents. These decisions and documents provide the legal basis for fire management activities on the Salmon-Challis NF.

- ✚ **Land and Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision, 1987, Salmon National Forest**
- ✚ **Land and Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision, 1988, Challis National Forest**
- ✚ **Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness Wildland Fire Use Management Guidebook**

B. National Fire Management Policy

Forest Service policy and direction relevant to this plan include the following.

- ✚ **Wildland and Prescribed Fire Management Policy, Implementation Procedures and Reference Guide, August 1998**
- ✚ **Federal Review and Update of the 1995 Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy and Program Review, January 2001**
- ✚ **Wildland Fire Use Implementation Procedures Reference Guide (May, 2005)**
- ✚ **Forest Service Handbook (FSH) 5109**
- ✚ **Forest Service Manual (FSM) 5100**

C. Salmon and Challis Forest-wide Conditions, Goals and Objectives

Specific goals, standards and guides, as prescribed by the Salmon National Forest Land Management Plan and Challis National Forest Land Management Plan are shown in appendix **xxx** of this document.

Both Forests were combined to form a single administrative unit in the late 1990's. Until the next Land Management Planning cycle, this Fire Management Plan will continue to apply to both the Salmon and Challis Land management Plans.

SECTION III – WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

A. General Management Considerations

- ✦ Wildland Fire Use will be implemented to the degree possible, as a means of gaining desirable fire effects, within those areas where fire use is acceptable.
- ✦ Aggressive initial attack will be undertaken on most fires outside fire use areas as well as those within fire use areas that have a high potential for escape or exceed seasonal prescriptive parameters.
- ✦ An Appropriate Management Response will be determined for each fire that exceeds initial action or exceeds fire use prescription.
- ✦ A WFSA will form the basis for AMR decisions when wildland fire use is not an option.
- ✦ The selected AMR strategy may change over the course and life of a wildland fire.
- ✦ The goal of ARM selection will be to implement both LRMPs, specifically to achieve the indicated degree of resource protection while maintaining firefighter and public safety, protecting private property, and protecting resource values at cost commensurate with values to be protected.
- ✦ Firefighter and public safety will be the primary consideration during implementation of the Fire Management Program.
- ✦ The BLM Salmon and Challis Field Offices are interagency partners with Salmon-Challis National Forest. The BLM provides one full time and one part time employee in the Interagency Dispatch Center located in Salmon. The S-C has a goal of continuous improvement of interagency relationships.
- ✦ Adherence to Forest Service Policy: All actions taken during the implementation of this plan will be evaluated for consistency with FS Policy. If any part or portion of this plan is found to be inconsistent with FS Policy that portion or part may be amended or abandoned.
- ✦ Collaborative processes: Collaboration will be focused on other Federal agencies, State Agencies, County Agencies and local governments. The purpose of collaboration will be to help develop agency actions that are as consistent as possible with the goals and objectives of cooperating governmental entities.
- ✦ Informing and educating the public about the wildland fire environment: Several activities that inform the public about wildland fire are ongoing across the Forest. These activities include the Smokey Bear Program in local schools, informative and educational articles in local papers as well as web-based information.
- ✦ Priority setting, for both suppression and wildland fire use, will take into account social and economic considerations including firefighter and public safety, threats to private property, threats to natural resource values and wilderness values. Fire Management Zone prioritization will be done by the assigned duty officer and affected Ranger. Forest level prioritization will be done by the Forest Duty Officer with input from Zone Duty Officers.
- ✦ The Salmon-Challis will pursue agreements with R-1 Regional Office and adjoining Forests for direct initial attack support.

B. Wildland Fire Management Goals

The following goals are derived from the LRMP's.

- ✦ *Provide a cost effective level of fire protection to minimize the combined costs of protection and damages, and prevent loss of human life (Salmon LRMP).*
- ✦ *Use prescribed fire to treat hazardous fuel conditions, accomplish range improvement, wildlife habitat improvement, and to create a diversified Forest condition when it is cost efficient (Salmon LRMP).*
- ✦ *Develop a well-planned and executed fire protection and fire use program that is cost efficient and responsive to land and resource management goals and objectives (Challis LRMP).*
- ✦ *Maintain fire suppression capabilities which allow an appropriate suppression response to all wildfires (Challis LRMP).*
- ✦ *Use prescribed fire to accomplish resource management objectives (Challis LRMP).*
- ✦ *Achieve a program where firefighter and public safety is the highest priority in every fire management activity (National Fire Plan)*
- ✦ *Manage wildland fire and implement the use of prescribed fire wherever appropriate as tools to meet resource management objectives as described in the Salmon and Challis National Forest Land and Resource Management Plans.*
- ✦ *Maintain an efficient and effective organization for the suppression of wildfires, at a minimum cost, consistent with the values at risk.(Challis LRMP)*

While most of these goals pre-date the Comprehensive Strategy, the National Fire Plan, and the Cohesive Strategy, they are consistent with these later documents. These goals then are strategic in nature with these specific plans providing further refinement.

1. Forest Fire Management Objectives for 2007

- ✦ Continue to implement the approved organization from the March 2004 Leadership Team decision, and recommendations from the 2003 General Management Review (*GMR*).
- ✦ Implement Appropriate Management Response to the degree practicable.
- ✦ Continue to establish values at risk in support of AMR decisions.
- ✦ Continue the development of fire use plans for areas outside wilderness as identified in the Challis LRMP, specifically, MA's 2, 11, 16 and 23.
- ✦ Define and develop Forest wide Fire Monitoring Plan.
- ✦ Continue the completion of structure protection plans within the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness as well as general Forest areas.
- ✦ Revise, implement and evaluate WildCad run cards to improve initial suppression responses.
- ✦ Work with the BLM to improve interagency fire management coordination.
- ✦ Continue to improve teamwork within the Fire Organization.
- ✦ Continue working closely with wilderness managers to address fire suppression and fire use issues.
- ✦ Complete a post-season After Action Review (AAR) for the 2007 season that includes all employees.
- ✦ Implement recommended changes resulting from the AAR for 2006.

- ✚ Develop and implement Appropriate Management Response protocols that are consistent with current LRMPs and responsive to resource management needs.
- ✚ Refine this Fire Management Plan to make it more user-friendly.
- ✚ Begin preparation for a Fire Preparedness Review to be conducted by the Intermountain Regional Office, time to be announced.
- ✚ Accomplish assigned hazardous fuels reduction targets.

C. Wildland Fire Management Options

Both *LRMPs* provide for the full range of fire management options, including suppression (confine, contain, control and monitoring), wildland fire use for resource benefit, management ignited prescribed fire and non-fire applications, however there are limitations on where and when these options can be used.

The following are elements of the wildland fire management program on the Salmon-Challis National Forest.

1. Wildland fire suppression:

Both LRMP's allow the use of the full range of fire suppression strategies, including control, contain, confine and monitoring. Both Forest Plans support the concept of Appropriate Management Response.

Limitations:

1. The Challis LRMP does not limit the selection of strategies.
2. The Salmon LRMP specifies that the selected strategy for initial response to a new ignition will be "control" except above 7,000 feet.
3. The Salmon LRMP allows the use of confine or contain strategies above 7,000 feet and for those fires that occur before May 10 or after September 30.

2. Wildland Fire Use

The Salmon National Forest *LRMP* limits Wildland Fire Use to the *FC-RONRW* while the Challis plan allows fire use within the *FC-RONRW* and some other areas.

Limitations:

1. The Challis LRMP allows wildland fire, outside the FCRONRW, within its MAs 2, 11, 16 and 23 under prescribed parameters. These parameters are displayed under the Fire Management Unit (*FMU*) in this document.
2. The Salmon LRMP has no provisions for wildland fire use outside the FCRONRW.
3. Fire Management Policy does not allow the use of person-caused fires for resource benefit.
4. Fire Management Policy does not allow a fire managed under a suppression strategy to be converted to wildland fire use.
5. The Challis LRMP management direction for MA 24, corridors specifies that "Fire management activities in the corridors will be compatible with fire management activities in the adjoining areas." This is interpreted to mean that fires within the corridor will be

managed under the same strategy as fire on adjoining wilderness lands, so when a fire use fire burns across a cherry-stem road it does not have to be declared an suppression fire and the acres burned within the cherry stem would be considered fire use acres.

3. Prescribed Fire

Both *LRMPs* provide direction for the use of prescribed fire. Both plans provide direction for the use of prescribed fire to treat activity fuels as well as to manage vegetative conditions.

Limitations:

1. The Region 4 Prescribed Fire Management Handbook will be used to guide operations on the Salmon-Challis and is hereby incorporated into this plan by reference.
2. Projects that include prescribed burning will include this activity in the project related NEPA analysis and decision.
3. Vegetative prescriptions will include specific resource objectives to be accomplished with this tool.

1. Non-Fire Applications

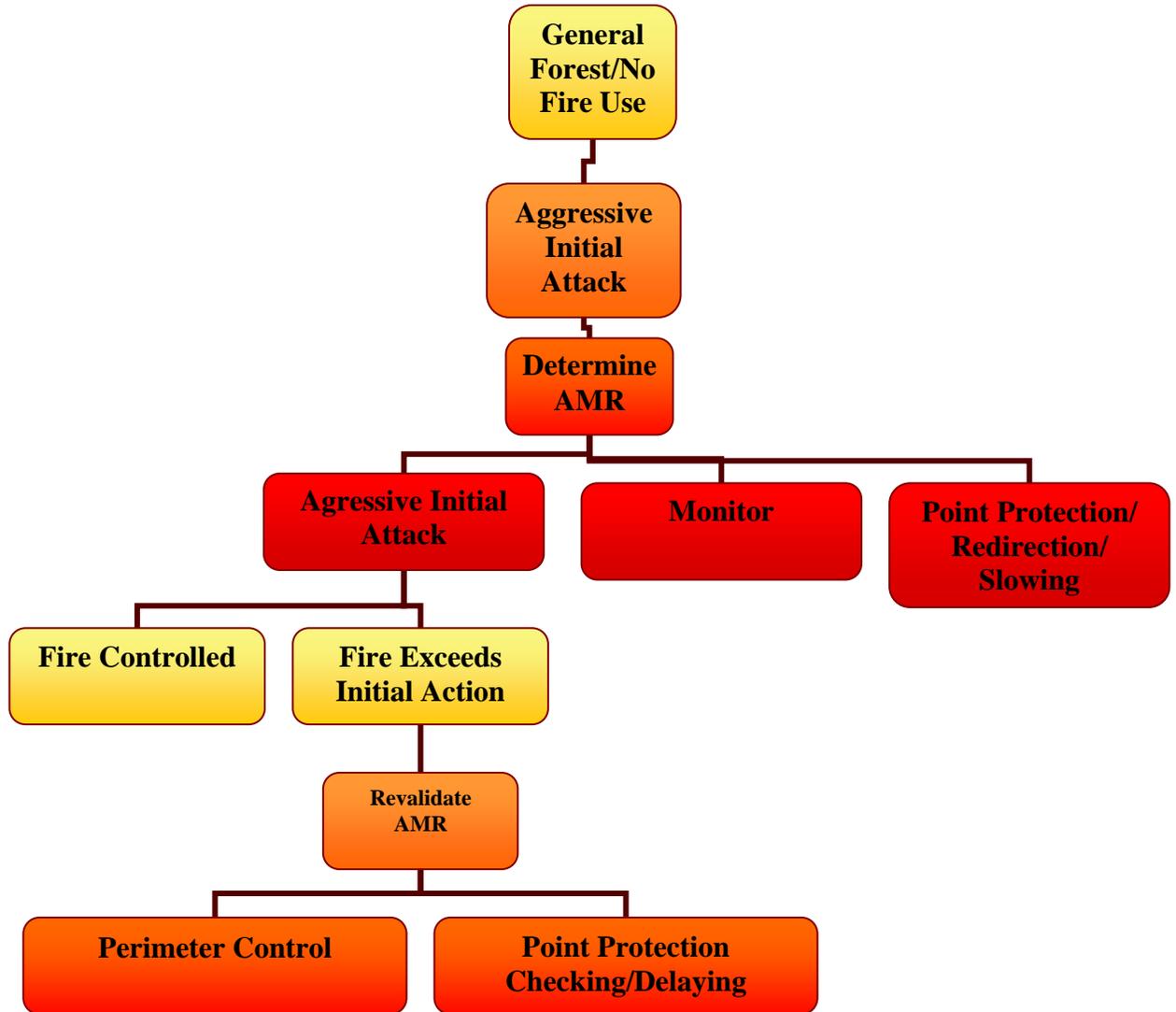
Both *LRMPs* provide for the use of non-fire applications to reduce fuel loading. Non-fire treatments can include fuel breaks, ladder fuel reduction, thinning from above and below, mechanical fuel removal for utilization, and mechanical fuel bed modification such as chopping, etc.

