



Box 16, Folder 1: Fire management/wildfires - response to wildfires of 2000, 2000-2001.

2000-2001

[s.l.]: [s.n.], 2000-2001

<https://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/NO3IJUD56QWLR8G>

<http://rightsstatements.org/vocab/InC/1.0/>

For information on re-use see:

<http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/Copyright>

The libraries provide public access to a wide range of material, including online exhibits, digitized collections, archival finding aids, our catalog, online articles, and a growing range of materials in many media.

When possible, we provide rights information in catalog records, finding aids, and other metadata that accompanies collections or items. However, it is always the user's obligation to evaluate copyright and rights issues in light of their own use.

Managing the Impact of Wildfires
on Communities and the Environment

A Report to the President

In Response to the Wildfires of 2000

September 8, 2000

I. Executive Summary

On August 8, 2000, President Clinton asked Secretaries Babbitt and Glickman to prepare a report that recommends how best to respond to this year's severe fires, reduce the impacts of these wildland fires on rural communities, and ensure sufficient firefighting resources in the future.

The President also asked for short-term actions that Federal agencies, in cooperation with States, local communities and Tribes, can take to reduce immediate hazards to communities in the wildland-urban interface and to ensure that land managers and firefighter personnel are prepared for extreme fire conditions in the future.

This report recommends a Fiscal Year (FY) 2001 budget for the wildland fire programs of the Departments of Agriculture and the Interior of \$2.8 billion. Included within this total is an increase of nearly \$1.6 billion above the President's FY 2001 budget request in support of the report's recommendations. This includes additional funding of about \$340 million for fire preparedness resources, new funding of \$88 million to increase cooperative programs in support of local communities, and approximately \$390 million for fuels treatment and burned area restoration. The increase also includes about \$770 million to replenish and enhance the Departments' fire suppression accounts, which have been depleted by this year's extraordinary costs, and to repay FY 2000 emergency transfers from other appropriations accounts.

A summary of the key points discussed in the body of the report:

1. **Continue to Make All Necessary Firefighting Resources Available.** The wildfires of the summer of 2000 continue to burn. As conditions change, new fires will start as others are controlled or die out. As a first priority, the Departments will continue to provide all necessary resources to ensure that firefighting efforts protect life and property. The Nation's wildland firefighting organization is the finest in the world and deserves our strong support.
2. **Restore Landscapes and Rebuild Communities.** The Departments will invest in restoration of communities and landscapes impacted by the 2000 fires. Some communities already have suffered considerable economic losses as a result of the fires. These losses will likely grow unless immediate, emergency action is taken to reduce further resource damage to soils, watersheds, and burned over landscapes. Key actions include:
 - **Rebuilding communities and assessing economic needs.** Assess the economic needs of communities and, consistent with current authorities, commit the financial resources necessary to assist individuals and communities in rebuilding their homes,

businesses, and neighborhoods. Existing loan and grant programs administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Small Business Administration (SBA), and USDA's Forest Service and rural development programs should provide this assistance.

- **Restoring damaged landscapes.** Invest in landscape restoration efforts such as tree planting, watershed restoration, and soil stabilization and revegetation. In so doing, priority should focus on efforts to protect:

- Public health and safety (e.g. municipal watersheds);
- Unique natural and cultural resources (e.g. salmon and bulltrout habitat) and burned-over lands that are susceptible to the introduction of non-native invasive species; and
- Other environmentally sensitive areas where economic hardship may result from a lack of re-investment in restoring damaged landscapes (e.g. water quality impacts on recreation and tourism).

3. Invest in Projects to Reduce Fire Risk. Addressing the brush, small trees, and downed material that have accumulated in many forests because of past management activities, especially a century of suppressing wildland fires, will require significant investments to treat landscapes through thinning and prescribed fire. Since 1994, the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management have increased the number of acres treated to reduce fuel buildup from fewer than 500,000 acres in 1994 to more than 2.4 million acres this year. Building on the forest policies of the past eight years, the wildland fire policy, and the concepts of ecosystem management, the Departments should establish a collaborative effort to expedite and expand landscape-level fuel treatments. Important dimensions of this effort include:

- **Developing a locally led, coordinated effort between the Departments of Agriculture, the Interior, and Commerce, and other appropriate agencies through the establishment of integrated fuels treatment teams at the regional and field levels.** The role of each team would be to identify and prioritize projects targeted at communities most at risk, coordinate environmental reviews and consultations, facilitate and encourage public participation, and monitor and evaluate project implementation. Each team will work closely with local communities to identify the best fit for each community.
- **Utilizing small diameter material and other biomass.** Develop and expand markets for traditionally underutilized small diameter wood and other biomass as a value added outlet for excessive fuels that have been removed.

- **Allocating necessary project funds.** Commit resources to support planning, assessments, and project reviews to ensure that hazardous fuels management is accomplished expeditiously and in an environmentally sound manner.
- 4. Work Directly with Communities. Working with local communities is a critical element in restoring damaged landscapes and reducing fire hazards near homes and communities. To accomplish this, the Departments recommend:
 - **Expanding community participation.** Expand the participation of local communities in efforts to reduce fire hazards and the use of local labor for fuels treatment and restoration work.
 - **Increasing local capacity.** Improve local fire protection capabilities through financial and technical assistance to State, local, and volunteer firefighting efforts.
 - **Learning from the public.** Encourage grass roots ideas and solutions best suited to local communities for reducing wildfire risk. Expand outreach and education to homeowners and communities about fire prevention through use of programs such as Firewise.
- 5. Be Accountable. Establish a Cabinet-level coordinating team to ensure that the actions recommended by the Departments receive the highest priority. The Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior should co-chair this team. Integrated management teams in the region should take primary responsibility for implementing the fuels treatment, restoration, and preparedness program. The Secretaries should assess the progress made in implementing these action items and provide periodic reports to the President.

II. Background

The 2000 fire season is undoubtedly one of the most challenging on record. Wildfires are on pace to break decades-old records. As of early September, more than 6.5 million acres – more than two times the ten-year national average -- have burned. The intensity of this year's fires is the result of two primary factors: a severe drought, accompanied by a series of storms that produced millions of lightning strikes and windy conditions, and the long-term effects of more than a century of aggressively suppressing all wildfires, which has led to an unnatural buildup of brush and small trees in our forests and rangelands.

This season has stretched the capabilities of the wildland firefighting system -- stretched, but not broken. Such a season tests our firefighters' training and the fire management infrastructure, and we have found that both are sound. This is a credit to the Nation's firefighters, support personnel, military and international partners, managers, and local communities who provide crucial help and resources.

More than 29,000 people have been involved in firefighting efforts, including about 2,500 Army soldiers and Marines and fire managers from Canada, Australia, Mexico and New Zealand. Our partners, both military and international, are assisting under pre-existing agreements with the National Interagency Fire Center in Boise, Idaho. In addition, 1,200 fire engines, 240 helicopters, and 50 airtankers are in use this season.

As challenging as this fire season has been, our firefighters have been successful in extinguishing more than 95 percent of wildfires before they become large fires (i.e., 100 acres or more). In all, they have extinguished more than 75,000 wildfire starts this season.

Weather

The weather phenomenon known as La Niña, characterized by unusually cold Pacific Ocean temperatures, changed normal weather patterns when it formed two years ago. It caused severe, long-lasting drought across much of the country, drying out our forests and rangelands. The situation was exacerbated by the fact that the drought followed several seasons of higher-than-normal rain, which fueled the growth of grasses and other plants that quickly dried when the rains stopped. This left millions of acres susceptible to fires. To make matters worse, this weather pattern also spawned a series of mostly dry thunderstorms with heavy lightning across the West. Because of the drought conditions, lightning strikes have ignited more new fires than would normally be associated with such storms.

The current season corresponds to a historical pattern of extensive wildfires during similar unusual weather conditions. The result has been an extended, severe fire season, with wildfires burning simultaneously across the western United States.

Historic wildfires

This year's fires also reflect a longer-term disruption in the natural fire cycle that has increased the risk of catastrophic fires in our forests and rangelands.

Natural fire patterns were first disrupted on a large scale with settlement activity during the second half of the 19th century when millions of acres of forests and wildlands were cleared to make way for farm crops and livestock pastures. During this time, timber companies, responding to a growing country's need for lumber and fuel, often took the biggest trees, leaving behind slash, undergrowth and smaller trees. These activities set the stage for disastrous fires.

