

**Forest Service Manual  
National Headquarters - Washington Office  
Washington, DC**

**Forest Service Manual 3100 – Cooperative Fire Protection  
Chapter 3150 – Rural Community Fire Protection Program**

**Amendment:** 3100-98-17

**Effective date:** August 27, 1998

**Duration:** This amendment is effective until superseded or removed.

**Approved by:** Mike Dombeck, Chief

**Date approved:**

**Responsible Staff:**

**Last Change:** Amendment 3100-98-16 to FSM 3150 Contents

**Superseded Document(s):** Amendment 3100-90-1 to FSM 3150

**POSTING NOTICE.** Amendments are numbered consecutively by title and calendar year. Post by document name. Remove entire document and replace with this amendment. Retain this transmittal as the first page of this document. The last amendment to this Title was Amendment 3100-98-16 to FSM 3150 Contents.

**Digest:** Following is an explanation of the changes throughout the directive by section.

**3150:** Makes minor editorial changes throughout chapter FSM 3150.

**3150.1:** Adds the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (Pub.L. 92-419, 7 U.S.C. 1921 et seq.) to the authority section.

**3150.3:** Removes direction on standards for assistance, which is revised and moved to FSM 3150.7.

**3150.4-3150.42:** Removes obsolete direction on the Farmers Home Administration formerly coded at FSM 3150.41; recodes responsibility sections; and adds responsibilities for the Director, International Institute of Tropical Forestry in FSM 3150.42.

**3150.6:** Recodes direction of the role of State Foresters formerly in FSM 3150.44.

**3150.7:** Adds revised direction on standards for administration of the rural community fire protection (RCFP) program.

**3151.1:** Changes caption from "Reallocation of Funds to Others" to "Reallocation of Funds to Secondary Recipients."

**3152.11:** Corrects references to the Office of Management and Budget Circular that sets audit requirements for the RCFP program.

**3153:** Changes the caption from "Property Accountability" to "Property Accountability and Management."

**3153.1:** Updates references to Title 7, Code of Federal Regulations, pertaining to property acquired and managed under the RCFP program. Removes direction on property disposal formerly coded to FSM 3153.12.

**3154:** Removes former section on Federally Owned Property.

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Further guidance for States and Federal agencies on this program is available in the "Rural Community Fire Protection Desk Guide" and the "FEPP Desk Guide; Federal Excess Personal Property Program," available from the Director of Fire and Aviation Management, Washington Office (FSM 3107).

### **3150.1 - Authority**

The authority for Forest Service involvement in the rural community fire protection (RCFP) program is Section 10, of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 as amended (92 Stat. 365; 16 U.S.C. 2101). Requirements regarding implementation and qualifying recipients are in the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, as amended (Pub.L. 92-419, as amended; 7 U.S.C. 1921 et seq.). Implementing regulations regarding RCFP equipment and supplies are in Title 7, Code of Federal Regulations, Parts 3016 and 3019 (7 CFR Parts 3016, 3019). Regulations regarding audits are in 7 CFR Parts 3050 and 3052. Additional audit requirements are in the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-133 (FSM 3152.1).

### **3150.2 - Objectives**

The objectives of the rural community fire protection (RCFP) program are to:

1. Provide financial, technical, and related assistance to State Foresters to organize, train, and equip local firefighting forces for fire protection in rural areas and communities of 10,000 persons or less.
2. Determine the benefits and costs of fire protection on rural communities and to evaluate the distribution of these costs and benefits among all appropriate entities.
3. Develop policy and monitor States' administration of equipment and supplies purchased in whole or in part with RCFP program funds.
4. Encourage and assist States in the use of Federal procurement systems, sources of supply, and Federal excess personal property in achieving the goals and objectives of the RCFP program.

### **3150.4 - Responsibility**

#### **3150.41 - Director of Fire and Aviation Management, Washington Office**

The Director of Fire and Aviation Management, Washington Office, is responsible for overall management of the rural community fire protection program.

#### **3150.42 - Regional Foresters, Area Director, and Institute Director**

1. Regional Foresters, except in Region 9, and the Area Director are responsible for managing the rural community fire protection (RCFP) program in their respective Regions or Area.

2. The Institute Director is responsible for managing the RCFP program in the Territories of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

#### **3150.6 - Role of State Foresters and Equivalent State Officials**

State Foresters or equivalent State officials administer the rural community fire protection program in their States to achieve national program objectives, in cooperation with the Forest Service.