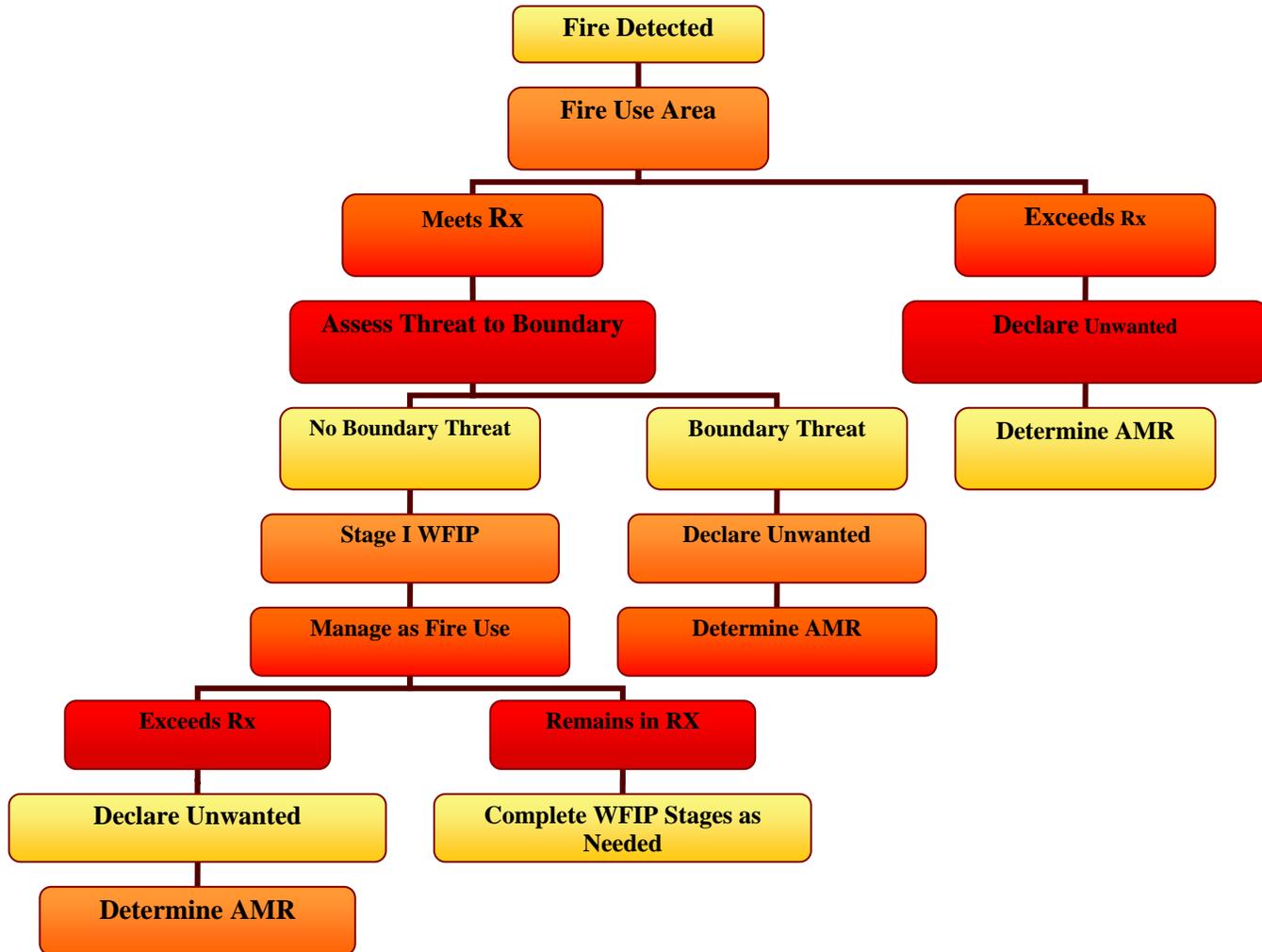
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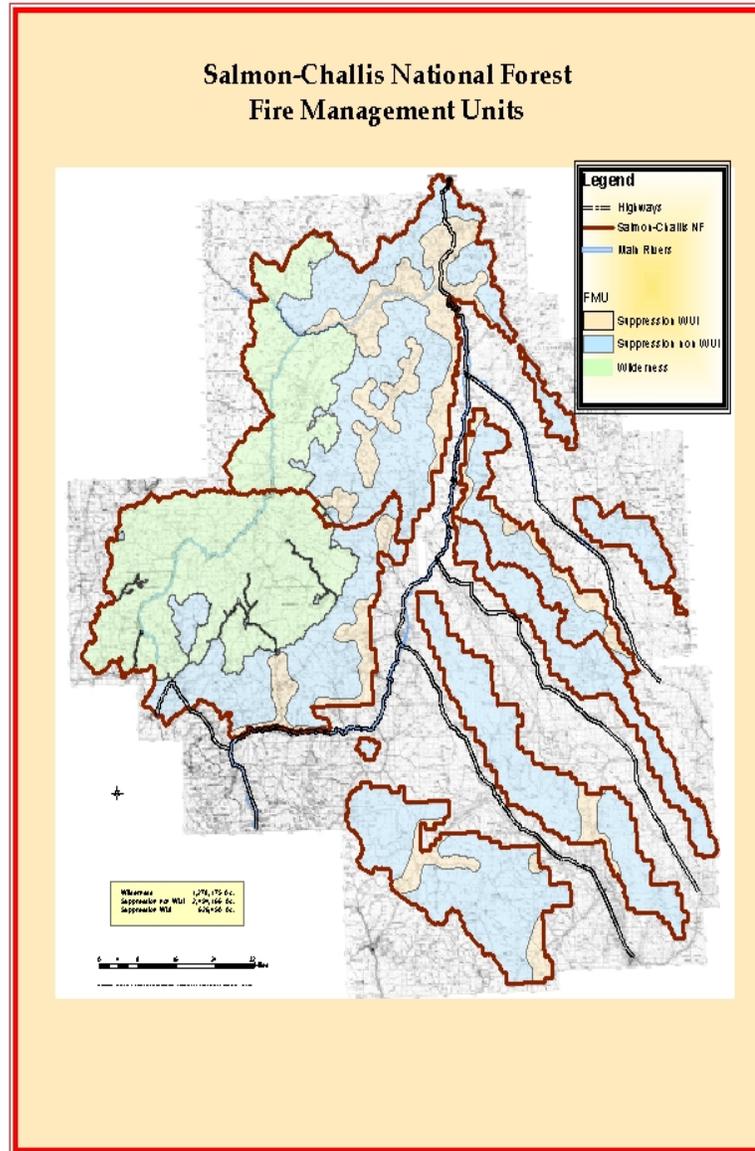
1. All such activities will comply with the corresponding Forest Plan and will be based on project level NEPA that addresses potential resource impacts that may result from mechanical fuel treatments.

D. Wildland Fire Management Options by Fire Management Unit

There are 7 Fire Management Units (FMUs) on the Salmon-Challis National Forest that are based on risk and general fire management strategies. General and specific risk, strategies, tactics, and values will be identified and displayed. Fire Management Units and Fire Management Areas will be reviewed and updated annually.







2. Salmon-Challis National Forest Fire Management Units

Fire Management Unit 1:

Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness

This Fire Management Unit is 1,278,175 acres in size and stretches from the Montana/Idaho boundary south to the Stanley Basin along the western boundary of the Forest. The area is dominated by the Middle Fork of the Salmon River and a number of major tributaries including, Camas Creek, Loon Creek, Marble Creek, Little Creek, Indian Creek, Pistol Creek, the Rapid River, Soldier Creek, Sulphur Creek, Elk Creek, and Warm Springs Creek. One other major stream, Horse Creek is included in the area and is the only major stream not a tributary of the Middle Fork of the Salmon River.

This FMU encompasses the Salmon-Challis National Forest portion of the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness. The Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness Fire Use Guidebook provides fire management direction for the Fire Management Unit. This direction includes the option of Wildland Fire Use. The unit is sub-divided into three fire risk zones based on fuels, topography, weather patterns, and proximity to areas of concern. These zones represent a relative measure of the threat to life, property, or the management area boundary depending upon time of season and environmental conditions. Brief summaries of each zone are given below.

Fire Management Guidelines

1. **Complete Stage I WFIP on all new starts**
2. **Manage as fire use unless determined to be unwanted fire**
3. **If determined to be unwanted fire, complete WFSA to determine Appropriate Management Response**

Boundary Fire Risk Zone

The highest risk wildland fire use areas are within this zone. Fire starts in this zone rarely pass the initial decision criteria used in determining its candidacy for fire use. This zone lies adjacent to areas of concern and comprises 499,670 acres of the FMU. The area's fuels, topography, prevailing wind pattern, and the defensibility of the point or area of concern determine its width. Ignitions that occur within this zone in early season (before August 1st) and under drought conditions (>90th percentile ERC) are assessed as candidate fires using a Stage I WFIP. However, they are often out of prescription due to high potential for escape, so are managed under an Appropriate Management Response.

The fire ecology of this zone is quite diverse since it is not an ecological zone but rather a wilderness boundary buffer zone. The wilderness boundary ranges from stream bottom to mountain top so the buffer is likewise diverse. This zone is of concern where fire prone habitats provide a route for fire to escape into the portion of the Forest that does not allow wildland fire use. Slope gradients generally decrease at higher elevations but wind exposure increases so wind driven stand replacement fires are more common. Candidate fires that are located where there is limited fuel continuity or are

limited in spread potential by weather changes may still be managed for resource benefit.

Fire use in that portion of Risk Zone 1 that adjoins the Boise National Forest will be more likely since they now have a fire use program in the area that adjoins the wilderness. Decisions to use fire in this area would be coordinated with the Boise.

✚ **Fire Management Guidelines**

- 1. Complete Stage I WFIP on all new starts**
- 2. Manage as fire use unless determined to be unwanted fire**
- 3. If determined to be unwanted fire, complete WFSA to determine Appropriate Management Response**

✚ **Fire Risk Zone 2 – Salmon River Breaks**

This zone was created using a 5,000 ft contour to identify the Salmon River Breaks. Fire use in this zone, called the early season/drought zone, (98,494 acres) is can be limited due to length of season, potential fire severity, risk associated with fire potentially crossing a boundary zone or threatening private in-holdings located in the wilderness corridor of the Salmon River.

The Salmon River Breaks is well known for its rapidly spreading fires in rugged terrain. Under early season or drought conditions, the risk of down and up-canyon spread from fire initiating in this area can be significant. The potential threat to life or loss of homes along the wilderness interface limits the opportunities for wildland fire use in the western portion of the Frank Church Wilderness.

The fire ecology of this zone is best described by fire groups two and three since they dominate the zone. These groups represent the warm, dry habitat types that support open forests of ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir, and warm, moist ponderosa pine habitat types, and warm, dry Douglas-fir habitat types dominated by ponderosa pine. These timber-grass types are best classified into Fire Behavior Fuel Models 2 and 9 and National Fire Danger Rating System (*NFDRS*) Fuel Model C.

Elevations typically range from 2,200 to 7,000 feet mean sea level. Slopes are very steep with cliffs and rock outcrops common. Fuels are often discontinuous because of exposed rock and shallow and unproductive soils. High temperatures and drought conditions are common.

Fires often start on higher ridges and spread by rolling material. Strong diurnal weather patterns result in brisk up-slope and up-canyon winds during the day with more-gentle down-slope and down-canyon winds at night. A thermal belt often establishes above an inversion layer where smoke often accumulates. Prevailing westerly winds often complement up-drainage winds. Counter-intuitively, the downriver flank of fires burning here are the most difficult to control.