One of the most significant examples of this phenomenon occurred in 1871 in Peshtigo, Wisconsin, near the Great Lakes. The area around Peshtigo, mostly private land, had been extensively logged. Merchantable timber was removed; slash and dense undergrowth were left behind. On October 8, 1871, a brush fire quickly erupted into an inferno, consuming Peshtigo in an hour and damaging 16 other towns and more than 1.2 million acres. The human toll -- more than 1,200 people killed -- stands as the worst wildfire disaster in U.S. history.

The Peshtigo tragedy served as a deadly warning about what can happen when forest health is badly compromised -- in this case, by logging activities. In fact, Peshtigo represented the beginning of new fire cycle throughout the Great Lakes region that would not be broken for more than 50 years.

In the West, a similar pattern erupted in August 1910 with the "Big Blowup" -- the Great Idaho fire. As in the 2000 fire season, a severe drought plagued the region when dry storms, accompanied by hurricane-force wind, produced thousands of lightning strikes and ignited hundreds of small fires. These fires converged to create a monster fire that was virtually unstoppable given the limited firefighting capability of the times. It consumed 3 million acres in northern Idaho and western Montana, killed 85 people, and destroyed the property and livelihoods of many others.

Speaking about the Big Blowup, Stephen Pyne, a professor at Arizona State University and a leading authority on the history of fire, said, "August of 1910 was the single most important moment in American fire history" because it radically changed the way the country viewed wildfires.

The ferocity of the Big Blowup, which came on the heels of other devastating fires on both private and government land, triggered a call for a systemic policy change. Less than a year later, the national Forest Service firefighting program was born. A war on all wildfires was declared. From that point on, all wildfires were extinguished as soon as possible.

Results of suppression policy

As a result of the all-out effort to suppress fires, the annual acreage consumed by wildfires in the lower 48 states dropped from 40 to 50 million acres a year in the early 1930s to about 5 million acres in the 1970s. During this time, firefighting budgets rose dramatically and firefighting tactics and equipment became increasingly more sophisticated and effective.

While the policy of aggressive fire suppression appeared to be successful, it set the stage for the intense fires that we see today. Full suppression of all wildfires initially gave our forests and wildlands a chance to heal, creating a false sense of security. However, after many years of suppressing fires, thus disrupting normal ecological cycles, changes in the structure and make-up of forests began to occur. Species of trees that ordinarily would have been eliminated from forests by periodic, low-intensity fires began to become a dominant part of the forest canopy. Over time, these trees became susceptible to insects and disease. Standing dead and dying trees in conjunction with other brush and downed material began to fill the forest floor. The resulting accumulation of these materials, when dried by extended periods of drought, created the fuels that promote the type of wildfires that we have seen this year.

The problems of unnaturally heavy undergrowth have been exacerbated by the introduction in the 1800s of non-native invasive weeds and grasses. These plants corrupt a region's ecological processes, robbing the soil and native plants of vital nutrients and water. Invasive species such as cheatgrass, which is pervasive on today's Western landscape, is one of the first plants to establish after a fire. It grows earlier, quicker, and higher than native grasses. Then it dies, dries, and becomes fuel.

In short, decades of aggressive fire suppression have drastically changed the look and fire behavior of Western forests and rangelands. Forests a century ago were less dense and had larger, more fire-resistant trees. For example, in northern Arizona, some lower elevation stands of ponderosa pine that once held 50 trees per acre, now contain 200 or more trees per acre. In addition, the composition of our forests have changed from more fire-resistant tree species to non-fire resistant species such as grand fir, Douglas-fir, and subalpine fir. As a result, studies show that today's wildfires typically burn hotter, faster, and higher than those of the past.

The Changing West

In addition to the unnatural fuel buildup developing in our forests and rangelands, wildland firefighting has become more complex in the last two decades due to dramatic increases in the West's population.

Of the 10 fastest-growing states in the U.S., eight are in the interior West. While the national average annual population growth is about one percent, the West has growth rates ranging from 2.5 to 13 percent.

As a result, new development is occurring in fire-prone areas, often adjacent to Federal land, creating a "wildland-urban interface" -- an area where structures and other human development meet or intermingle with undeveloped wildland. This relatively new phenomenon means that more communities and structures are threatened by fire. Wildland firefighters today often spend a great deal more time and effort protecting structures than in earlier years. Consequently, firefighting has become more complicated, expensive, and dangerous.

Current Fire Management Policy

This Administration has sought to increase efforts to reduce risks associated with the buildup of fuels in forests and rangelands through a variety of approaches, including controlled burns, the physical removal of undergrowth and other unnatural concentrations of fuel, and the prevention and eradication of invasive plants. Implicit in the Administration's policy is the understanding that reversing the effects of a century of aggressive fire suppression will be an evolutionary process, and not one that can be completed in a few short years.

As the composition and structure of our Nation's forests have changed over time, conditions that increase the likelihood of catastrophic fire have grown. Periodic, severe wildfires have occurred when weather conditions have produced drought, dry lightning, and high winds. This was illustrated in 1988, the year of the Yellowstone fires, and in 1994, when fires claimed the lives of 34 firefighters, including 14 of our country's most elite

firefighters in one inferno on Storm King Mountain in Colorado. This pattern has repeated itself in the year 2000.

After evaluating the 1988 and 1994 fires, foresters, fire ecologists, biologists, and others cautioned that the century-old policy of excluding all fires from the forests rangelands had brought about ecological changes that were increasing the likelihood of catastrophic wildfire. This was confirmed by the 1999 General Accounting Office Report, *Federal Wildfire Activities*, which noted "[F]ederal acreage is susceptible to catastrophic wildfires, particularly where the natural vegetation has been altered by past uses of the land and a century of fire suppression."⁷

Given the experiences of the 1988 and 1994 fire seasons and the recommendations of scientific experts, the Clinton/Gore Administration initiated the first-ever, comprehensive interagency review of wildland fire policy. Based on this review, which was summarized in the 1995 Federal Wildland Fire Policy Statement, the Departments of Agriculture and the Interior predicted serious and potentially permanent environmental destruction and loss of private and public resource values from large wildfires. The policy statement recognized the important function that fire plays in many ecosystems and identified the critical role fire can play in the management of forests and watersheds. The policy noted that, "[C]onditions on millions of acres of wildlands increase the probability of large, intense fires beyond any scale yet witnessed. These severe fires will in turn increase the risk to humans, to property and to the land upon which our social and economic well-being is so intimately intertwined."

As three of the country's leading wildland fire ecologists recently said, "Fires will inevitably occur when we have ignitions in hot, dry, windy conditions. . . . It is one of the great paradoxes of fire suppression that the more effective we are at fire suppression, the more fuels accumulate and the more intense the next fire will be."

After the policy was put in place, the Departments dramatically increased the number of acres treated to reduce fire risks. In 1995, Federal agencies treated fewer than 500,000 acres. This year, the Departments will remove brush, small trees, and downed material from more than 2.4 million acres using small, intentionally set, "prescribed" fires and mechanical thinning techniques.

Across the country, the Departments have been working to assess the important roles that fire plays in different ecosystems and to integrate this knowledge into management practices. They also began the Joint Fire Science Project to provide a scientific basis for helping the Departments prioritize their fire prevention activities on the ground. In 1999, this project developed maps, with state-level resolution, that identify forests most at risk from large, catastrophic fires. Work continues to improve the resolution of the maps so that they can be used to help assist with strategic planning, prioritizing resources and identifying specific projects on the ground.

The Departments have been moving quickly to incorporate this new information in their budget requests and other policy documents, but the severity of this year's fire season has added extra impetus to move these recommendations forward.

III. Key Elements Of The Administration's Wildland Fire Management Policy

The new wildland fire policy that the Administration has developed in recent years acknowledges the dangers posed by the long-term building of excessive fuel levels in our forests and rangelands. It seeks to reduce those risks through a variety of approaches, including controlled burns, the physical removal of undergrowth and other unnatural concentration of fuel, and attacks on invasive plants. Implicit in the Administration's policy is the understanding that reversing the effects a century of aggressive fire suppression has had on our nation's public lands will be an evolutionary process, not one that can be completed in a few short years.

