



National Fire Plan

WILDLAND FIRE LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

The Wildland Fire Leadership Council (WFLC) was established in April 2002 to implement and coordinate the National Fire Plan and the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy. WFLC consists of senior level department officials, federal, state, tribal and county representatives, including all five federal wildland firefighting agency heads. WFLC was established to address interagency, interdepartmental differences to ensure seamless delivery of a coordinated fire protection program. The Council brings together wildland firefighting organizations to implement the 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy and Implementation Plan, a component of the National Fire Plan. WFLC meets regularly to monitor progress of the Ten-Year Strategy, to discuss current issues, and to resolve differences among wildland firefighting agencies.

The National Fire Plan represents a long-term commitment and investment to help protect communities, natural resources, and most importantly, the lives of firefighters and the public from the risks of wildland fire. This long-term commitment is shared among federal agencies, states, local governments, tribes, and interested citizens and organizations. Collaboration, priority setting, and accountability are among the guiding principles that will ensure success of the NFP's goals.

Through collaborative work, the WFLC has been highly successful in working to reduce interagency, interdepartmental differences for a seamless delivery of a coordinated fire protection program. Among its many accomplishments, the WFLC:

- Implemented outcome-based performance measures supporting the 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy and Implementation Plan. These performance measures represent a long-term commitment to protect communities and the environment from the impacts of catastrophic fire. The measures will indicate trends, unit costs, changes in the landscape, and other features associated with specific fire management actions and outcomes. These measures are an integral part of each wildland firefighting agency's individual performance evaluation, and as such, represent a contract with Congress and the public to wisely use finds and resources.
- Established a real-time accomplishment reporting system for managers at all levels to plan and monitor hazardous fuel reduction treatments, post-fire stabilization and rehabilitation, and community assistance. The Council also decided to track all hazardous fuels reduction acres treated under the President's Healthy Forests Initiative that result in condition class changes.
- Required fire suppression financial criteria and oversight and initiated large fire management and cost reviews. Interagency teams composed of representatives from various Federal and State agencies completed reviews on fires in Arizona, Washington, Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, and Oregon in 2003. Each review proposed recommendations to further improve efficiency and reduce operational costs. Large fire management and cost reviews are continuing in 2004.
- Chartered a Strategic Issues Panel on Fire Suppression Costs to examine wildland fire suppression activities from a broader land management context that integrates fire suppression and vegetation management. The panel will present its report on August 10, 2004.
- Adopted a standardized fire management plan template for use by all federal wildland fire management agencies.

- Approved development of major technological advancements and science-based decision-making tools for fire management planning, targeted fuels reduction, and monitoring of resources affected by wildfires. The Fire Program Analysis (FPA) system will provide managers with a common interagency process for fire management planning and budgeting that evaluates the effectiveness of alternative fire management strategies through time and that meets land management objectives. The new FPA application will allow for landscape-scale, interagency analysis at the planning unit.
- The Landscape Fire and Resource Management Planning Tools Project (LANDFIRE) will develop a multi-agency, inter-disciplinary research and development program designed to develop consistent and accurate data on vegetative conditions, fire fuels, risks and ecosystem status at the national, regional and local scales for use in implementing the national fire plan.
- Executed a Memorandum of Understanding between states and federal agencies for standardized priority setting for hazardous fuels projects.
- Executed a Memorandum of Understanding that establishes consistent policies and procedures across the Departments of Agriculture, Interior, and Energy to support the use of byproducts from fuels reduction.
- Signed a Memorandum of Understanding for consistent administration of wildland fire grant and agreement programs among the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture.
- Adopted a common budget structure for the Departments of Agriculture and the Interior that establishes common definitions for similar activities, reduces the total number of budget items, links the budget to performance measures, and improves financial accountability.
- Approved a monitoring framework designed to track the achievement of the primary objectives of the 10-year Implementation Plan and the Healthy Forests Restoration Act with emphasis on hazardous fuels treatments, restoration of healthy forests and the protection of communities.
- Chartered a working group to explore air quality and smoke management policy and guidance.
- Approved the National Wildfire Enterprise Architecture Steering group charter. The WFLC will provide oversight in implementing the action plan prepared for the GAO report entitled “Geospatial information: Technologies hold promise for Wildland Fire but Challenges Remain”, (GAO-03-114T).
- Reviewed the “Changing Role and Needs of Local, Rural, and Volunteer Fire Department in the Wildland Urban Interface” Report prepared by the National Association of State Foresters (NASF) and the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC). An action plan is under consideration by the WFLC.
- Endorsed and supported a National Fire Plan conference in partnership with the International Association of Fire Chiefs. This conference provided national recognition for accomplishments and training on plan implementation for local communities.
- Signed a memorandum of understanding with the American Red Cross formalizing a partnership among wildland fire agencies, National Fire Protection Association, and the American Red Cross to reduce loss from wildland fire in communities through cooperative education efforts.
- Facilitated a dialogue with partners by including stakeholder interaction as a component of WFLC meetings. A diverse group of stakeholders have met and attended field trips with Council members in Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Louisiana and Montana.