This zone includes the locations of several fires that have resulted in fatalities and near-misses. Ship Island, Cramer, and Butte fires all occurred here.

Steep terrain, rolling material and rapid fire spread are common factors in such fires.

✚ **Fire Management Guidelines**

1. **Complete WFSA on all new starts that transition to extended attack**
2. **WFSA should include one alternative for perimeter control and one alternative for point protection, redirection and slowing strategy**
3. **Validate selected WFSA alternative to determine the need to change Appropriate Management Response**

✚ **Fire Risk Zone 3 – Interior**

The third zone is referred to as the interior zone (680,011 acres). Ignitions occurring within the interior zone should normally pass the initial decision criteria, concerning fire use candidacy, due to reduced threat to life, property, or the management area boundary. Provided other criteria are met, ignitions in this area can proceed to the Wildland Fire Implementation Plan (*WFIP*) Stage II analysis.

The fire ecology of this zone is diverse ranging from habitats common to the breaks to cool and moist sub-alpine areas. Because of this, fire spread can begin as soon as early summer on steep, high energy sites and perhaps not at all in more moist habitats. Since fires here can be long duration, a wide range of fire types can be involved over the course of a fire season. Fire effects can also vary widely from non-lethal underburning to major stand replacing runs. Smoke production is likewise variable.

The primary fire objectives for this unit are:

- ✚ Permit lightning caused fires to play, as nearly as possible, their natural ecological role within the wilderness.
- ✚ Suppress human caused fires and fires determined to be inappropriate for fire use management using the most appropriate management response.

Specific Fire Management objectives for the unit are:

- ✚ The use of fire as a means of restoring and perpetuating natural ecosystems within the wilderness.
- ✚ Develop and manage a program for using fire use to achieve wilderness objectives.
- ✚ Provide direction regarding appropriate suppression responses including any constraints on techniques, methods, tools and equipment.
- ✚ Maintain cost effective prescribed fire and fire suppression programs within the wilderness.
- ✚ Provide a smoke management program that reduces the impacts of residual smoke on air quality.

✚ **Fire Management Guidelines**

1. **Complete Stage I WFIP on all new starts**
2. **Manage as fire use unless determined to be unwanted fire**
3. **If determined to be unwanted fire, complete WFSA to determine Appropriate Management Response**

4. WFSA should include one alternative for perimeter control and one for point protection, redirection and slowing tactics

Fire Management Unit 2:

Suppression-Wildland Urban Interface

This FMU is 626,450 acres in size and is scattered across the Forest primarily along major river and stream corridors. Included within the unit are areas bordering the Salmon River, Owl Creek, Panther Creek, Napias Creek, Silver Creek, Spring Creek, Indian Creek, North Fork of the Salmon River, Sheep Creek, Dahlonga Creek, Fourth of July Creek, Hayden Creek, Big Timber Creek, Little Timber Creek, Williams Creek, Williams Lake, Morgan Creek, Challis Creek, Garden Creek, Pass Creek, Wet Creek, Big Lost River, East Fork of the Big Lost River, Rio Grand Canyon and Antelope Creek.

Lands within or in proximal to this FMU are classified as Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). Included are the “at-risk” communities identified by the State of Idaho as a part of the National Fire Plan as well as those identified as WUI and Wildland urban intermix communities using the Forest Wildland Urban Interface definition.

FMU Strategic and Measurable Management Objectives:

1. Suppress 90% of reported fires at 5 acres or less.

Management Constraints or Criteria Affecting Operational Implementation:

1. See MA specific guidelines in Appendix O of this plan.

Historical Fire Occurrence:

1. See the fire history map in Appendix AA of this plan.

Fire Management Situation: Fuel buildup and the recent drought cycle make this FMU the highest priority due to the presence of communities, rural development and municipal watersheds.

 **Fire Management Guidelines**

1. **Initial Attack all new starts if firefighter safety can be assured**
2. **Prepare a WFSA for all fires transitioning to extended attack**
3. **WFSA should include one alternative for perimeter control and one for point protection, redirection and slowing tactics**

Fire Management Unit 3:

Suppression-Non-Wildland Urban Interface

This FMU is 2,040,315 acres in size. The area includes most of the upland area of the Salmon-Challis National Forests. Mountain Ranges dominate this Fire Management Units and these mountain ranges can be used to describe the area. Included in the FMU is the Southern end of the Bitterroot Range, the Southern part of the Beaverhead Range, The Salmon River Mountain Range except for the portion included in the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness, the upper northeastern quarter and entire northern half of the Lemhi Range, the Lost River Range, the White Knob Mountains and the eastern portions of the Boulder Mountains and Pioneer Mountains.

This Fire Management Unit encompasses the majority of non-wilderness lands managed under the provisions of the Salmon-Challis National Forests and the Land and Resource Management Plans. These plans specify the suppression of all wildland fires as the primary fire management strategy for use within the FMU. Wildland Fire Use is not authorized within this FMU.

Fire management direction comes from Federal Wildland and Prescribed Fire Management Policy and from the Salmon National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan and the Challis National Forest Land Management Resource Plan.

FMU Strategic and Measurable Management Objectives: Suppress 90% of reported fires at less than 5 acres.

Management Constraints or Criteria Affecting Operational

Implementation: See MA specific guidelines in Appendix O of this plan.

Historical Fire Occurrence: See the fire history map in Appendix AA of this plan.

Fire Management Situation: Increasing fuel loads secondary to insect and disease mortality and forest succession have resulted in moderate to extreme fire risk. Aggressive suppression efforts are required where resource values are high. Other areas with minimal resource values at risk may be managed by confine or contain strategies that include monitoring. In all cases, firefighter and public safety, along with suppression costs will be major considerations when selection management strategies.

 **Fire Management Guidelines**

- 1. Initial Attack all new starts if firefighter safety can be assured**
- 2. Prepare a WFSA for all fires transitioning to extended attack**
- 3. WFSA should include one alternative for perimeter control and one for point protection, redirection and slowing tactics**

Fire Management Unit 3: Wildland Fire Use, Non-WUI

The following areas were previously managed primarily under a suppression strategy. The Challis LRMP allowed for wildland fire use but plans had not been developed until 2006.

Borah Peaks Fire Use Area (MA 16)

FMU Identifier: Borah Peak (Challis LRMP Management Area #16)

FMU Acreage: 156,220 Acres

General Risk Category: Low, interior Lost River side, moderate east of divide.

Fire Behavior indicator: ERC

NFDRS Weather Station: Road Creek-101816, Mulkey Bar- 101906, Copper Basin-101804

Administrative Unit: Lost River Ranger District

Unit Fire Manager: South Zone Fire Management Officer

Responsible Dispatch Office: Central Idaho Interagency Coordination Center (CIICC)

Communities adjacent to this FMU: MacKay, Pahsimeroi valley.

Prescriptive parameters for wildland fire use:

FMU Characteristics: from LMRP

The Borah Peak Management Area comprises the central one-third of the Lost River Mountain Range. Its boundaries can be easily reached by the Double Springs Pass Road, Pass Creek Road, and other roads and trails leading off Highway 93 and Pahsimeroi Valley roads.

This unit is characterized by high peaks, large cirque basins, steep slopes and narrow canyon bottoms below cirque basins, leading to alluvial fans. The area is very rugged, with outstanding geological features due to repeated glaciation. One of the most outstanding features is Borah Peak, the highest mountain in Idaho, reaching 12,655 feet in elevation.

The diversity of vegetation produces a broad spectrum of life zones ranging from semi-arid shrublands to alpine rock/scree. Several vegetation types are present, including sagebrush and grass, mountain mahogany, spruce, subalpine fire, whitebark pine, and Douglas-fir. The steep slopes and high mountain tops and ridges provide a scenic backdrop to the valley ranches and communities. The surrounding valleys include irrigated hayfields and pastures, and riparian willow/cottonwood plant communities.

Current uses include grazing, minerals and gas exploration, timber and firewood harvest, and dispersed recreation including hunting, fishing, hiking, mountain climbing, and cross-country skiing.

Major scenic attractions include Mt. Borah and "Little Switzerland" in the upper reaches of the Pahsimeroi. The back country nature and diversity of vegetation types provide habitat for elk, mule deer, bighorn sheep, pronghorn antelope and a multitude of other game and non-game animal species. Historically, mountain goats occupied the range, but today, none exist. There are several small high mountain lakes, most of which contain fisheries.

***Desired Future Conditions** – The majority of this area is proposed for inclusion into the National Wilderness System. It will therefore remain in its existing state and its wilderness attributes will be protected. The remaining lands outside of the proposed wilderness will be managed with modest improvements.*

FMU Strategic and Measurable Management Objectives- Prepare a Stage I analysis on all ignitions within this FMU. Manage 100% of ignitions that meet Stage I requirements as a means of reducing fuels and providing desirable ecological effects. Socio-political considerations, including smoke impacts will be the primary reason to suppress fires beyond National, Regional and Forest Preparedness level restrictions.

Management Constraints or Criteria Affecting Operational

Implementation- There are no known biological concerns that would constrain fire use. Cultural resources and recreation improvements may require

management actions for protection. Line officer will consult resource specialists during WFIP preparation to identify specific resource concerns and required mitigation actions.

Historic Fire Occurrence: This FMU has had limited large fires in the past. Most fires have been small and were successfully suppressed.

Fire Management Situation: Wildland fires have been suppressed in this FMU since the completion of the Challis LRMP in 1987. Limited spread potential exists due to the presence extensive exposed rock along the divide between Lost River and the Pahsimeroi Valley. Isolated pockets of vegetation do exist but lack of connectivity precludes fire spread. The Challis BLM Field Unit is working on a Fire Use Plan for the upper Pahsimeroi, adjoining this FMU, so provide a future option for inter-agency fire use.

The area is very rugged and terrain poses a threat to firefighter safety and makes suppression operations potentially expensive.

 **Fire Management Guidelines**

1. **Complete Stage I WFIP on all new starts**
2. **Manage as fire use unless determined to be unwanted fire**
3. **If determined to be unwanted fire, complete WFSA to determine Appropriate Management Response**
4. **WFSA should include one alternative for perimeter control and one for point protection, redirection and slowing tactics**

Pioneer Mountains Fire Use Area (MA 11)

FMU Identifier: Pioneer Mountains (Challis LRMP MA #11)

FMU Acreages: 245,972 Acres

General Risk Category: Low to moderate.

Fire Behavior indicator: ERC for long term, BI for short term

NFDRS Weather Station: Road Creek-101816, Mulkey Bar- 101906, Copper Basin-101804

Administrative Unit: Lost River Ranger District

Unit Fire Manager: South Zone Fire Management Officer

Responsible Dispatch Office: Central Idaho Interagency Coordination Center (CIICC)

Communities adjacent to this FMU: MacKay

Prescriptive parameters for wildland fire use: Use FCRONRW parameters.

FMU Description: from LRMP

The Pioneer Mountains Management Area lies between the Mackay Front Management Area and the Sawtooth National Forest with which it forms a common boundary. Access is provided by the Trail Creek Road in the north, and the Cherry Creek Road from Antelope Creek and Highway 93, in the south. The road through Copper Basin connects the two routes.

The mountainous terrain varies from alpine basins, flats and benches, to rocky walls and mountain peaks. Glacial cirques with vertical relief of 3,000 to 4,000 feet are found at the base of many peaks. The Pioneer Range is the second highest in Idaho with Hyndman Peak exceeding 12,000 feet. There are gently, rolling hills in the eastern portion of the area.

Numerous lakes and streams are located in the unit. Vegetation at the lower elevations consists of Douglas-fir and lodge pole pine scattered within a sagebrush and grass community. Spruce and wet sedge meadows occur throughout. At higher elevations, vegetations range from subalpine forests to alpine meadows under the barren mountain summits. The large and varied topographic features supports habitat for diverse communities of plants and animals, and is characterized with high quality vegetative diversity. This area is classified as a western spruce/fir forest and sagebrush steppe ecosystem.

Current use includes livestock grazing, timber harvest, mining activity, hunting, fishing, camping, backpacking, horseback riding and snowmobiling.