The key elements of the Administration's wildland fire management policy are set forth below. They include: (1) integrated firefighting management and preparedness; (2) reducing hazardous fuel accumulations; and (3) local community coordination and outreach.

Notably, the Administration's wildland fire policy does not rely on commercial logging or new road building to reduce fire risks and can be implemented under its current forest and land management policies. The removal of large, merchantable trees from forests does not reduce fire risk and may, in fact, increase such risk. Fire ecologists note that large trees are "insurance for the future – they are critical to ecosystem resilience." Targeting smaller trees and leaving both large trees and snags standing addresses the core of the fuels problem.

The Congressional Research Service (CRS) recently addressed the effect of logging on wildfires in an August 2000 report and found that the current wave of forest fires is not related to a decline in timber harvest on Federal lands. From a quantitative perspective, the CRS study indicates a very weak relationship between acres logged and the extent and severity of forest fires. To the contrary, in the most recent period (1980 through 1999) the data indicate that fewer acres burned in areas where logging activity was limited.

Since 1945, the fluctuation pattern of acres burned in the 11 Western States has shown a steady rise with some of the worst fire seasons in the late 1980's, when timber harvest peaked at 12 billion board feet. In fact, the 10-year average annual number of acres burned nationwide in the 1980's when logging activity was heaviest was higher (4.2 million acres) than in both the 1970's (3.2 million acres) and the 1990's (3.6 million acres).

Qualitative analysis by CRS supports the same conclusion. The CRS stated: "[T]imber harvesting removes the relatively large diameter wood that can be converted into wood products, but leaves behind the small material, especially twigs and needles. The concentration of these fine fuels on the forest floor increases the rate of spread of wildfires."

Similarly, the National Research Council found that logging and clearcutting can cause rapid regeneration of shrubs and trees that can create highly flammable fuel conditions within a few years of cutting. Without adequate treatment of small woody material, logging may exacerbate fire risk rather than lower it.

The President has proposed to protect more than 43 million acres of remaining National Forest roadless areas. These areas have tremendous ecological value and serve as important watersheds, areas for recreation, and important habitat for fish and wildlife.

Some critics have expressed concern that the Administration's proposed roadless area policy could increase wildfire risks. The facts do not support this conclusion. To the contrary, all available evidence suggests that fire starts may be fewer in unroaded than in previously roaded forests. Fires are almost twice as likely to occur in roaded areas as they are in roadless areas.

The proposed roadless area protection policy would not affect the Federal agencies' ability to control wildland fires. The agencies' success rate in extinguishing wildfires on initial attack is the same in roadless, wilderness, and roaded areas. Approximately 98 per cent of all fires are extinguished before they grow large and out of control. In addition, the proposed roadless policy would allow road construction if a wildland fire threatened public health and safety.

The Forest Service has identified 89 million acres of National Forest System land that have a moderate to high risk of catastrophic fire. Of these acres, less than 16 per cent are in inventoried roadless areas. Moreover, the Forest Service would prioritize efforts to reduce fuels in areas that have already been roaded because these areas tend to be much closer to communities and have higher fire risks. Indeed, given current funding levels and the scope of the fuels issue, the Forest Service would do fuels reduction work for 15 years in roaded areas.

A. Firefighting Management and Preparedness

The Administration's review of wildland fire policy validated the importance of maintaining an integrated firefighting management structure that can deliver first-class firefighting resources to the front lines of wildfires.

The Departments operate under a model interagency framework that has been developed over two decades. Program management and coordination takes place through a national-level group, the National Wildfire Coordination Group, which includes representatives from the States. It determines training, equipment, and other standards to ensure that all Federal, State, and local agencies can easily operate together.

The fire program operates under a command structure called Incident Command System to respond to and manage wildfires on an intergovernmental basis. The system includes local fire operations that are supported by a national network of coordination centers and supply bases. The National Interagency Fire Center in Boise, Idaho, oversees national wildfire operations.

The Administration has provided full support to the interagency firefighting effort (see attachment A) and has implemented a series of budget and management improvements.

Based on lessons of recent fire seasons, especially 1999 and 2000, the Departments have reassessed the assumptions and variables used in planning models to determine the resources needed to fight fires. They recommend funding 100 percent of this revised estimate of full preparedness.

In addition, the Departments have devoted special attention to firefighting training and coordination. As part of this emphasis, the Departments have added training courses, modified current classes, and, in some cases, raised the qualifications for certain positions. In 1999, the Departments issued a revised qualifications system for firefighting and prescribed fire positions in order to ensure that the U.S. continues to field the finest firefighting and prescribed fire force in the world.

B. Reducing Hazardous Fuel Accumulations

Implicit in the Administration's efforts to reduce wildfire risk through the elimination of brush, small diameter trees, and other fuels and the reintroduction of fire to forest and rangeland ecosystems is the understanding that reversing the effects a century of aggressive fire suppression will be an evolutionary process, not one that can be completed in a few short years.

The Administration's forest policies have emphasized the importance of reducing hazardous fuel accumulations in our forests and rangelands and restoring the health and natural processes of forest and rangeland ecosystems. Reduction of fuels can be achieved in a variety of ways -- by mechanical, chemical, biological and manual methods. The prudent use of fire, either alone or in combination with other means, can be one of the most effective means of reducing such hazardous fuel. In addition, early research has demonstrated that the selective removal of undergrowth and non-native plant species, can significantly reduce fire risks. The Administration is testing the effectiveness of these strategies' pilot projects.

By way of example, in a report published in *Proceedings from the Joint Fire Science Conference and Workshop, 1991*, researchers studied four large wildfires in Montana, Washington, California, and Arizona to determine if previous fuel treatment and thinning activities had any impact on fire severity. The sites selected for study underwent treatment within ten years prior to being burned in wildland fires. The findings indicated that fuel treatments mitigate fire severity. "Although topography and weather may play a more important role in fuels in governing fire behavior, topography and weather cannot be realistically manipulated to reduce fire severity. Fuels are the leg of the fire environment triangle that land managers can change to achieve desired post-fire condition."

The General Accounting Office (GAO Report GAO/RCED-99-65) also has emphasized the need for fuels management, concluding that "the most extensive and serious problem related to the health of forests in the interior West is the over-accumulation of vegetation, which has caused an increasing number of large, intense, uncontrollable, and catastrophically destructive wildfires."

The Departments have moved forward with an aggressive program to thin forest stands to reduce small diameter trees, underbrush and accumulated fuels

Between 1994 and this year, the Departments increased their efforts to reduce fire risks through prescribed fire and thinning by close to 500 percent (see attachment B). In 1999, the Departments treated 2.2 million acres. At the same time, the Departments have increased the use of prescribed fires to begin steering our forests and rangelands back toward more healthy conditions.

Presently, both Departments are developing strategies to address aggressive fuel management. These call for a targeted approach to removing excessive fuel through mechanical treatments and prescribed fire in order to protect communities at risk, help prevent insect and disease damage, and generally improve overall ecosystem health and sustainability. Obviously, large-scale improvements will take several years to occur against the backdrop of a century-long suppression policy. Nonetheless, this year's fire season is providing some evidence that the controlled reintroduction of fire is beginning to bear fruit.

An example involves a wildfire in South Dakota's Black Hills. The Jasper fire, more than 82,000 acres, is the largest fire in the history of the Black Hills. It has displayed the most severe fire behavior in the history of the area, burning 50,000 acres in only a few hours. During the course of a fierce crown -- fire run -- where flames roar through the forest through the tops of the trees -- the fire burned into a section of the Jewel Cave National Park where a prescribed fire had been conducted near the Park's visitor center and housing area. When it hit the prescribed burn area, the fire changed from a crown-fire to a ground-based fire where it could be effectively fought. Fire crews were able to remain in the area only because of the defensible space and barriers created. As a result, none of the Park's major structures burned.

As dramatic as this example is, an equally dramatic example illustrates the risks that are inherent in prescribed fires if they are not implemented in a careful and well-managed manner.

Specifically, the Cerro Grande fire near New Mexico's Los Alamos National Laboratory, which began as a prescribed fire in Bandelier National Park in New Mexico in May, is a terrible reminder of the costs if prescribed fires are not well-planned and executed. Nearly 300 homes were damaged or destroyed, 18,000 people were evacuated, and 48,000 acres were burned. The Administration fully supported a compensation program enacted by Congress for the victims of the fire. The Administration is also fully committed to implementing changes in prescribed fire policy and procedures as a result of investigations and reviews of the Cerro Grande fire.