#### **3150.7 - Standards Applicable to Grant Proposals**

Forest Service officials must ensure that States and secondary recipients receive information and abide by the following standards for rural community fire protection (RCFP) grant proposals:

1. Local entities must match Federal funds, according to actual costs, on at least a 50/50 basis. Local entities may contribute more than 50 percent; Forest Service contributions may not exceed 50 percent.

2. Proposed projects must show a positive benefit/cost ratio.

3. Selection of applications to be funded is consistent with program objectives and any established national or regional priorities.

4. No more than 10 percent of RCFP allocations may be withheld by the State for administrative purposes. The Forest Service may not withhold any RCFP funds for administrative purposes.

#### **3151 - Allocation of Funds**

Allocate rural community fire protection (RCFP) funds to the States through appropriate grant procedures in accordance with direction in FSM 1580 and FSH 1509.11.

##### **3151.1 - Reallocation of Funds to Secondary Recipients**

Forest Service officials shall ensure compliance with the guidelines for subrecipient application for funds as directed under FSM 3151.11. State Foresters and equivalent State officials may reallocate all or a portion of rural community fire protection (RCFP) grant funds to secondary recipients, commonly referred to as subrecipients. Normally, State grantees reallocate RCFP

funds to rural fire departments serving communities with populations of 10,000 or less for training, organizing, and equipping local forces. In special circumstances, State Foresters may reallocate RCFP funds for use within the State forestry organization or another State organization, such as to a State fire academy, for training materials used to train rural fire service workers.

#### **3151.11 - Subrecipient Application for Funds**

1. The Regional or Area grant shall require the State Foresters to use an application procedure for subrecipients that ensures:
  - a. Funds are used only for organizing, training, or equipping local firefighting forces.
  - b. A systematic process is used for determining need based on criteria which address National, Regional, and State priorities.
  - c. Potential subrecipients comply with the assurances required by Form SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance, and Form AD-623, Application for Federal Assistance (Nonconstruction Programs), Part II.
2. The application instrument or format used must include the written assurances printed on Forms SF-424 and AD-623. State Foresters may require applicants for subgrants to use Forms SF-424 and AD-623.

#### **3151.12 - Unauthorized Uses of Rural Community Fire Protection Funds**

Forest Service officials must ensure that State Foresters and subrecipients do not use rural community fire protection funds for the following or similar activities:

1. Construction of fire service facilities.
2. Purchase of non-fire equipment.
3. Any activity that directly benefits single communities of over 10,000 people.

#### **3151.13 - Matching Funds**

Grant documents must stipulate that the State Forester shall ensure that rural community fire protection grants are matched by State or local funds on at least a 50/50 basis. State or local funds may exceed 50 percent; Forest Service funds cannot exceed 50 percent.

#### **3152 - Program Administration**

Forest Service officials shall ensure effective program administration is being conducted at the regional and State levels.

### **3152.1 - Audits and Reviews**

Audits monitor compliance with State and Federal laws and regulations to ensure integrity of the rural community fire protection (RCFP) program.

#### **3152.11 - State Audits**

States conduct audits and furnish the cognitive Federal agency with audit reports. Regional Foresters, the Area Director, and Institute Director cooperate, as needed, in developing actions to correct deficiencies found in audits.

Audit requirements for States, local governments, and non-profit corporations (for example, some rural fire districts), are contained in Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-133 (FSM 3101). Implementing regulations are contained in 7 CFR Part 3052.

The State Forester ensures program integrity through State reviews and audits that reveal the degree of compliance with applicable State and Federal regulations. State Foresters furnish Regional Foresters and the Area Director copies of audit findings and cooperate with them in developing and implementing actions to correct deficiencies noted.

#### **3152.12 - Forest Service Activity and Program Reviews**

Conduct reviews of the rural community fire protection program as needed in accordance with FSM 1410, with particular attention on how the State's program is achieving Regional, Area, and national program objectives.

### **3153 - Property Accountability and Management**

#### **3153.1 - Purchased Property**

Inform State Foresters or their equivalent State grantees of their responsibility to comply with requirements on property accountability and management contained in 7 CFR Parts 3016 and 3019. Regulations relating to equipment and supplies acquired by State and local governments are found in 7 CFR 3016.32 and 3016.33. Regulations relating to equipment and supplies acquired by non-profit rural fire departments and institutions of higher education are in 7 CFR 3019.34 and 3019.35. Program guidance and copies of regulations are included in the Rural Community Fire Protection Desk Guide (FSM 3107).

#### **3153.11 - Property Identification**

Encourage State Foresters to mark purchased property with RCFP identification decals or with other agreed upon identifiers in accordance with State regulations.