Elk and mule deer are the most common big game species. Pronghorn antelope, mountain goat, bighorn sheep, mountain lion and black bear also inhabit the unit. Cold water resident lake and stream fisheries are present throughout the area.

***Desired Future Conditions** – the management area will remain essentially unchanged and undeveloped. Dispersed recreation activities and opportunities will dominate the management strategy. Highly productive range lands will be intensively managed. That portion of the area proposed as Wilderness will remain in its natural condition.*

FMU Strategic and Measurable Management Objectives- Prepare a Stage I analysis for 100% of natural ignitions that occur within the FMU. Manage all selected use fires to optimize desired fire effects, within constraining parameters.

Management Constraints or Criteria Affecting Operational

Implementation- Grazing, recreation use, stands managed for timber production, mining activities and hunting occur within the Pioneer Basin. These activities may preclude fire use within some areas during use periods. Stage I analysis will include consideration of these values.

Historical Fire Occurrence-

This FMU has not experienced large fires since the 1890-1920 era with the exception of fires in 1962 (East Fork Big Lost) and 2005 (Wildhorse). Most fires have been suppressed successfully.

Fire Management Situation-

This FMU includes extensive areas of exposed rock so fire spread potential is limited particularly in the south portion of the FMU. Lower elevations include grazing that limits fire spread. Numerous recreation sites increase the potential for person-caused fires. Limited roads and steep terrain make suppression difficult. Fire regimes of higher elevation areas tends to be stand replacing. Fire starts tend to be infrequent and generally lightning caused.

✚ **Fire Management Guidelines**

1. **Complete Stage I WFIP on all new starts**
2. **Manage as fire use unless determined to be unwanted fire**
3. **If determined to be unwanted fire, complete WFSA to determine Appropriate Management Response**
4. **WFSA should include one alternative for perimeter control and one for point protection, redirection and slowing tactics**

Seafoam Wildland Fire Use Area (MA 2)

FMU Acreage: 37,684 Acres

General Risk Category: Moderate.

Fire Behavior indicator: ERC for long term, BI for short term

NFDRS Weather Station: Ezra Creek-101314, Bonanza-101801, Little Creek-101805

Administrative Unit: Middlefork Ranger District

Unit Fire Manager: South Zone Fire Management Officer

Responsible Dispatch Office: Central Idaho Interagency Coordination Center (CIICC)

Communities adjacent to this FMU: None

Prescriptive parameters for wildland fire use: Use the FCRONRW parameters.

FMU Characteristics: from LRMP

The Seafoam Management Area is an exclusion surrounded by wilderness in the southwest corner of the Frank Church—River of No Return Wilderness. It is completely surrounded by lands administered by the Salmon- Challis National Forests. Access is provided by Highway 21 and the Forest Service system road over Vanity Summit.

Elevations run from 6,000 to 9,300 feet with steep slopes, high rocky peaks, deep valleys, and glaciated cirque basins characterizing the area. The western border of the area fringes on some high mountain lakes that offer good scenic quality. Vegetation varies from Douglas-fir/pine grass to subalpine fir types above 6,000 feet. The area is classified as a grand fir/Douglas-fir ecosystem.

Current uses include mining, big game hunting, fishing, camping and backpacking. Most roads and developments in the area are associated with past or present mining activity. Lead, zinc, silver and gold were the leading minerals produced, beginning after 1880. Elk and mule deer are the most common big-game species encountered. This area may play a role in the Gray Wolf Recovery Plan, which is to be completed at a later date. Anadromous fisheries are also present in Rapid River and its tributaries.

Desired Future Condition – The character of the land will remain essentially unchanged. Man’s activities will be noticeable, primarily through mining activities. The area will provide a wide variety of outdoor recreation opportunities.

FMU Strategic and Measurable Management Objectives- Conduct Stage I analysis on 100% of natural ignitions. Of those fires approved for fire use optimized fire effects by allowing fire to spread to the extent possible.

Management Constraints or Criteria Affecting Operational Implementation-

Abundant historic mining activity and the presence of cultural resources limit the potential for fire use in some areas. Stage I analysis will include consideration of these resources. Fire protection plans may be needed in some instances. Higher elevation sites offer higher fire use potential.

Historical Fire Occurrence- There have been no large fires within the FMU since 1924. Small fires have been suppressed successfully. Fire occurrence is low.

Fire Management Situation- Since fire has not visited most of the area for over 100 years, fuels are abundant. Fire use is desirable, where resource concerns allow, to increase vegetative diversity and to reduce fuels. This FMU is totally surrounded by the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness where fire use has occurred for 20+ years. The inclusion of this FMU for fire use may allow increased opportunities for fire use in the adjoining wilderness. Fire use costs may be higher here due to the need to protect cultural resources. Resource specialist input will be key to the development of Stage I analysis.

 **Fire Management Guidelines**

1. **Complete Stage I WFIP on all new starts**
2. **Manage as fire use unless determined to be unwanted fire**
3. **If determined to be unwanted fire, complete WFSA to determine Appropriate Management Response**
4. **WFSA should include one alternative for perimeter control and one for point protection, redirection and slowing tactics**

Furnace Creek Wildland Fire Use Area (MA23)

FMU Identifier: Furnace Creek (Challis LRMP MANAGEMENT AREA #23)

FMU Acreage: 12,975 Acres

General Risk Category: Moderate to high.

Fire Behavior indicator: ERC

NFDRS Weather Station: Ezra Creek-101314, Bonanza-101801

Administrative Unit: Salmon/Cobalt Ranger District

Unit Fire Manager: North Zone Fire Management Officer

Responsible Dispatch Office: Central Idaho Interagency Coordination Center (CIICC)

Communities adjacent to this FMU: Meyers Cove

Prescriptive parameters for wildland fire use: Use the FCRONRW parameters.

FMU Characteristics: from LRMP

The Furnace Creek Management Area is located along the northern boundary of the Forest adjacent to the Frank Church—River of No Return Wilderness and the Salmon-Challis National Forests. The area is roadless with the exception of the poorly maintained road along Camas Creek which forms this unit's western boundary. This road originates at Meyers Cove.

The topography ranges from gentle slopes of benches and bottomlands to near vertical headwalls in cirque basins. The Furnace Creek watershed is entirely within and comprises the majority of this Management Area. Elevations rise in excess of 9,000 feet.

Vegetation consists of extensive stands of Douglas-fir, lodge pole pine, Englemann spruce, and subalpine fir. Small stands of quaking aspen are also present. The timber has suffered from an extensive pest epidemic.

Curl-leaf mountain mahogany, sagebrush and bunchgrass exist on drier sites. Extensive riparian/wet meadow areas are present within the unit. The ecosystem is classified as western spruce/fir and grand fir/Douglas-fir.

Current use consists primarily of hunting and some fishing. Elk hunting is popular in this unit. The area supports elk, mule deer, bighorn sheep, black bear and anadromous fisheries.

Desired Future Conditions – The management area will remain essentially undeveloped.

FMU Strategic and Measurable Management Objectives- Complete a Stage I analysis on 100% of natural ignitions. Manage fire selected for fire use to maximize desirable fire effects. Desirable fire effects are reduction of surface fuels and regeneration of older stands to increase age class diversity.

Management Constraints or Criteria Affecting Operational

Implementation- This FMU is bounded on the west and south by FCRONW where fire use is allowed. This east to west oriented drainage lines up with prevailing winds so fire spread will tend to be toward managed lands to the east and north where fire use is not allowed. Private in-holdings to the north along Castle Creek and Meyer's Cove are a concern. Some exposed rock provides limited spread potential for fire low and south of Furnace Creek. Elsewhere continuous forest canopy provides a route for fire to escape. Long duration fires with high ERC values would make fire use difficult if not impractical. Fire use opportunities would likely be constrained to late summer or early fall with active management likely.

Historical Fire Occurrence- No large fires have been recorded within the FMU for over 100 years. Small fires have been successfully suppressed.

Fire Management Situation- Abundant fuels, larger areas of unbroken tree canopy and the lack of recent fire make this drainage susceptible to stand replacing fire. These factors also make fire use within this FMU problematic. Stage I analysis should consider time of season, historic weather patterns as well as predicted weather. A careful selection of fires plus well considered resource protection planning will allow late season fires to accomplish resource

objectives. The need for active management should be considered in a "go" decision.

 **Fire Management Guidelines**

- 1. Complete Stage I WFIP on all new starts**
- 2. Manage as fire use unless determined to be unwanted fire**
- 3. If determined to be unwanted fire, complete WFSA to determine Appropriate Management Response**
- 4. WFSA should include one alternative for perimeter control and one for point protection, redirection and slowing tactics**

SECTION IV – WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM COMPONENTS

A. General Implementation Procedures

The Fire Management on the Salmon-Challis consists of the suppression, fire use and fuel management implementation programs. The suppression and fire use programs will be implemented through Appropriate Management Response (AMR). The implementation procedures for these specific components are addressed in this section.

The implementation of the fire management program will be guided through the analysis of historic fire behavior indices *NFDRS*. This analysis provides a series of threshold values used to determine when and where specific portions of the fire program will be implemented. This helps fire managers and line officers to quickly narrow the range of management options for specific fires and select the most appropriate response for the given time and place.

Approved Fire Use Areas

- ✦ Natural ignitions will be evaluated as potential fire use candidates and suppressed only when it is determined they are not in an area where fire use is allowed or when they are not in prescription.
- ✦ All fires determined to be person-caused will receive a suppression response determined through an Appropriate Management Response analysis.
- ✦ A minimum tools analysis will also be completed by the responsible line-officer or their acting for suppression responses within Wilderness.

General Forest (Non-Fire Use Areas)

- ✦ Suppression resources will be dispatched to the fire location and provide a strategic fire size-up.
- ✦ The initial response will generally be suppression response, the intensity of which will be based on current and expected fire conditions as documented in WILDCAD run-cards for the area.
- ✦ If the fire is not controlled and escalates further actions will be determined using the WFSA process to select the Appropriate Management Response.
- ✦ The daily validation of WFSA or any resulting revisions of the WFSA, will form the basis for selecting the Appropriate Management Response which may change over the course of a long duration fire.

Lightning Plan

- ✦ The Lightning Plan, found in Appendix M, will be implemented during high fire-load periods when the number of new fires exceeds the capability of CIICC.
- ✦ The decision to implement the Lightning Plan will be made by the FFMO, Zone FMOs and the Dispatch Center Coordinator.
- ✦ The plan will stay in effect until this group decides to revert to routine operations.

Specific Implementation Procedures for Wildland Fire Use

The Strategic Size-up portion of the Stage I *WFIP* (or equivalent) will be completed for each new wildland fire detected. This assessment and subsequent procedures are outlined in the Wildland Fire Use Implementation Procedures Reference Guide (February 2005).

Wildland fires reported to CIICC that are in or suspected to be in an area where fire use is allowed will be reported to the Zone Duty Officer responsible for the area. The Zone Duty Officer will assist the responsible District Ranger in completing the Stage I WFIP on fires within their administrative boundaries.

The Zone Fire Manager will then communicate the outcome of the Stage I WFIP to CIICC. If the appropriate management response is suppression, a wilderness “minimum tools analysis” will be completed and the results conveyed to CIICC for the initial response. If the outcome is fire use, CIICC will place the fire on the list of active fire use fires.

The **Stage I WFIP** is the Initial Fire Assessment step. It is necessary to establish the foundation information critical to manage the fire. It documents the current and predicted situation and all appropriate administrative information. It aids managers by providing them with decision criteria to make the initial decision whether to continue management of the fire for resource benefits or to take suppression action. It also provides the manager with a recommended response action.

If the appropriate management response is determined to be initial attack, because the fire is out of prescription, then there is no need to continue the Stage 1 beyond the Fire Situation Assessment. However, if a confine/contain strategy is being considered then it is necessary to complete a basic WFSA to support this decision.

B. Implementation Procedures for Fire Suppression

Both the Salmon and Challis *LRMPs* allow a full range of appropriate management responses but under different circumstances and in different locations. Forest Plan direction forms the basis for all fire management actions including fire use and suppression.

District Rangers who are designated as qualified by the Forest Supervisor, will be responsible for the management of fires at the Type 3, 4 and 5 levels, including developing and signing a WFSA if needed. The Forest Supervisor is responsible for all Type I and II fires, and all Wildland Fire Use events that require the completion of a Stage III and/or the assignment of a Fire Use Team.