C. Local Community Coordination and Outreach

The Administration's wildland fire policy recognizes that effective fire management requires close coordination with local communities, particularly those communities that are in the wildland-urban interface. As the management of private lands has become a key factor in the fire-risk equation, the Departments have recognized the importance of providing outreach, education, and support for local communities who must play a primary role in reducing fire hazards in and near their communities.

As discussed above, the changing demographics are expanding the wildland-urban interface and creating new challenges for fighting wildland fires. Increasingly, many homes on private land in and around new communities are at risk. Indeed, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) estimates that wildfires destroyed more than 9,000 homes between 1985 and 1995. Officials further believe that the number of homes damaged by wildfires in the 1990s is six times that of the previous decade. More than 1,000 homes have been destroyed during this summer alone.

Safe and effective protection in these areas demands close coordination between local, State, Federal and Tribal firefighting resources. Typically, the primary burden for wildland-urban interface fire protection falls to property owners and State and local governments. Rural and volunteer fire departments provide the front line of defense, or initial attack, on up to 90 percent of these high-risk and costly fires. While they have a good record in rapidly suppressing traditional wildland fires, these local resources often struggle to effectively address the complex demands of fighting fire in the wildland-urban interface.

The Departments also have taken steps to assist communities in developing their own firefighting capabilities. The Forest Service's State and Volunteer Fire Assistance Programs, for example, provide technical and financial assistance to local firefighting resources to help promote effective and coordinated integrated fire management response. Through the Volunteer Fire Assistance Program, the Forest Service has been successful in providing firefighting equipment to rural fire departments and in training their firefighters to meet Federal interagency standards.

The Departments have made available the training facilities at the National Interagency Training Center in Boise, Idaho, to community-based firefighters. By way of example, the BLM Boise District in Idaho has trained more than 1,500 firefighters from 57 different fire departments from both urban (e.g. Boise) and rural areas within the last five years. Training opportunities recently have been extended to ranchers who are interested in fire proofing their properties and understanding basic fire suppression tactics. The Boise District also has formalized an agreement with Ada County, Idaho, to train and integrate county employees into certain firefighting operations and promote an effective and coordinated integrated fire management response.

The problem of fires in the wildland-urban interface is multifaceted and will not be solved overnight. Nevertheless, there are a number of short-term actions that the Federal government, in cooperation with State, tribal and local governments, can take to reduce the future risk to communities and resources.

A top priority for reducing risk is to reduce fuels in forests and rangelands adjacent to, and within communities. Particular emphasis should be placed on projects where fuel treatment can also be accomplished on adjoining State, private, or other nonfederal land so as to extend greater protection across the landscape. This provides protection from catastrophic fires that develop on public lands. This can be accomplished by making available adequate incentives and technical assistance to communities and private landowners to encourage the reduction of hazardous fuels around homeowner properties. These individual actions will not only provide greater personal protection but will also increase the safety and effectiveness of firefighting personnel. When done on a large scale, fuel reduction around individual homes can result in greater overall protection for an entire landscape or watershed.

The Departments have been implementing a number of programs to educate communities and homeowners in recently burned areas and high-risk urban-wildland interface areas about fire hazards. The Forest Service's Firewise program, for example, is a very successful program designed to educate rural homeowners about precautions they can take to make their homes more fire resistant and more easily defendable by local fire departments. Firewise specifically helps communities and homeowners recognize fire hazards, design Firewise homes and landscapes, and make wise planning, zoning, and building material choices. These efforts play an important role in reducing the loss of lives and property -- as well as tremendous government expense -- in the wildland-urban interface.

IV. Consequences of the 2000 Wildfire Season

Economic Impacts

Although the data needed for a thorough assessment of economic impacts on areas affected by this year's wildfires are not yet available, preliminary reports indicate that the losses from the 2000 wildfires will be substantial and widespread. Montana Governor Racicot estimated that businesses were losing about \$3 million a day because of fire. Idaho Governor Kempthorne estimated losses in Idaho at \$54.1 million overall, of which \$15 million comes from about 500 small businesses. He estimated another \$12.5 million in agricultural losses and \$12 million in watershed restoration costs.

Economic impacts arise both directly from fire damage and indirectly from changes in local economic activity, such as a drop in tourism. Both direct and indirect effects of the wildfires have exacted a heavy economic toll on many local, often rural communities.

In Hamilton, Montana, the loss of more than 300,000 acres to fire prompted officials to close much of the public land essential to Montana's tourism economy. As a result, the Chamber of Commerce reports that seven chamber members alone had reported losses totaling \$500,000. A local fishing guide who relies on tourists told reporters that he had lost 76 percent of his normal business in one month alone.

In Idaho, two ranchers lost more than 700 cattle during a 20,000-acre fire near Dietrich, with a value of at least half a million dollars. Insurance will cover about 25 percent for one of the ranchers. The other rancher had no insurance on his herds.

President Clinton responded to requests from the Governors of Idaho and Montana and declared the two states as disaster areas, making them eligible for Federal relief. One-stop centers are being established so that citizens can obtain service and financial assistance from all relevant agencies.

Damage to Natural Resources

In addition to these types of direct, out-of-pocket impacts on citizens, it is likely that losses in resource values will total billions of dollars.

The consequences of this year's wildfires on our country's natural resources are as vast as they are varied. The wildland fires of 2000 have burned both public and private lands over a broad spectrum of semi-arid rangeland and forested ecosystems, often encompassing entire watersheds critical to community water supplies. Compared to historic fire events, recent fires have burned with such intensity that the ecosystems of many of these extensively burned areas have been drastically changed. Without intervention, these burned lands will recover slowly and be susceptible to undesirable changes in vegetation composition. For example, plant species such as cheatgrass often become established in burned areas, creating additional fire risks and disrupting natural systems.

The immediate problems associated with the severity of fire will extend well into winter. With a lack of vegetation on hillsides, for example, the likelihood that rain and snowfall will create flooding and mudslides increases. In turn, the water quality of streams and rivers are damaged, which can kill native fish. Many wildlife populations also have been killed or disrupted.

Non-native invasive plant species -- weeds -- thrive on both public and private lands in the wake of wildland fires, presenting several problems. These opportunistic plants compete with and can overtake native plant communities. In addition, their proliferation provides powerful fuel for wildfires, increasing the likelihood of and severity of future wildfires. Cheatgrass, in particular, has spread throughout the West on degraded rangelands, increasing in density on burned areas. In the Great Basin ecosystem alone, one out of every three acres is either dominated or threatened by cheatgrass.

Harvesting Burned Trees

The appropriate harvest of fire-damaged timber can provide a means of recovering some of the economic value of forest stands and improving landscape health, but it is not a panacea for reducing wildfire risk. Removal activities that do not comply with environmental requirements can add to the damage associated with fire-impacted landscapes.

The Departments will continue to consider the option of harvesting fire-damaged trees when appropriate, with priority placed on those areas where roads already exist and where risks to communities from future wildfire are greatest. However, as has been the Departments' practice, such timber sales should proceed only after all environmental laws and procedures are followed and the affected communities are afforded the opportunity to participate in the process.

In the past, some Congressionally mandated salvage logging resulted in the harvest of green, healthy trees in addition to dead and dying timber. Congressional direction contained in the 1995 Rescissions Act -- known as the "Salvage Rider" -- placed priority on salvage logging over environmental protection. This is not an acceptable approach to harvesting fire-damaged trees.

V. Key Points and Recommendations

1. Continue to Make All Necessary Firefighting Resources Available.

As a first priority, the Departments will continue to provide all necessary resources to ensure that fire suppression efforts are at maximum efficiency in order to protect life and property. The United States' wildland firefighting organization is the finest in the world and deserves our strong support. To ensure continued readiness of the firefighting force, the Departments recommend providing additional resources for firefighting activities.

Wildland firefighting is a difficult and dangerous job, and it is essential that our firefighters continue to be well trained, with the appropriate equipment and resources they need to do their job. Safety of our firefighters and members of the public is, and always will be, the Administration's number one priority. We will continue to provide all necessary resources that our firefighting force need to continue the battle against this year's fires in as safe a manner as possible.

