

United States Department of the Interior
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Washington, D.C. 20240

In Reply Refer to:
ANRS/DNR-NR-FM/014201

Memorandum

To: Regional Directors, Region 1-7

From: Director /s/Marshall Jones SEP 15, 2003

Subject: Burned Area Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Policy and Procedures Update

In response to the January 13, 2003, Wildland Fire Leadership Council's BAER/ESR funding process decision (http://www.fireplan.gov/wflc_nfp_meetnote_1_13.html) and May 5, 2003, Wildland Fire Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation Policy and Procedures memorandum from the Assistant Secretary- Policy, Management and Budget (attached) the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has revised its burned area emergency stabilization and rehabilitation policy and procedures. This memorandum supercedes FWSCNWR-NR-FM/006098.

Beginning in Fiscal Year 2004, emergency stabilization and rehabilitation activities and treatment will be funded from two separate subactivities. Also, separate emergency stabilization and/or rehabilitation project plans are required for all burned areas needing emergency stabilization and/or rehabilitation, respectively. The project leader in charge of the burned Service lands is responsible for plan development and implementation. All plans must be compatible with approved Service land use plans and be compliant with applicable laws, policies, and agreements. All existing project numbers will terminate at the end of this fiscal year. New project numbers will be generated beginning October 1, 2003.

Regions must institute plan development and approval procedures to meet the following deadlines. It is imperative that emergency stabilization activities begin as soon as possible; therefore, the initial project plan must be submitted for approval/disapproval within seven calendar days after total containment of the fire with approval/disapproval within six business days (if additional time is needed, extensions may be negotiated with those having approval authority). Non-emergency rehabilitation plan initial submission and approval should be completed by the end of the first fiscal year in order to be considered for funding in the next fiscal year. The Regional Director is responsible for plan approval/disapproval if cost estimates are less than \$500,000. In addition, the Regional Fire Management Coordinator must concur

in writing that the plan fits the technical definition for use of emergency stabilization or rehabilitation subactivity funds. Plans costing more than \$500,000 are approved by the Assistant Director, National Wildlife Refuge System, for National Wildlife Refuges or the Assistant Director, Fisheries and Habitat Conservation, for National Fish Hatcheries.

All plan activities and treatments are monitored according to plan specifications and annual and final accomplishment reports are required. The project leader's supervisor is responsible for plan implementation and reporting oversight.

Emergency stabilization funding is provided for no more than one year following total containment of the fire. Emergency stabilization funding can be used for up to three years following total containment of the fire for treatment effectiveness monitoring and to repair or replace emergency stabilization structures or treatments where failure to do so would imperil watershed functionality or result in serious loss of downstream values. However, emergency stabilization funding cannot be used to continue seeding, plantings, and invasive plant treatments beyond one year. Continued treatment funding beyond the first year requires an approved plan amendment including monitoring documentation justifying the additional funding request and data entry into the National Fire Plan Operations and Reporting System (NFPORS) Restoration and Rehabilitation (R&R) module. Continued treatment effectiveness monitoring funding beyond the first year requires an annual accomplishment report including monitoring documentation and data entry into the NFPORS R&R module.

Rehabilitation funding is provided for no more than three years. All rehabilitation activities and treatments from BLM, BIA, NPS and FWS will be funded on a competitive priority basis using common criteria as established by the National Coordinators in consultation with the Office of Wildland Fire Coordination. All activities and treatments will be reviewed at the end of each fiscal year and funded with the next fiscal year's funds. Funding can only be expended on approved activities or treatments must be resubmitted for funding approval each fiscal year. Any rehabilitation activity or treatment for years two or three without written monitoring documentation will not be funded.

The Service's Fire Management Branch located at the National Interagency Fire Center in Boise, Idaho, is responsible for budgetary and accomplishment tracking and will assign an individual project charge code to each project plan after an electronic copy of an approved plan is forwarded to the Fire Management Branch Chief and all appropriate NFPORS R&R module entries are completed. All emergency stabilization and rehabilitation project charge codes will be closed one year following total containment of the fire, and at the end of each fiscal year, respectively. A new project charge code will be issued after receipt of all necessary plan amendments, annual accomplishment reports, and appropriate NFPORS R&R module entries are completed. An electronic copy of the final accomplishment report will be sent to the Fire Management Branch to complete the project.

The Burned Area Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation chapter in the Service's Fire Management Handbook provides additional implementation and operational guidance (e.g., plan templates, program standards, etc.).

If you have additional questions please contact Mr. Bill Leenhouts, Fire Management Specialist, Fire Management Branch, at 208-387-5584.

Attachment

cc: 3251-MIB/ANRS
670-ARLSQ/ANRS-DNRS
570-ARLSQ/ANRS-NR
570-ARLSQ/ANRS-NR-FM
Regional Fire Management Coordinators

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