The Salmon-Challis Forest Supervisor, or their designated acting, retains the authority to sign all WFSAs and Delegation of Authority to type I and II Incident Commanders.

A suppression response will be initiated in following situations:

All person-caused wildland fires:

- ✚ Whenever prescriptive criteria are outside of the range to allow wildland fire use for the individual Fire Management Unit.*
- ✚ All wildland fires in areas where wildland fire use is not an option.*

The level of suppression response intensity may range from monitoring to aggressive initial attack. The chart shown in Figures 3 & 4 may be used to help determine the suppression response intensity.

Appropriate Management Response

The appropriate management response will be based on:

- ✚ The range of available management responses for the specific WFU.*

- ✚ The current Staffing Level for the specific *WFU*.

Not all available resources can be used without prior authorization of the appropriate Line Officer. When such authorization is required, the Zone Duty Officer will consult with the appropriate Line Officer and convey specific equipment use authorization to CIICC before actions are initiated. These include:

- ✚ Retardant use within wilderness and/or near streams, rivers or riparian areas Riparian Habitat Conservation Area (*RHCAs*) unless there is an imminent threat to firefighters or the public.
- ✚ Aircraft use within wilderness for either initial attack or support purposes.
- ✚ Use of mechanized equipment within wilderness, such as chain-saws, pumps etc.
- ✚ All actions that constitute a "wilderness intrusion" will be documented in a manner prescribed and reported to the appropriate wilderness manager.

Figure 3 Appropriate Management Response

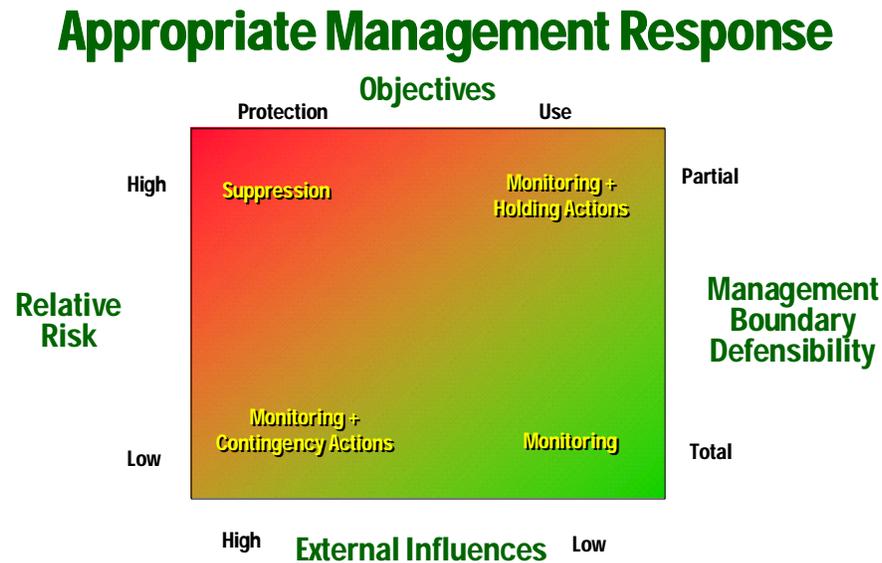
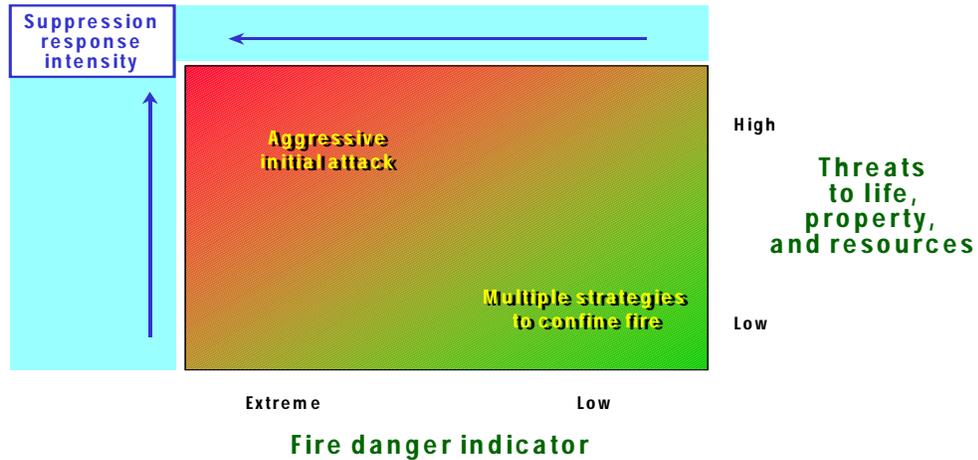


Figure 4 Appropriate Management Response

Appropriate Management Response



Range of Potential Fire Behavior

Fire behavior on the Forest varies greatly both temporally and spatially. Fire season can start as early as March and extend as late as November if dry and warm weather prevails. Fires that occur prior to spring green-up (that usually occurs by May 15th) generally burn through fine dead surface fuels with spread halted by aspect change and canopy cover. Larger surface fuels and ground fuels are usually too wet to burn. These fires are usually person caused since lightning is rare during this time period.

The period from the beginning of green-up until early to mid-July is generally one of lower fire risk. Green fuels serve as a heat-sink so tend to retard fire spread. Also, this time period generally sees increased rain associated with monsoonal flow that often persists until early to mid July. Fires are often started by lightning that accompanies weather systems but are mostly confined to snags and hollow live trees. Surface spread is generally limited to litter beneath trees.

The weather after early to mid July tends to increasingly dry with fewer thunderstorms. As this pattern develops, dry lightning storms can ignite numerous fires in increasingly dry forested areas. Seasonal curing of grasses occurs during mid to late July providing an abundance of fuels to carry surface fires. Forests are also becoming dry enough to support surface fire spread. Fires are generally fast moving on open southerly and westerly aspects and tend to be slow spreading under standing timber. During this time the Salmon River Breaks tend to be dry enough for large fires to occur there.

August tends to be a hot and dry period with occasional dry lightning-storms. Persistent high pressure often develops and keeps skies sunny, winds light and conditions hot and dry. Fires burning under these conditions can result in smoky skies and persistent fire spread. This period can also see the passage of low pressure systems that originate in the Gulf of Alaska. These systems begin to appear as the summer weather pattern begins to transition to an autumnal pattern. These systems may be either wet or dry depending on the system and the storm track. Weather in advance of the cold front usually produce hot

and very dry south or southwest winds which can greatly increase the spread of ongoing fires. After the front passes, winds shift to northwesterly and can be very dry and vigorous. Under these conditions rapid fire growth is very possible especially at higher elevations that are more exposed. Fuel moistures are at the lowest level for the year.

Storms can also be wet with a cooling trend that may signal the end of critical fire season or just an interlude. These storms have been called the “August Singularity” but this term is misleading since the arrival of this pattern only happens in August about half the time. If this pattern does not develop by mid-September fire season may persist until shorter days and cooler nights bring an end to significant fire spread.

If this pattern does develop and produce rain and cooling, the period of warm and dry weather that occurs afterwards is often called “Indian Summer”. The weather often turns hot and dry through late September or early October. Fire behavior moderates during this period due to longer nights and shorter burn periods. Frost can occur at higher elevations at any time during late summer to early fall causing live vegetation to cure rapidly after it is frost-killed. Fuel availability is often at its highest level during this time.

As days become shorter in late September through mid-October fire spread potential is limited to south and west aspects for only a few hours per day. North aspects do not receive enough sun to support persistent fire spread. Rare events, such as vigorous cold front passages, can result in broad scale burning but these episodes generally last for 1-3 days.

Review of representative weather stations on the Salmon-Challis NF indicates that Energy Release Component (ERC) and Burning Index (BI) are reliable fire danger indicators and can be used to estimate potential fire behavior. Energy Release Component (ERC) charts and Burning Index charts are included in the CICC NFDRS plan. Pocket cards are provided to firefighters for Fuel Model T (Sagebrush – Grass), Fuel Model G (Short needle conifer with heavy dead), and Fuel Model C (ponderosa pine and short grass) for the breaks country. These cards are available online at <http://famweb.nwcg.gov/pocketcards/east1.htm> or in the Appendix R.

Preparedness Actions

Annual Prevention Program

The fire prevention activities on Forest are accomplished by Fire Management Staff and the interagency visitor information staff. A typical range of program efforts is undertaken including signing, press releases and public service announcements, educational programs targeting school children and forest visitors and coordination with local cooperators during periods of high fire danger. Each Zone has written a fire prevention plan and updates are added annually.

The Salmon-Challis National Forest receives moderate visitor use in dispersed backcountry settings as well as at developed recreation facilities. Recreational use resulting in the potential for human caused fire begins typically after Memorial Day and continues through the big game hunting seasons in October and November.

The Forest participates in the Smokey Bear Program to maintain public awareness of the need to prevent wildfires. Smokey Bear related fire prevention materials are distributed

at agency offices as well as through educational programs that focus on local school children. Forest employees dressed as Smokey Bear participate in local festivals and parades throughout the Forest.

Contacts with Forest visitors at the office locations across the Forest provide information regarding current fire danger and tips for camping and backcountry use. Recreation staff including wilderness rangers and personnel staffing developed recreation sites make frequent one on one contact with recreational users.

Indirect contacts are made through radio, television, newspapers, and signing. Press releases, informal contacts, and feature articles are also used to get the message to the public.

The Forest and Zone Fire Management Officers routinely coordinate fire prevention activities with Federal, State and local cooperators and communities.

Special Orders and Closures

Authority – The Regional Forester and Forest Supervisor have authority to issue restrictions and closures of National Forest Lands. The District Rangers, who are responsible for implementation and enforcement of the restrictions, will be contacted to ensure that proposed restrictions are coordinated across the Unit as appropriate. Closures will be consistent with those developed by the Southern Idaho Restrictions Group.

See the Closure AAR in Appendix xxxx.

Industrial Operations and Fire Precautions

Zone Fire Management staff, Facility Managers, or their appointed representatives, typically make inspections of all Forest facilities periodically. Measures to reduce the risks of and hazards from wildfire are to be taken immediately whenever problems are noted.

Rights-of-way in the form of roads and powerlines are periodically reviewed to minimize the potential for fire starts through the special use inspection process.

Power-lines traverse the Forest at numerous locations. Inspections and follow through in removing vegetation that could fall across the line and start fires is required. (Powerline Fire Prevention Handbook FSH 5109.21)

The Timber Sale Administrator is responsible for completing fire prevention inspection of the Timber Sale Contractor's equipment and sale area. The Forest Service Representative and/or Sale Administrator will enforce all requirements of the contract related to fire prevention precautionary measures. All internal combustion engines that operate on the Forest must have properly working spark arresters. Agency personnel conduct spark arrester inspections. The inspection procedures are listed in the spark arrester guide. (Spark Arrester Guide – General Purpose and Locomotives, Volume 1, PMS 430-2 and Spark Arrester Guide – Multipurpose Small Engine, Volume 2, PMS 430-2) Reports of these inspections should be routed to the appropriate Zone FMO.

Inspection of and requirements placed on Special Use operations will include fire prevention considerations. Compliance inspections are completed in accordance with

contract requirements or per manual direction in the case of special use permits. Inspections are for the protection of the Forest and the operators.

Annual Fire Training Activities

All agency personnel holding a REDCARD in a position that requires duty on or near active fires are required to attend an 8-hour annual fire refresher. This refresher includes fire shelter deployment and recurrent safety topics such as Standards for Survival; Look Up, Look Down, Look Around; or similar safety oriented training (ref. FSM 5109.17). Attendance at the refresher training and successful completion of the appropriate level of work capacity testing is a pre-requisite for receipt of a red card.

The use of the Six Minutes for Safety program is encouraged on a daily basis for all fire management and fire production resources.

Basic Firefighter training (S-130, S-190) is offered annually to new employees and interested members of local cooperating agencies and fire departments.

Zone Fire Management Officers are the primary point of contact for agency employees from other resource disciplines or support functions to coordinate training needs.