To fully fund the fire management preparedness programs, the Departments recommend additional resources in FY 2001 of about \$337 million, including \$204 million for the Forest Service and \$133 million for the Department of the Interior over the President's request. This continuing funding would provide the Departments' fire management organizations with the capability to prevent, detect, and take prompt, effective action to control wildfires. These funds also would support the personnel, equipment, and technology necessary to conduct proper planning, prevention, detection, information, education, and training.

2. Restore Damaged Landscapes and Rebuild Communities.

After ensuring that suppression resources are sufficient, invest in the restoration of communities and landscapes impacted by the year 2000 fires. The Departments also recommend that investments in the treatment of landscapes through thinning and the restoration of fire be continued and expanded to help reduce the risk of catastrophic fires.

Providing Economic Assistance to Hard-Hit Communities

As discussed above, the year 2000 fires have hit many communities hard. Both the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Small Business Administration (SBA) are responding to the immediate need for assistance. FEMA anticipates that more than 10,000 citizens from Idaho and Montana may qualify for disaster unemployment assistance, and it is anticipated that the SBA may offer more than \$50 million in small business loans to assist affected businessmen. The USDA's Forest Service and rural development program also are preparing to provide immediate economic assistance, using existing resources. In receiving grant or loan applications under these programs, the Department of Agriculture will fully consider the impact of the season's wildfires on communities seeking assistance, giving such communities a competitive advantage in the USDA grant-making and loan-making.

In addition to these short-term actions, the Departments recommend that stabilization and restoration investments be made in areas that have been damaged by fire and which are at risk of erosion, invasive species germination or water supply contamination. These investments should be made in a manner that provides maximum benefit to hard-hit communities with local contractors and the local workforce being utilized to maximum extent possible.

In a similar vein, the Departments also are recommending below that forest treatment activities be stepped up in intensity. These activities can be labor intensive and, once again, the Departments intend to involve local communities and the local workforce in implementing these activities.

Key aspects of these programs are set forth below.

Burned Area Stabilization and Restoration

Stabilization

Stabilization activities include short-term actions to remove hazards and stabilize soils and slopes. Examples of specific actions or "treatments" might include the removal of hazards; seeding by helicopter, plane, or by hand; constructing dams or other structures to hold soil on the slope; placing bundles of straw on the ground, parallel to the slope to slow the movement of soil down hill; contour furrowing or trenching (ditches cut into the mountain or hillsides to catch soil moving down hill); correcting road drainage by realigning poorly designed roads and culvert replacement to manage water and soil movement after the fire; and temporarily fencing cattle and people out of burned areas.

Priorities for stabilization activities include protecting human life and property; protecting public health and safety; stabilizing municipal watersheds; stabilizing steep slopes and unstable terrain; protecting archeological resources; and replacing culverts.

Restoration

Restoration activities include longer-term actions to repair or improve lands that are unlikely to recover naturally from severe fire damage. Examples of specific actions or "treatments" might include planting or seeding native species; reforesting desired tree species; chemical or mechanical treatment to reduce competition; and other efforts to limit the spread of invasive species.

Priorities for restoration activities include preventing introduction of non-native invasive species; promoting restoration of ecosystem structure and composition; rehabilitating threatened and endangered species habitat; and improving water quality.

Because of the large amount of acreage affected by this year's fires, the Departments propose to develop a stabilization and restoration plan that is coordinated with all affected agencies, including appropriate state and local agencies.

Responsibility for implementation of individual projects lies at the field-level. Projects covering multiple jurisdictions will be planned and implemented on an interagency basis. The Departments recognize that the scope of this effort will require additional resources. Three specific aspects of the program may require special support:

- (1) *Native plant/seed sources*: Availability of native seeds and plant materials is limited. Significant effort will be needed to encourage the production of seeds and plant materials by the private sector and develop agency seed storage capabilities to support restoration activities.
- (2) *Science and research*: Significant information collection, research, and data analysis is required to assess the effectiveness of restoration techniques and develop improved techniques. Current technologies and techniques are largely based on experiences from agricultural practices in the early part of the 20th Century. Special attention will be focused on techniques applicable to non-agricultural lands and to treatments using native seeds and plants.
- (3) *Capital equipment*: The current post-fire program relies on a limited amount of capital equipment (e.g., drill-seeders), much of which is not dedicated to this program. Additional equipment will be needed to support the expanded requirements, especially in the application of native seeds.

3. Investments in Projects to Reduce Fire Risk

As discussed above, the Departments have been implementing new approaches to address the long-term buildup of hazardous fuels in our forests and rangelands. The fires of 2000 have underscored the importance of pursuing an aggressive program to address the fuels problem with the help of local communities, particularly those in wildland-urban interface areas, where threats to lives and property are greater and the complexity and costs of treatments higher.

The Departments recommend continuing current fuel reduction strategies and seeking additional budgetary resources to treat additional acreage. The Departments are requesting \$257 million for fuels reduction activities in FY 2001, over the President's request including \$115 million for the Forest Service and \$142 million for the Department of the Interior. These funds will cover accelerated treatments, especially in the wildland-urban interface area and will work to support additional research and eradication of invasive species. Funding will be available to support Endangered Species Act consultation work by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service.

Implementation of Fuels Reduction Program

The most significant implementation challenge for the Departments is to substantially increase the number of acres of forestlands that receive fuels treatment. Both Departments are utilizing one aspect of fuels treatments, prescribed fires, increasingly. That program will continue to play a key role, although the lessons from the Cerro Grande fire demand that this strategy be implemented with great care. In that regard, the Departments will implement recommendations from the independent review of the Cerro Grande fire.

In addition to prescribed burns, the physical removal of undergrowth and other fuels needs to be stepped up in intensity in order to have a more significant impact on dangerous fuels buildup. Because of the importance of this activity, the Departments recommend that experienced personnel be dedicated full time to this activity, with direct chains of command to the Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior. The Secretaries, in turn, should meet periodically to assess the progress of these efforts.

Markets for Removed Materials

Because much of the hazardous fuels in forests are excessive levels of forest-based biomass -- dead, diseased and down trees -- and small diameter trees, there are several benefits of finding economical uses for this material, including helping offset forest restoration cost; providing economic opportunities for rural, forest-dependent communities; reducing the risks from catastrophic wildfires; protecting watersheds; helping restore forest resiliency, and protecting the environment.

USDA Forest Service research teams are working to develop new uses for small trees and new ways to process them. A need exists to transfer and commercialize new technology as it comes on line and to develop and expand local markets for these products. Both Departments propose to partner with communities, universities, and businesses to conduct additional research on the stimulation of small diameter and other vegetative products industries.

Small diameter logs, for example, can be used for housing material such as trim, siding, and sub-flooring. Recent technology now makes it possible for wood composites - fibers, flakes and strands - from lower quality species of trees such as juniper, pinyon pine, and insect-killed white fir to be used successfully for particleboard and replacement filler for thermoplastic composites that make up a wide range of consumer products such as highway signs. Similar uses are being expanded for pulp chips. The woody residues that make up a forest's undergrowth has historically been burned or allowed to accumulate in huge piles on the forest floor. This material could potentially be economically used as compost and mulch material.

Research Needs

Given the severity of this year's fires and the additional fuels management and restoration activities recommended by this report, the Departments have a number of additional research needs. They recommend research on the relationship between invasive species and fires and the effectiveness of various treatment efforts.

They also recommend research based on recent fire seasons regarding relationships between land management practices and the occurrence and intensity of fires.

Budget

The two Departments request additional resources of \$130 million in FY 2001 over the President's request to fully fund a burned area restoration program as described above, including \$45 million for the Forest Service and \$85 million for the Department of the Interior.

4. Work Directly with Local Communities.

Working with local communities is a critical element in restoring damaged landscapes and reducing fire hazards proximate to homes and communities. To accomplish this, the Departments recommend:

- a. Expanding the participation of local communities in efforts to reduce fire hazards and the use of local labor for fuels treatment and restoration work.
- b. Improving local fire protection capabilities through financial and technical assistance to state, local, and volunteer firefighting efforts.
- c. Assisting in the development of markets for traditionally underutilized small diameter wood as a value added outlet for removed fuels.
- d. Encouraging a dialogue within and among communities regarding opportunities for reducing wildfire risk and expanding outreach and education to homeowners and communities about fire prevention through use of programs such as Firewise.

As discussed above, the Departments have been working with communities on fire-related activities through a variety of programs. On the operational side, the National Interagency Fire Center provides training opportunities for local firefighters, and the Fire Center has developed cooperative arrangements with many local and state entities to facilitate coordinated firefighting efforts. The Departments also work with local communities to assist in fire protection activities through the Firewise program and other outreach efforts. In addition, the Departments currently work with local communities on fuels treatment and post-fire restoration projects.

Although Federal agencies are engaged in these activities on an on-going basis, the Departments recommend that a significant new initiative be undertaken to coordinate appropriate investments and outreach activities with affected communities. The proposed initiative would focus on three major arenas: (1) improving community-based firefighting capabilities and coordination with state and Federal firefighting efforts; (2) working closely with communities-at-risk in implementing post-fire restoration activities and fuels reduction activities; and (3) expanding joint education and outreach efforts regarding fire prevention and mitigation in the wildlife-urban interface.

Rural and volunteer fire departments provide the front line of defense, or initial attack, on up to 90 percent of the communities. Volunteer fire departments are the backbone of fire protection in America. County, State, and Federal agencies provide immediate backup to local fire departments when a wildland-urban interface fire gets out of control. Strong readiness capability at the state and local levels go hand-in-hand with optimal efficiency at the Federal level. The level of funding being proposed will provide a more optimum efficiency level for the states and local fire departments in the impacted areas.

Budget

To support this initiative for community involvement and participation, additional funding of \$88 million in FY 2001 is required. The USDA Forest Service proposes increases of \$53.8 million for state and volunteer fire assistance, as well as an additional \$12.5 million for economic action programs and \$12 million for forest health

activity. The Department of the Interior proposes a new program to support rural fire districts, particularly those intermingled with Bureau of Land Management lands. Funding of \$10 million is proposed for FY 2001.

5. Be Accountable

A Cabinet-level management structure should be established to ensure that the actions recommended by the Departments receive the highest priority. The Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior should co-chair this effort. Regional integrated management teams should be accountable for fuels treatment, restoration, and fire preparedness. Local teams, working closely with communities and other agency partners, would manage projects on the ground.

Wildland fires know no jurisdictional boundaries. It is for that reason that the five primary Federal agencies that have operational responsibility for preparing for, and responding to, wildfires, formed the National Interagency Fire Center. The Fire Center is a model of cross-agency cooperation and accountability, and it provides a key focal point for coordination with state and local firefighting efforts.

As with fighting fires, Federal, State and local governments will have to cooperate to restore damaged lands, invest in protecting affected communities, and reduce hazardous fuel loads.

A number of existing, regional integrated management teams are in place to assist in the setting of regional priorities for land restoration, fuels treatment, and community cooperation and outreach. The Departments recommend that these regional structures be utilized and/or retooled, as appropriate, to provide a focal point for these initiatives.

The Departments would also establish locally led teams with the Department of Commerce and other appropriate agencies. These integrated teams would identify specific land restoration, fuels treatment, and preparedness projects; coordinate environmental reviews and consultations; facilitate and encourage public participation; and monitor and evaluate project implementation.

Because of the critical importance of these matters, the Departments recommend Cabinet-level oversight of the implementation of these initiatives, co-chaired by the Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior. Among other things, the new management team would be responsible for ensuring that appropriate performance objectives are established and met, ensuring that adequate financial and other resources are made available, establishing a system for identifying and addressing implementation issues promptly, and ensuring that the environmental reviews required by the National Environmental Policy Act, and all other environmental requirements, are undertaken and completed on a timely basis.

The Departments recommend that the Cabinet-level group assess the progress towards implementing these tasks, and provide periodic reports to the President.

Appendix: Funding Summary

Nearly \$1.6 billion in additional resources over the President's FY2001 Budget requests for the USDA Forest Service and the US Department of the Interior will be required in FY 2001 to meet the objectives of this report. This includes \$897 million more for the USDA Forest Service, and \$682 million more for the US Department of the Interior.

To continue the momentum gained by the additional FY 2001 resources, future funding for fiscal year 2002 and the out years will need to be maintained for these same program components. Tables 1 through 3 summarize these needs for FY2001, by totals and by each Department.

Table 1

FY 2001 Funding Summary, USDA Forest Service and the US Department of the Interior

USDA Forest Service and the US DOI	FY 2000	FY 2001				
	Final	President's	Additional	Total	House	Senate
	Budget	Needs	Needs	Action	Action	
...Dollars in thousands...						
Fire Preparedness	\$584,618	\$586,433	\$336,381	\$922,814	\$586,433	\$586,683
Fire Operations	323,995	331,136	677,711	1,008,847	320,107	579,394
Emergency Fire Contingency	290,000	150,000	476,000	626,000	200,000	150,000
State Fire Assistance	23,929	30,006	42,994	73,000	25,000	28,042
Volunteer Fire Assistance	3,240	2,510	10,790	13,300	5,000	5,000
Rural Fire Assistance	0	0	10,000	10,000	0	0
Forest Health Management	62,075	62,842	12,000	74,842	63,794	63,383
Economic Action Programs	20,198	17,267	12,500	29,767	14,246	23,486
TOTAL	\$1,308,055	\$1,180,194	\$1,578,376	\$2,758,570	\$1,214,580	\$1,435,988

Table 2.

FY 2001 Funding Summary, USDA Forest Service

USDA Forest Service	FY 2000	FY 2001	FY 2001	FY 2001	FY 2001	FY 2001
	Final	President's	Additional	Total	House	Senate
	Budget	Needs	Needs	Action	Action	
...Dollars in thousands...						
Fire Preparedness	\$408,768	\$404,343	\$203,547	\$607,890	\$404,343	\$404,593
Fire Operations	208,888	216,029	338,971	555,000	210,000	333,300
Emergency Fire Contingency	90,000	150,000	276,000	426,000	0	150,000
State Fire Assistance	23,929	30,006	42,994	73,000	25,000	28,042
Volunteer Fire Assistance	3,240	2,510	10,790	13,300	5,000	5,000
Rural Fire Assistance	0	0	0	0	0	0
Forest Health Management	62,075	62,842	12,000	74,842	63,794	63,383

Economic Action Programs	20,198	17,267	12,500	29,767	14,246	23,486
TOTAL	\$817,098	\$882,997	\$896,802	\$1,779,799	\$722,383	\$1,007,804

Table 3

FY 2001 Funding Summary, US Department of the Interior

US Department of the Interior	FY 2000	FY 2001				
	Final	President's	Additional	Total	House	Senate
	Budget	Needs	Needs	Action	Action	...Dollars in thousands...
Fire Preparedness	\$175,850	\$182,090	\$132,834	\$314,924	\$182,090	\$182,090
Fire Operations	115,107	115,107	338,740	453,847	110,107	246,094
Emergency Fire Contingency	200,000	0	200,000	200,000	200,000	0
State Fire Assistance**	0	0	0	0	0	0
Volunteer Fire Assistance**	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rural Fire Assistance*	0	0	10,000	10,000	0	0
Forest Health Management**	0	0	0	0	0	0
Economic Action Programs**	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	\$490,957	\$297,197	\$681,574	\$978,771	\$492,197	\$428,184

*New program proposed in the Report to the President

** No DOI equivalent to these USDA Forest Service programs

The following briefly describes each program component, including total funding requirements for FY 2001 (President's request plus additional resources now being requested):

Fire Preparedness

Provides the fire management organization with the capability to prevent, detect, or take prompt, effective initial attack suppression action on wildfires. Preparedness activities include planning, prevention, detection, information and education, pre-incident training, equipment and supply purchase and replacement, and other preparedness activities. Funding estimates are based on prediction models that determine a cost-effective level of preparedness for initial and extended attack.

- For the USDA Forest Service \$608 million for recurring readiness and program management costs, including fire science and research.
- For the US Department of the Interior \$315 million for recurring readiness and program management costs; one-time readiness and program management costs; fire science and research; and fire management facilities repair.

Fire Operations - Suppression

Provides costs directly associated with fire suppression activities (personnel costs, contracts, aviation, supplies, and so on)

- For the USDA Forest Service \$320 million.
- For US Department of the Interior \$153 million.