Fire training is available on-Forest, within the Region and Nationally. The Forest Fire Training Coordinator is responsible for disseminating fire training information and making nominations for off-Forest classes and coordinating and teaching on-Forest classes.

Required fire training for AD employees as well as agency employees will meet the standards set forth in FSM 5109.17 or the Interagency Standards for Fire and Aviation Operations (REDBOOK).

Fire Management Funded Training

Every year questions arise about the funding of fire training for non-fire employees. As budgets become tighter these questions become more frequent. This letter is intended as a guideline for fire managers to refer to when asked these questions. The fire budget is not robust enough to provide all the training needed by fire employees to meet their career goals, let alone provided funding for all non-fire employees.

There are times when fire should pay for non-fire employees to attend training sessions or workshops. These are as follows:

- ✚ When an employee is a member of a Type I or II Incident Management Team and they are expected to attend team meetings. This would generally be limited to Command and General Staff positions but may include some Unit level positions.
- ✚ When a Forest employee is asked to attend a training to work toward filling a shortage position, whether at the National, Regional or Forest levels. Logistics positions are good examples.

In general, employees who are attending fire training to meet Forest support needs, such as basic firefighter training, or who are doing so for career development, should be



funded through their project area. The exception to this may be the individual who has demonstrated a commitment to fire support over the years, particularly if the function they work for cannot provide the training.

Training prioritization for both fire and non-fire people funded through fire funds is also important. The following are generalized priorities.

- ✚ Training that is required for the continued efficient operation of the forest fire organization. This would include training to meet position specific competencies and to fill shortage positions.
- ✚ Training to qualify for, or maintain qualifications for, *IMT* positions.
- ✚ Training for fire personnel to meet out-year goals for the Forest as well as employee development.
- ✚ Training for non-fire employees who show a commitment to fire support.

Qualifications and Needs Assessment

The Salmon-Challis National Forest Fire Qualification committee reviews the list of personnel qualified by position to undertake assignments in support of wildfire or prescribed fire. The Qualification Committee also identifies positions where insufficient personnel are qualified to meet short-term and mid-term wildland fire management needs.

The needs assessment is forwarded to the Idaho Training Oversight Committee for discussion at the Area level.

Fire Season Readiness

Annual Preparedness Reviews

The Forest Fire Management Officer, in conjunction with the District Ranger and Zone Fire Management Officer, annually conducts readiness inspections for all suppression modules. **This will be completed no later than June 25th. The goal of fire managers is to have all suppression resources trained and available for assignment by the middle of June.** Areas that may be covered include safety drills, knowledge of standard fire orders and watch out situations, hose-lay and line construction skills, station maintenance, training records, and equipment knowledge and maintenance. Format for annual review is included in the appendices.

The Forest Aviation Officer, in conjunction with the District Ranger and Zone Fire Management Officer, annually conduct readiness inspections for all aviation resources stationed on the Forest. **This will be completed no later than June 20.** The goal of this inspection will be to ascertain that all agency aircraft operations are prepared for the season and compliant with the Interagency Helicopter Operations Guide (IHOG) as well as other manual direction.

Season Start and Stop Criteria with Typical Dates

Established on-dates for fire modules are based on *NFMAS* funding levels. This also authorizes employment of seasonal personnel that will continue through the end of fire season. The *NFMAS* fire season as determined by historical analysis of fires is June 1 through September 30. This corresponds to the period of time when approximately 95% of all fire starts occurred.



Updated
Forest
Policy

Forest and District-level cache considerations with stocking levels and management

The purpose of the Supervisors Office fire cache in Salmon is to support extended attack and one (1) type 3 fire organization for up to 48 hours without support from geographic area caches. The purpose of District fire caches is to support re-supply for initial attack and the equipping of local militia. District and Forest caches are available to support Incident Management Teams for short periods if the Forest fire workload allows. Caches are not a source of supply for *IMTs* to use to meet fire loss tolerance standards.

Detection

Lookouts: The Forest has a number of lookouts but only four are staffed on a routine basis: Long Tom, Pinyon, Stein and Twin Peaks. These lookouts provide both fire detection and critical communication links.

Aerial Patrols: An aerial patrol will typically occur after each lightning storm or daily when the planning level is III or above. Aerial patrols may be requested at anytime by duty officers through the Dispatch Duty Officer or Forest Duty officer. Those serving as aerial observers will be trained in the use of maps, radios and GPS as well as being qualified as an ICT5. CICC will utilize the BLMs Automated Lightning Detection System to help determine where detection flights are needed. All aerial observers must meet the 5109.17 standards for this position.

Routes: Routine daily aerial patrol routes will generally be those shown above. Variations in these routes will occur with requested by a Zone or Forest Duty Officer.

Discovery: Upon discovery of any wildland fire or unreported controlled burn, information will be collected using the Great Basin Initial Attack Fire Size Up Card, and communicated to the Dispatch Office where this information will be input to a Strategic Fire Size-Up portion of the Stage I.

Notification: Forest and Zone Duty Officers will be notified of new fire starts in a timely manner, generally within 5-10 minutes of discovery for Zone and 10-20 minutes for Forest. Zone Duty Officers will be notified at critical time, as identified in the Dispatch Triggerpoints for Duty Officer Notification, Appendix F.

Fire Weather and Fire Danger

Weather Stations

See Appendix P for weather station information.

NFDRS Operations Plan

See Appendix P for the Forest NFDRS Operations Plan.

Policy, Forest Service Manual and Handbook Direction

Aviation Management

The Forest has aviation plans for four helicopters and one fixed-wing aircraft. See Appendix C for all aviation related plans.

Initial Attack

Information Used to Set Initial Attack Priorities

In instances where multiple wildland fire starts require prioritization, the Forest Duty officer and Zone Fire Managers will consult with Rangers, Staff Officers and the Forest Supervisor, as needed, to set priorities for initial attack. The following criteria will be considered when assigning incident priorities (adopted from the National Mobilization Guide):

The potential to destroy or harm human life:

The potential to destroy:

- ✚ Communities
- ✚ Community infrastructure (including long term effects to economic sustainability and viability)
- ✚ Historically significant cultural resources
- ✚ Commercial business
- ✚ Principle residence (year round homes)
- ✚ Non-principle residence (seasonal homes, cabins, etc.)
- ✚ Out-buildings (barns, unattached garages, utility buildings, etc.)
- ✚ Potential to adversely impact cultural and natural resource values
- ✚ Probability of meeting incident objectives

Criteria for the Appropriate Initial Attack Response

All initial attack actions will be those identified on the WILDCAD RUNCARDS, provided to CIICC by Zone Fire Managers, for the appropriate National Fire Danger Rating System index threshold for ERC and BI. These thresholds are described as Low, Moderate, High, or Extreme and have a progressively greater level of response. These initial actions were designed with the following considerations in mind.

- ✚ Available fire management options prescribed by the LRMP for the specific area
- ✚ Current and expected fuel and weather conditions
- ✚ The probability the fire will continue to spread
- ✚ Availability of resources
- ✚ Ability to maintain firefighter safety
- ✚ Risk the fire poses to the public
- ✚ Management discretion and flexibility

Confinement as an Initial Action Strategy

Fires may be managed under either plan using a confinement strategy if it is determined to be the Appropriate Management Response. The initial decision to manage a fire under this strategy should be followed by a WFSA that documents the rationale. This would include safety, potential resource loss, threat to private property and cost.

Confinement can also be a strategic selection through the *WFSA* process when the fire is expected to exceed initial attack capability.

Response Times

Response times (the time from dispatch of a resource until they are in motion) for all suppression resources will be predicated on the current *NFDRS* Indices as they relate to historic fire growth. As weather and fuel conditions become drier and fire spread

potential greater, response times would decrease. These response times are documented in the Specific Staffing and Action Guide in Appendix T.

Restrictions and Special Concerns

Fire management tools, such as dozers, retardant, aircraft and fireline explosives are available for use although some restrictions do apply. Both Forest Plans are mute on everything but dozers.

Tractor/Dozer Use

Social and Political Concerns

Residents of the communities within the proclaimed boundaries of the Salmon-Challis, as well as those who are proximal to it, are generally supportive of the fire management program. Wildland fire use is generally supported because of the positive effects on big-game habitat, although some outfitter and guides may be individually impacted by specific fires. Wildland fire suppression is a source of seasonal employment within the local communities. Purchasing in support for fire management is often done within local communities when possible.

The impact of smoke is perhaps the greatest concern within local communities. Both suppression and wildland fire use fires contribute to the load of smoke that affects the area. Smoke from suppression fires is less of an issue than is smoke from fire use events because the public sees the latter as discretionary. During the past few years local residents have experienced periods of heavy smoke concentrations that have affected their physical and mental health.

Extended Attack and Large Fire Suppression Determine Extended Attack Needs

A wildland fire is considered to be in extended attack status:

- ✚ Suppression activity for a wildfire that has not been contained or controlled by initial attack or contingency forces; and
- ✚ For which more firefighting resources are arriving, en route or being ordered by the initial attack incident commander.

Extended attack needs will be determined by the following factors as well as specific FMU objectives.

- ✚ Current and predicted fire behavior
- ✚ Current and predicted weather
- ✚ Suppression resource availability

A Wildland Fire Situation Analysis (WFSA) must be completed and approved prior to the initiation of a new strategy and within 12 hours of the fire escaping initial actions (FSM 5131.1).

Implementation Plan Requirements – WFSA Development

A Wildland Fire Situation Analysis must be completed when:

- ✚ Wildland fire escapes or is expected to escape initial action.

- ✚ A wildland fire use fire shall be declared an unwanted fire if it exceeds or is anticipated to exceed the Maximum Manageable Area, or is no longer achieving resource management objectives; and the Fire Use Manager (*FUMA*) determines that the situation cannot be mitigated with available resources, within 48 hours, or the mitigation actions specified in the *WFIP* have failed. A *WFSA* will be prepared to define the appropriate future management action.
- ✚ A prescribed fire exceeds its prescription and is declared a wildland fire.

The responsible District Ranger (or their qualified acting) will develop a *WFSA*; select the preferred management strategy, and act as agency administrator for all Type 3, 4 and 5 incidents. The District Ranger will advise the Forest Supervisor on the preferred management strategy but the FS will make the decision. Selection of the preferred management strategy will not consider positive resource benefits resulting from wildfire as an objective.

Alternatives developed through the Wildland Fire Situation Analysis process must be consistent with the goals of the Forest Land and Resource Management Plan and must address the following:

- ✚ Firefighter and public safety
- ✚ Expectation that the alternative can be implemented
- ✚ Each alternative must be accompanied by a strategic plan of action
- ✚ The probability of success and consequences of failure must be assessed and displayed
- ✚ Each alternative will display the estimated numbers of acres burned, times for containment and control, suppression costs and resource damage

- ✚ Every *WFSA* will have a least cost alternative. See criteria for approval in the appendices (Large Fire Cost Containment)

Complexity Decision Process for Incident Management Transition

An Incident Complexity Analysis, found in Appendix “L” (for Type 1 or 2) and “M” (for Type 3, 4 or 5) of the REDBOOK, will be used as a guide for ICs, fire managers and Agency Administrators to evaluate emerging fires in order to determine the level of management organization required to meet agency objectives. This will assist in identifying resource, safety, and strategic issues that will require mitigation. (*NFES 2724*, 10-6).

The need to transition from initial attack to extended attack and from extended attack to Type I or II Incident Management Teams will be predicated on the following:

- ✚ An Incident Complexity Analysis
- ✚ Current fire management workload
- ✚ Expected fire management workload based on historic records
- ✚ Local, Regional and National management considerations
- ✚ Firefighter and public safety considerations
- ✚ Local political concerns

During the transition period to a more complex level of management, local resources assigned to the fire will be managed within the capability of the assigned IC. All resources will remain engaged in the accomplishment of incident objectives although

they may be disengaged to a safer location. Resources will be deployed to accomplish the following priorities:

- ✚ Protection of public safety
- ✚ Protection of firefighter safety
- ✚ Protection of the wildland urban interface
- ✚ Fire suppression actions such as establishing an anchor point or constructing control line
- ✚ Protection of high resource values
- ✚ Logistics support activities for the incoming team

Local suppression resources assigned to the incident at the time of transition to a Type I or II IMT may be either assigned to the fire for the remainder of their 14 day tour, or released to their home unit. This issue will be agreed to at the time of transition of command, between the Incident Commander and the Agency Administrator. The Forest will make resources available to the extent possible. Factors to be considered in making this decision include:

- ✚ Initial attack responsibility areas, team and Forest
- ✚ Current and expected initial attack load and resource need
- ✚ Mental and physical condition of assigned Forest resources

The Forest recognizes that the time period that begins just before transition, and extends until the new team is in place and has control, is the most hazardous time on an incident. However, the Forest also recognizes that each incident needs to be managed by an Incident Commander qualified at the current and projected complexity level so transition of command has to occur. While there is risk involved with transition there is also risk associated with an IC performing beyond their qualifications. A balance of these risks must be achieved. Consider the following:

- ✚ Do you anticipate an increase in complexity to the next higher IC level? Make the decision sooner rather than later.
- ✚ Is there truly a compelling need for transition of command during the operational period?
- ✚ Are local resources and the IC mentally and physically exhausted to the point this is more of a risk than a mid-shift transition?
- ✚ What is the worst thing that could happen if resources are pulled from the fire because of complexity issues, exhaustion or safety?

The Forest FMO is responsible for overseeing the completion of the following prior to the arrival of a Type 1 or Type 2 Incident Management Team on the Unit. The local unit is responsible for the actual WFSAs development. The Agency Administrator will be responsible for the IMT in-briefing and the delegation of authority:

- ✚ WFSAs complete with applicable incident objectives and a selected alternative to guide tactical suppression actions. The Forest Supervisor (or acting) will select the preferred alternative and sign the Wildland Fire Situation Analysis.
- ✚ Agency Administrator Briefing guide completed
- ✚ Delegation of Authority completed and signed by the Forest Supervisor

Unit Example of Delegation of Authority for Incident Commander

See Appendix E for an example of a Letter of Delegation to a type I or II IMT.



Forest Policy

Exceeding Existing WFSAs – Selection of New Strategy

A new *WFSAs* is required when the objectives of the existing *WFSAs* have been compromised (or are expected to be compromised). The revised *WFSAs* will include a new set of objectives and a range of alternatives and associated fallback strategies and worst-case outcomes.

All Salmon-Challis National Forest Wildland Fire Situation Analyses will have a least-cost alternative.

Given the inherent inaccuracies in developing estimated costs associated with each alternative, exceeding the cost estimate for the preferred alternative should not in and of itself generate a need to revise the existing *WFSAs*.

Minimum Impact Suppression Tactics (MIST) Requirements

Implementation of the appropriate management response for all wildfires, within and external to designated wilderness areas, will utilize appropriate suppression tactics to minimize ground-disturbing activities. Fire suppression actions in wilderness will be based on a minimum tools analysis that is intended to determine how management objectives can be met with the least impact to wilderness values.

The requirement to use *MIST* tactics within wilderness is at the discretion of the responsible line officer who must weigh the potential resource impacts of aggressive fire fighting against the increased commitment of resources to implement *MIST* tactics.

Minimum Impact Suppression Tactics can be found in the Incident Response Pocket Guide, page 84.

Other Fire Suppression Considerations

Both the Salmon and Challis Land and Resource Management Plans were amended by INFISH and PACFISH. The following requirements are derived from the Forest Plan as amended.

Petroleum based fuel:

- ✚ Store all fuel outside of *RHCAs*. During refueling, ensure that no fuel enters a water source or is spilled within the riparian area.
- ✚ All refueling sites shall have a spill containment kit (adequate to contain the amount of fuel being stored) on site while there are petroleum-based products being stored.
- ✚ All trucks hauling fuel for project implementation shall have Forest Service approved spill containment kits in the truck as well as at the storage area.
- ✚ Provide containment for any operation using a pump connected to a five-gallon gas container, to prevent any fuel spill or leakage from entering the stream channel or riparian area.

Pump screening:

- ✚ Screen pump suction hoses with a 3/32 inch or smaller mesh size screen with the water velocity at the screen not exceeding 0.4 feet per second.

Wildland Fire Use

Wildland fire use refers to the management of natural ignited wildland fires to accomplish specific, pre-stated, resource objectives. Specific locations where fire use is approved are included in the Land and Resource Management Plan. This section of the Plan provides resource managers with the information they will need to complete a *WFIP* for a specific fire.

The Wildland Fire Use Implementation Procedures Reference Guide, 2005, will guide the fire use program.

Objectives

The objectives for the fire use program are included in the *LRMP* for both Forest. The Salmon plan says “Use unplanned ignition on areas within wilderness identified in this plan to achieve management objectives.” The Challis plan says “Permit lightning-caused fires to play, as nearly as possible, their natural ecological role within wilderness.” Implementing this direction is the objective of the fire use program.

Factors Affecting Decision Criteria for Wildland Fire Use

The decision to manage a wildland fire for resource benefit will be guided by the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness Fire Use Management Guidebook. This guidebook includes several criteria to consider when making fire use decisions. These criteria include:

- ✚ Time of year (seasonality)
- ✚ Position of the ignition within the FMU
- ✚ Fire danger indicator (ERC)
- ✚ The relative risk of the fire creating negative economic values (cost + net value change)
- ✚ Potential impacts to non-fire use areas

The CIICC Fire Intelligence specialist produces a daily intel report that provides current information needed for fire use decisions. This information needs to be reviewed by Fire Managers recommending fire use decisions, on at least a semi-daily schedule.

Additional risk indicators and special considerations for fire use include:

- ✚ The approach of high use recreation periods, hunting season etc.
- ✚ Politically sensitive periods such as the Lewis and Clark celebration in 2005

Fire use decisions are supported by a network of *RAWS* stations located across the Forest. The specific details of these weather stations are included in the Appendix P.

A representative weather station, or stations, will be selected for each fire use event. *NFDRS* Indices are available for both historic analysis and for current and expected conditions. *FMU* descriptors will include a historic fire analysis for the index that provides the best fit for predicting potential fire spread.

Preplanned Implementation Procedures

Wildland fire use would be implemented whenever and where ever possible. Wilderness managers consider the effects of natural fire to be desirable, regardless of intensity so fire. The following factors may affect the use of ignitions.

- ✚ Potential for the fire to escape the MMA
- ✚ The potential for the fire to impact private property

- ✦ The airshed is smoke laden to the degree news use fires are not politically acceptable
- ✦ National, Regional and Local preparedness levels indicate a lack of resources to adequately manage a new use fire
- ✦ Other socio-political considerations

Since there is no way to set threshold values for these factors it is important to review them periodically.

Impacts of Plan Implementation

Potential impacts resulting from the implementation of wildland fire use include the following, including potential mitigation actions.

- ✦ Smoke production may impact local and regional air quality. This potential will be mitigated by following the recommendations of the Montana-Idaho Airshed Group and public information.
- ✦ There is a potential for a fire use fire to escape the MMA and impact inholding, adjacent private lands, general forest lands and improvements. Mitigation to avoid this would include, careful design of MMA's and associated Management Action Points and Contingency Actions to protect the MMA. Contingency actions would be incorporated into the Wildland Fire Situation Analysis.
- ✦ If, for some reason, new starts cannot be managed as fire use candidates they would be managed under a suppression strategy. This loss of opportunity would reduce the potential for implementation of the fire use program but would not preclude future opportunity. Even though these fires may be managed under a suppression strategy the outcome could be exactly the same as a use fire with the only difference being the ability to claim target.

Required Personnel

The number of personnel required for an incident will vary. Management could range from a Fire Use Manager (FUMA) to a full Fire Use Management Team (FUMT). Staffing levels will be re-evaluated on a daily basis and adjusted based on potential trigger points, numbers of ignitions and size of fires, predicted weather, etc.

At a minimum, a FUMA will be assigned to every wildland fire used to achieve resource benefit (FSH 5145.3). Every wildland fire use requires that the line officer designate a qualified FUMA who is responsible for all aspects of the WFIP. The level of management may change during the life of the fire, as determined by the Line Officer, during daily validation (5140, WO Amendment, 2004).

Implementation and management of a wildland fire use program will generally consist of the following staffing:

Low complexity events:

- ✦ Fire Use Manager (FUMA2 or FUMA1)

Moderate complexity events:

- ✦ Fire Use Manager (FUMA2 or FUMA1)
- ✦ Operations Support (DIVS) or Operations Section Chief Type 2
- ✦ Logistics Support (Ground Support Unit Leader) or Logistics Section Chief Type 2

High complexity events:

- ✚ Fire Use Manager 1 (FUMA1) or properly trained type 2 IC
- ✚ Operations Section Chief Type 2
- ✚ Logistics Section Chief Type 2
- ✚ Planning Section Chief Type 2
- ✚ Long-term Fire Analyst
- ✚ Fire Use Management Teams can have three trainee positions
- ✚ Fire Effects Monitor

Staff positions that may be involved in decision processes supporting the appropriate management response include, but are not limited to:

- ✚ Zone Duty Officer
- ✚ District Ranger
- ✚ Forest FMO
- ✚ Archaeologist
- ✚ Wildlife Biologist
- ✚ Resource Advisor

Current draw down levels will be adhered to as established by the Salmon-Challis National Forest *NFDRS* Plan in appendices. Draw down levels can fluctuate on a daily basis. Decision makers need to contact the Central Idaho Interagency dispatch center for the current level.

Required fire use positions will be filled by qualified Forest employees or ordered through the dispatch system. A list of qualified Forest personnel is attached in Appendix S.

Public Involvement

Initial news queries on wildland fires will be directed to a Fire Information Officer assigned as needed. Prompt reply to such queries is essential and should include interpretation of the wildland fire use program. The Forest Duty Officer, IC or FUMA will provide periodic fire information update to the Fire Information Officer.

Requests for media visits will be directed to the Fire Information Officer and coordinated with the FUMA or Incident Commander.

A list of key agency, interagency, state and congressional delegation contacts for inclusion in each WFIP at the Stage III level will be made available.

A Fire Information Officer will either be assigned from the pool of qualified personnel on the Forest or ordered through the dispatch office.

Records

Permanent records of fire use fires will be gathered by the responsible Zone Fire Manager. At the end of the season, or when the fire is declared out, these records will be transferred to CIICC. These records will be retained in record storage as per the National direction regarding legacy fire records. The following components will be included in these records.

Approved Planning Documents

All original, signed, WFIP components, including amendments and revisions will be included in the record package.

Monitoring Reports

All monitoring records, reports and findings will be included.

Periodic Fire Assessments

Original Periodic Fire Assessments will be included.

Funding Codes and Cost Accounting

All financial records including funding codes and cost accounting documents will be retained.

Permanent Maps

One copy of all map products developed for the WFIP will be retained.

Photos and other records

Photographs and other records that substantially contribute to the understanding of the fire use event will also be included.

Cost Tracking

Cost tracking records will be maintained in a condition to facilitate efficient financial reviews.

B. Prescribed Fire

The Fire Management and Fuels programs were partially separated on this Forest during a recent reorganization. Fuels planning and timber management are now combined while fuels implementation, through prescribed burning, still resides with the Fire program. Even though there is no direct organizational tie between Fire and Fuels there is a close functional tie. This tie is necessary because of the close relationship between prescribed fire and wildland fire qualifications. Also, since fuels budgets and targets are dispersed via the fire management program there has to be close coordination. Smoke management, an important aspect of prescribed burning, is also coordinated through fire management.

Fire and Fuels/Timber Management staffs have started to explore how to improve cooperation between these programs. This includes fuels planning and wildland fire use participation.

Planning and Documentation

Annual Activities

The primary annual activity that supports the fuels program is the planning process from project inception to NEPA decision. This is now and will continue to be the most demanding work of the fuels program. The Forest has several planning project underway but none completed for the out year.

FMU Specific Prescribed Fire Strategy

The most aggressive fuels treatment projects are situated in the “Suppression, Wildland Urban Interface” FMU. The current emphasis is along the North Fork Salmon corridor where high fuel continuity and private dwellings complicate protection. Projects in this area are focused on removal of ladder fuels and reduction of surface fuels to improve firefighting efficiency.