Fire Operations – Fuels Management

Use of prescribed fire, mechanical removal, and other techniques to remove/reduce hazardous levels of fuels in order to reduce risks to communities and to restore natural fire regimes to wildlands. Includes funding to support non-fire disciplines (biology, wildlife, hydrologists, etc.) necessary to conduct planning and assessment activities.

- For the USDA Forest Service \$190 million including \$20 million for research and \$11.5 million to support environmental clearances.
- For US Department of the Interior \$195 million, including at least \$20 million to support environmental clearances.

Fire Operations – Burned Area Rehabilitation

Provides for post-fire stabilization and restoration of burned lands. Short-term stabilization efforts remove hazards and address erosion, flooding, and mudslide problems. Longer-term rehabilitation are targeted on those portions of fires that burned severely, thus less likely to revegetate naturally. Special attention focused on lands subject to non-native, invasive species.

- For the USDA Forest Service \$45 million.
- For US Department of the Interior \$105 million.
- Both Departments will have flexibility to increase these levels if estimated needs in other fire-related activities are less than currently projected.

Emergency Fire Contingency

Provides additional emergency funds for Fire Suppression activities that are only released to the agency upon Presidential declaration that regular suppression funds are insufficient. These funds ensure that funding is always available to fight wildfires.

- For the USDA Forest Service \$426 million, of which \$276 is to repay the Knutson-Vandenberg (K-V) Fund.
- For US Department of the Interior \$200 million, including estimated \$75 million to repay a September 2000 Section 102 transfer.

State and Volunteer Fire Assistance

State fire assistance in the USDA Forest Service provides technical training, financial assistance, and equipment to States to ensure that Federal, State, and local agencies can deliver a uniform and coordinated suppression response to wildfire. Special emphasis will be placed on a Wildland-Urban Interface component.

- For the USDA Forest Service \$86 million including \$20 million for incentives for high priority forest management practices on their lands to reduce fire risk and fuel loads and \$4 million for high priority fire education and prevention programs in the wildland-urban interface.
- US Department of the Interior has no equivalent program; see Rural Fire Assistance program below.

Rural Fire Assistance

Rural fire district assistance in the Department of the Interior is a new program to provide technical and financial support to volunteer fire departments that protect communities with populations of less than 10,000. Emphasis is on areas intermingled with lands managed by the Interior Department (especially the Bureau of Land Management).

- USDA Forest Service has no equivalent program; see State and Volunteer Fire Assistance above.
- For US Department of the Interior \$10 million.

Forest Health Management

Provides forest health technical and financial assistance to all Federal agencies, Tribal governments, and States in carrying out a coordinated nationwide program of detecting, monitoring, evaluating, preventing and suppressing invasive forest insects and diseases.

- For the USDA Forest Service \$75 million, including funding for the management and control of invasive species as a result of the fires and are based on estimates of detection, evaluation, and high priority management and control treatments.
- US Department of the Interior has no equivalent program.

Economic Action Program

Provides technical and financial assistance to address the long-term health of rural areas, by helping communities develop opportunities and enterprises through diversified uses of forest resources.

- For the USDA Forest Service \$30 million, including funding for rural community assistance, forest products conservation and recycling, and market development and expansion.
- US Department of the Interior has no equivalent program.

Wildland Preparedness Funding History

Department of the Interior and USDA Forest Service

(BA in millions)

	FY 1999	FY 2000	FY 2001
	Enacted	Enacted	Request
Department of the Interior	\$157	\$176	\$182
USDA Forest Service	<u>325</u>	<u>360</u>	<u>404 *</u>
Total	\$482	\$536	\$586

* BA reflects the revised USDA Forest Service budget structure in FY 2001

Attachment B

Acres Treated

Year	USDA Forest Service	Department of the Interior	
		Acres in Thousands	
1993	385	368	
1994	384	334	
1995	570	348	
1996	617	298	
1997	1,097	503	
1998	1,489	620	
1999	1,412	765	

[President and First Lady](#) | [Vice President and Mrs. Gore](#)
[Record of Progress](#) | [The Briefing Room](#)
[Gateway to Government](#) | [Contacting the White House](#)
[White House for Kids](#) | [White House History](#)
[White House Tours](#) | [Help](#) | [Text Only](#)

[Privacy Statement](#)

**STATEMENT OF
MIKE DOMBECK
CHIEF
FOREST SERVICE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Concerning
FEDERAL AGENCY PREPAREDNESS FOR THE SUMMER 2000 FIRES
and the
PRESIDENT'S REPORT ON MANAGING THE IMPACTS OF WILDFIRES
ON COMMUNITIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT
Before the
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON FORESTS AND PUBLIC LAND MANAGEMENT
UNITED STATES SENATE
September 15, 2000**

MISTER CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today concerning the summer 2000 wildfires, and Secretary Glickman and Babbitt's Report to the President. I am Mike Dombeck, Chief of the Forest Service.

I appreciate your interest in what the agency is doing with respect to catastrophic wildfire. As the 2000 fire season continues, it is clear there is significant short-term rehabilitation and long-term restoration work that must be done.

I would like to speak today about how the Forest Service is positioned to implement the Report to the President in response to the wildfires of 2000. The Report was issued on September 8, 2000, and is titled, "*Managing the Impact of Wildfires on Communities and the Environment.*"

The current fire season corresponds to a historical pattern of extensive wildfires during similar unusual weather conditions. The result has been an extended, severe fire season with wildfires burning simultaneously across the western United States. The Forest Service's firefighters and our interagency partners have done an outstanding job in these difficult conditions. So far this year, we have put out a remarkable 76,000 fires that burned 6.6 million acres across the western United States (2.5 million on Forest Service lands).

We have already heard from Under Secretary Lyons about the different elements of the Report to the President. I would like to discuss the Forest Service's plans for implementing the Report.

The Report to the President builds on many of the actions that we are already taking. However, given the magnitude of the fire season and its effects, there is clearly a need for additional action and resources than would otherwise be possible within our baseline funding. We developed the following principles to guide Forest Service efforts to address rehabilitation needs and reduce future risk of unnaturally intense wildland fires to communities and natural resources:

- Assist state and local partners to take actions to reduce fire risk to homes and private property through programs such as FIREWISE;
- Focus rehabilitation efforts on restoring watershed function, including protection of basic soil, water resources, biological communities, and prevention of invasive species;
- Assign highest priority for hazardous fuels reduction to communities at risk, readily accessible municipal watersheds, threatened and endangered species habitat, and other important local features, where conditions favor uncharacteristically intense fires;
- Restore healthy, diverse, and resilient ecological systems to minimize uncharacteristically intense fires on a priority watershed basis. Methods will include removal of excessive vegetation and dead fuels through thinning, prescribed fire, and other treatment methods;
- Focus on achieving the desired future condition in collaboration with communities, interest groups, and state and federal agencies. Streamline process, maximize effectiveness, use ecologically conservative approaches, and minimize controversy in accomplishing restoration projects;
- Monitor to evaluate the effectiveness of various treatments to reduce unnaturally intense fires while restoring forest ecosystem health and watershed function;
- Encourage new stewardship industries and collaborate with local people, volunteers, Youth Conservation Corps members, service organizations, and Forest Service work crews, as appropriate, and;
- Focus research on long-term effectiveness of different restoration and rehabilitation methods to determine those methods most effective in protecting and restoring watershed function and forest health. Seek new uses and market byproducts of restoration.

The Forest Service and other firefighting agencies understood early that this could be a potentially difficult fire season. Early planning was done and resources were in place before the season began. As we are now all too aware, the fire season has been extremely difficult. We will continue to make all necessary firefighting resources available.

Concerns have been raised that significantly less financial resources were available for fire preparedness this year. The appropriation for preparedness went up this year, yet many operating costs also went up, such as payroll, training, travel, vehicle acquisition and operation, unemployment/worker's compensation costs, and contract costs, such as for pre-suppression aerial support, to name just a few.

The Administration has provided full support to the interagency firefighting effort (see attachment A) and has implemented a series of budget and management improvements.

Based on lessons of recent fire seasons, especially 1999 and 2000, the Forest Service has reassessed the assumptions and variables used in planning models to determine the resources needed to fight fires. It recommends funding 100 percent of this revised estimate of full preparedness.