Within the “Suppression, Non-Wildland Urban Interface” FMU the focus of the fuels program is to reduce the threat wildland fire poses to ecosystem health by emulating fire effects through vegetative manipulation. While this does include prescribed fire it also includes the removal of trees that would not have grown under a historic fire regime. The outcome of this treatment would be reduced surface fuel loading, a reduced rate of recruitment of large woody fuels, reduced moisture and competitive stress on remaining trees, reduced threat of extensive crown fire and a broad based improvement of general ecosystem health.

Fuel management activities within the FCRONRW may occur where high value infrastructure, such as lookouts, heritage sites, trail bridges and private inholdings are routinely threatened by fires and the cost of protection during wildland fires is very high compared to the cost of fuel treatment.

Personnel Needs for Prescribed Fire Program

The ideal organization to implement the prescribed fire program are two complex burn bosses, 6 intermediate burn bosses and 4 experienced burn plan writers. However, the program can still be implemented with fewer qualified individuals at a lower efficiency level.

The only way this organization is possible is if the Fire and Fuels Management organizations work closely together since neither have large enough organizations to meet this need alone.

Weather, Fire Effects and Monitoring

Weather, fire behavior and prescribed fire effects monitoring are described in the project specific NEPA decision, the vegetation prescription and the individual burn plan.

Weather is monitored before and during the prescribed burn to determine if prescribed weather parameters are being met. For more complex burns a spot weather forecast is generally requested to get more accurate and site-specific weather. Weather records are important for the analysis of fire effects.

Fire behavior is continually monitored during prescribed burns and provides an immediate feedback to the burn boss about how current ignition patterns are meeting objectives. Ignition patterns are dynamic over the course of the day and must be adjusted several times based on observed fire behavior.

Fire effects monitoring must be done to determine if the measurable objectives in the NEPA decision were met through the implementation of the prescribed burn. The monitoring plan elements depend on the objectives of the burn treatment that are detailed in the vegetation management prescription.

Prescribed Fire Project Critique

Informal reviews and after action reviews:

- ✦ A daily onsite post-burn debriefing to assess how implementation went each day and any suggestions for improvement is part of the Salmon-Challis National Forest Prescribed Fire Burn Plan (see appendices).
- ✦ Burn plan documentation requires a post burn evaluation including assessment of objective achievement, an informal unit log and after action review.

Formal Prescribed Fire reviews:

Formal prescribed fire reviews will be conducted when a prescribed fire escapes and/or an injury occurs that requires medical treatment. These reviews would be lead by the Forest Fire Manager with team members determined by the charter provided by the local line officer. Elements of these reviews may consist of the following:

Effectiveness	Safety
Organization	Qualifications
Policy implementation	Smoke monitoring
Job hazard analysis effectiveness	Information dissemination

Historic Fuel Treatment Map

A forest-wide fuel treatment history map is included in Appendix BB.

Local Prescribed Fire Burn Plan Requirements

All burn plans will be written under the agreed standard burn plan format. Elements required in the prescribed fire burn plan can be found in the implementation guide. These elements are reflected in the Region 4 Standard burn plan (see appendices).

For high complexity prescribed fires, the burn plan will be developed by or in conjunction with a Prescribed Fire Planning Specialist (FSM 5145.21). A Prescribed Fire Burn Boss Type 2 (RXB2) may develop intermediate and non-complex burn plans. Subordinates may prepare a burn plan as part of a developmental training project with assistance and review by the appropriate, qualified fire management staff.

Forest Policy

The technical review process for burn plans is detailed in chapter 3.a.5 of [The Interagency Prescribed Fire Handbook](#).

Line officer review will include a checklist that must be reviewed prior to approving a burn plan. Reviews will include a discussion of risk locally and at a program level.

The Forest Supervisor approves all burn plans unless approval authority is delegated to line officers, through a letter of delegation. These letters of delegation are included in Appendix N of this plan.

Exceeding Existing Prescribed Fire Burn Plan

Any prescribed fire that exceeds the designated *MMA*, contingency area or exceeds prescription constraints will be considered an escaped fire if not able to be returned to



prescription within 48 hours (see FSM 5140). Following designation of an escape, a Wildland Fire Situation Analysis (WFSA) will be completed and approved by the appropriate Line Officer. A current listing of Line Officer delegated authority is located in Appendix N.

Considerations used when developing the WFSA for an escaped prescribed fire are similar to a fire that escapes initial action from an unplanned wildland fire. They include:

- ✚ Fire fighter and public safety
- ✚ Risk to improvements
- ✚ Risk to resource values
- ✚ Cost of Suppression

Other considerations related to the escape prescribed fire include:

- ✚ NEPA decision objectives and project analysis
- ✚ Effects analysis from the NEPA decision

Prescribed burning operations:

- ✚ The prescribed burn plan will follow mitigation measures stated in the *Programmatic Biological Assessment for Fire Suppression and Prescribed Natural Fire Activities in the Upper Salmon River Sub-basin* (USDA Forest Service, 2002).
- ✚ Coordinate the burn plan activities with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game and other interested agencies and publics.
- ✚ No ground disturbing machinery will be used within *RHCAs*.
- ✚ If the prescribed fire removes any stream shade, which may affect stream temperatures, a long term monitoring plan will be developed with the Level 1 Team to assess those impacts.

Air Quality and Smoke Management

Pertinent Air Quality Issues

Location of Class I Airsheds

Class 1 airsheds near (<100 miles) to the Salmon-Challis National Forest include:

- ✚ Sawtooth (southwest)
- ✚ Hells Canyon (west)
- ✚ Selway-Bitterroot (north)
- ✚ Anaconda-Pintler (northeast)
- ✚ The Frank Church River of No Return is classified as a **Class II** airshed

Smoke Sensitive Areas

Smoke sensitive areas are defined as schools, hospitals, nursing homes, major roads such as interstates and major state highways and communities. Individual Fire Management Units descriptions define smoke sensitive areas.

Smoke Management Restrictions Procedures

The approved Idaho Smoke Management Plan (SMP) manages smoke management and air quality. The Idaho SMP meets the requirements of the Clean Air Act. Implementation of the SMP is the responsibility of the state of Idaho. All Salmon-Challis National Forest Wildland Fire use projects follow the Idaho SMP. Potential emissions, critical receptors, Class I airsheds and any mitigations are detailed in the burn approval application process

and in individual burn plans. Approval to burn for each project will be obtained from the Idaho/Montana Smoke Management Group.

Action Plan to Meet Clean Air Act

The Forest is a member of the Montana-Idaho Airshed Group and will adhere to the guidelines of this group as a means of meeting the Clean Air Act.

C. Non-Fire Fuel Applications Mechanical Treatment and Other Applications Annual Planning Projects

Approximately 5% percent of the annual total treatment acres on the Salmon-Challis National Forest are completed with non-fire or mechanical treatment. In 2004 mechanical treatments increased over the historical average based on the emphasis on treatment in the wildland urban interface. These treatments occur using both Federal employees and contractors. Techniques used include chain saw felling, lop and scatter, whole tree removal, tractor piling, hand piling, chipping and use of on site micro milling.

Equipment and Seasonal Restriction

Equipment use to treat fuels may be restricted by a variety of factors. Sensitive species, erosive soils are examples of mechanical treatment restrictions. These restrictions are described in project specific NEPA analysis.

Required Effects Monitoring

Effects monitoring requirements for mechanical fuels treatment are described in the project specific NEPA decision and the vegetation prescription.

Format for Mechanical Fuel Treatment Critique

Formal prescribed fire reviews will be conducted when a prescribed fire escapes and/or an injury occurs that requires medical treatment. These reviews are completed by the Forest Duty Officer and associated team and chartered by the local line officer. Elements of these reviews may consist of the following:

- ✚ Effectiveness
- ✚ Safety Organization
- ✚ Policy implementation
- ✚ Job hazard analysis effectiveness
- ✚ Contract specification met

Cost Accounting

Cost accounting was accomplished through the use of specific job codes for each individual project.

Required Reporting and Documentation

- ✚ Perimeters will be mapped to the standard described in the monitoring guide.
- ✚ Report through the appropriate accounting system (i.e. MAR)

Annual Project Implementation List

See *Section V* for this years fuels implementation projects.

D. Emergency Rehabilitation and Restoration (BAER)

Site-specific burned area rehabilitation plans will be completed as needed. The Forest Hydrologist is the coordinator for burned area rehabilitation (BAER) who will prepare plans for approval by the Forest Supervisor.

SECTION V – ORGANIZATION AND BUDGETARY PARAMETERS

A. Fiscal Year 2006 Budget and Ability to Support Planned and Unplanned Actions

The WFPR budget for 2007 is \$4,900,000 with planned expenditures at \$5,040,441. The structural imbalance in this budget is within 2% of allocated funds. P-code savings generally range from \$250,000 to \$350,000 so it is anticipated that there will in fact be a surplus in this account at the end of the fiscal year.

The workforce funded through this budget is similar to that of the past several years. This workforce will be capable of accomplishing planned and unplanned work.

WorkPlan Unit Funds Summary

Report ID: Funds 1

Unit:	0413	SALMON-CHALLIS	Date:	03/27/2006
Fiscal Year:	2006		Time:	12:39:57 PM
BLI:	WFPR			

Fund Code	BLI Code	BLI Name	Projected	Actual	Planned	Balance	Percent Planned
WFWF	WFPR	PREPAREDNESS	\$4,958,000	\$4,958,000	\$5,040,441	-\$82,441	102%
Fund Subtotal:			\$4,958,000	\$4,958,000	\$5,040,441	-\$82,441	102%
Total:			\$4,958,000	\$4,958,000	\$5,040,441	-\$82,441	102%

B. Organization Chart Supported by Current FY Budget

C. Cooperative agreements and interagency contacts

Interagency cooperation and agreements are integral to wildland fire operations on and around the Salmon-Challis National Forest. The Central Idaho Annual Operating Plan (see appendices) describes this cooperation and is authorized by the Idaho State wide interagency fire management agreement (Interagency Agreement, No 97-SIA-004, FS# R401-F1-11046000-0188 Effective February 20, 2001)

D. Equipment Rental Agreements

Equipment rental agreements are stored and updated at the interagency fire center and District offices.

E. Contract Suppression and Prescribed Fire Resources

All current contract resources are listed in the Appendices.

SECTION VI – MONITORING AND EVALUATION

D. Annual monitoring requirements

Monitoring is accomplished on all hazardous fuels projects as well as all treatments completed in support of resource management activities on the Forest (wildlife habitat improvement, site preparation, etc). Monitoring plans for each project are developed during the project-planning phase and are included in each prescribed fire burn plan or project folder.

Monitoring requirements are outlined in the Land and Resource Management Plan.

E. Reporting requirements

The Forest completes the following reporting requirements:

- ✚ Individual Fire Reports – FSM 5182.1
- ✚ Annual Fire Report - FSM 5183.2
- ✚ NFPORS data base
- ✚ Incident Status Summary (209) for wildfires that exceed 100 acres in timber cover types or 300 acres in mixed shrub/grassland cover types.
- ✚ Management Attainment Reports (MAR):
- ✚ MAR FP- FFPC: Fire Fighting Production Capability (FFPC) at the annual budget
- ✚ MAR FP-FUELS-APP: Acres of hazardous fuels treated by prescribed fire and mechanical treatment

Section VII - Appendices

- A. Agreements**
- B. Air Quality**
- C. Aviation Plans**
- D. Burn Plan**
- E. Delegation of Authority to IC T I or II Example**
- F. Triggerpoints for Dispatcher Notification of Duty Officer**
- G. Drawdown Plan**
- H. Duty Officer**
- I. Fire Management Roles and Responsibilities**
- J. Incident Action Plan Forms**
- K. IC Type II Delegation**
- L. Job Aides**
- M. Lightning Plan**
- N. Line Officer Delegation**
- O. Management Area Direction**
- P. NFDRS Related Plans**
- Q. Organization Charts**
- R. Fire Danger Pocket Cards**
- S. Qualified Personnel**
- T. Specific Staffing and Action Guide**
- U. Forest Type III IMT Plan**
- V. Forest Fire History Map**
- W. WFSA**
- X. Wilderness Fire**
- Y. Work-Rest**
- Z. Historic Fuel Treatment Map**