In addition, the Forest Service has devoted special attention to firefighting training and coordination. As part of this emphasis, it has added training courses, modified current classes, and, in some cases, raised the qualifications for certain positions. In 1999, the Forest Service and its interagency partners issued a revised qualifications system for firefighting and prescribed fire positions in order to ensure that the U.S. continues to field the finest firefighting and prescribed fire force in the world.

An important issue related to preparedness and firefighting capability is the need to address firefighter pay equity issues. The availability of qualified employees for critical firefighting overhead and support positions has been affected by constraints on overtime pay for many employees. The Forest Service and the other wildland firefighting agencies will continue to work with the Office of Personnel Management to resolve this issue.

Burned area emergency rehabilitation teams are already mobilized and conducting preliminary assessments and rehabilitation projects needed to help prevent further loss of life, property, and resources from the first damage-producing storms that may cause excessive erosion, water quality degradation, and other damage from burned areas. To date, 65 plans have been approved and \$34 million has been made available to treat over 400,000 acres.

Associated with the emergency rehabilitation actions that result from wildfire are additional restoration needs to mitigate the devastating effects of the fires. The funds requested may also address efforts to reforest burned areas, replace recreation facilities, treat noxious weed infestations resulting from fire, survey and monitor impacts to wilderness, survey and rehabilitate impacted heritage resources, reconstruct fencing, and restore critical habitat, to replace facility structures and restore impacted trails. The Forest Service will evaluate these needs after the fires are contained to

determine the extent of the needs.

The recommendations in the Report to the President would also expand our efforts working with the State and private landowners, the National Fire Protection Association, and local firefighting organizations to help ensure that home protection capabilities are improved and to educate homeowners in fire-sensitive ecosystems about the consequences of wildfires, and techniques in community planning, homebuilding, and landscaping to protect themselves and their property. Our FIREWISE program has been very successful in helping homeowners and communities reduce damage to their houses.

This year's fires also reflect a longer-term disruption in the natural fire cycle that has increased the risk of unnaturally intense fires in our forests and rangelands. During the last century, fires have been aggressively extinguished in the West. As a result, the annual acreage consumed by wildfires in the lower 48 states dropped from 40 to 50 million acres a year in the early 1930s to about five million acres in the 1970s. During this time, firefighting budgets rose dramatically and firefighting tactics and equipment became increasingly more sophisticated and effective.

Decades of excluding fire from our forests has drastically changed the look, fire behavior, and ecological condition of western forests and rangelands while simultaneously increasing the cost and difficulty of suppressing fires. A century ago, when low intensity, high frequency fires were common place, many forests were less dense and had larger, more fire-resistant trees. For example, in northern Arizona, some lower elevation stands of ponderosa pine that once held 50 larger trees per acre now contain 200 or more smaller trees per acre. In addition, the composition of our forests have changed from more fire-resistant tree species to non-fire resistant species such as grand fir, Douglas fir, and subalpine fir. As a result, studies show that today's wildfires, typically burn hotter, faster, and higher than those of the past.

Wildland firefighting has become more complex in the last two decades due to dramatic increases in the West's population. Of the ten fastest growing states in the U.S., eight are in the interior West. As a result, new development is occurring in fire-prone areas, often adjacent to Federal land, creating a "wildland-urban interface"--an area where structures and other human development meet or intermingle with undeveloped wildland. Wildland firefighters today often spend a great deal more time and effort protecting structures than in earlier years. Consequently, firefighting has become more complicated, expensive, and dangerous.

The Forest Service and its interagency partners have increased their efforts to reduce risks associated with the buildup of brush, shrubs, small trees and other fuels in forest and rangelands through a variety of approaches, including controlled burns, the physical removal of undergrowth, and the prevention and eradication of invasive

plants. In 1994 the Forest Service was treating approximately 385,000 acres across the United States to reduce hazardous fuels. Today, the Forest Service has successfully increased annual treatment almost four-fold. Last year the Forest Service treated approximately 1.4 million acres. Reversing the effects of a century of aggressive fire suppression will take time and money targeted to high priority areas of protecting people, communities, critical watersheds, and wildlife habitat.

As stated earlier, the Forest Service and Interior agencies are steadily increasing their capacity to reduce hazardous fuels. They are also focusing these efforts on the wildland/urban interface, but the scale of the problem is beyond our current means. The Report to the President recommends increased resources to continue making progress in reducing fuels, particularly in the wildland/urban interface areas.

The General Accounting Office (GAO) issued a report in April, 1999, titled: *Western National Forests: a Cohesive Strategy is Needed to Address Catastrophic Wildfire Threats* (GAO/RCED-99-65). The Forest Service has developed a draft cohesive strategy to respond to the concerns raised by GAO. The draft strategy is not operational in nature, but rather is a strategic blueprint that utilizes coarse-scale national data to assess the problem of fuel buildup across the west. The draft strategy is consistent with the broad objectives outlined in the Report to the President, and provides a process for prioritizing and focusing our treatments.

Some critics have expressed concern that the Administration's roadless area policy could increase wildfire risks and hinder both suppression and hazardous fuels management needs. The analysis in the draft Environmental Impact Statement indicates that the degree of overlap of high risk areas with inventoried roadless is relatively small, with only 3 million acres of inventoried roadless in high hazard condition out of the estimated 24 million acres at high risk. Furthermore, the priorities that focus on protection of life and property, usually not a problem for roadless areas, are more important for the wildland-urban interface where roads are more prevalent.

Two fires in the Bitterroot National Forest help make the point that fires in wilderness or roadless areas can be much less costly to fight. The Skalkaho Fire burned 64,000 acres, required 755 firefighters, and cost \$7.2 million. Meanwhile, a fire in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness burned 63,000 acres, required only 25 firefighters, and cost \$709,000.

Working with local communities is a critical element in restoring damaged landscapes and reducing fire hazards near homes and communities. This work will be pursued through expanding community participation, increasing local capacity, and learning from the public. Rural and volunteer fire departments provide the front line of defense, or initial attack, on up to 90 percent of the communities. Strong readiness

capability at the state and local levels goes hand-in-hand with optimal efficiency at the Federal level. The level of funding being proposed in the Report to the President will provide a greater efficiency level for the states and local fire departments in the impacted areas.

Accountability is of utmost importance, and the Forest Service is taking action to ensure accountability. The additional funding need identified in the Report to the President is \$1.57 billion for the Departments of Interior and Agriculture. The Forest Service portion of this additional need is approximately \$896 million. This funding will be used for fire preparedness, fire operations, State and volunteer fire assistance, forest health management, to repay monies borrowed from trust funds to pay for current emergency fire operations, and economic action programs related to accomplishment of all of the actions outlined in the Report to the President.

The funds associated with the Report to the President are requested as contingent emergency funds, reflecting the uncertain nature of the additional needs for various activities and programs for the 2000 (e.g., rehabilitation) and the upcoming 2001 fire seasons, as well as uncertainty over when some funds will be needed. Only by flexible funding, supporting the agency's ability to respond to the variable nature of the program needs, will we know the full range of priority needs.

Funding levels in different categories are approximate, and will be adjusted as needed as the year progresses. However, reasonable estimates for likely program components of this funding are:

- \$203,547,000 for Fire Preparedness;
- \$338,971,000 for Fire Operations;
- \$276,000,000 for the Emergency Fire Contingency;
- \$42,994,000 for State Fire Assistance;
- \$10,790,000 for Volunteer Fire Assistance;
- \$12,000,000 for Forest Health Management;
- \$12,500,000 for the Economic Action Program.

The Forest Service is reviewing its performance measures and strategic plan goals and objectives to ensure that measures accurately reflect the outcomes anticipated from the work and actions contemplated by the Report to the President. The outcomes associated with the additional funding are significant, and we estimate the following:

- 455,000 acres of fuels management on federal lands, targeted to high priority areas including wildland-urban interface areas. This is in addition to the President's fiscal year 2001 request for treating 1.345 million acres;
- 315,000 acres of fuels management on wildland-urban interface areas on non-

- federal lands (through cost-sharing);
- At least 750,000 acres of rehabilitation and restoration of burned areas;
- 4,300 volunteer fire departments in high-risk areas receiving increased assistance for training and equipment, and increase of over 1,800 from the President's fiscal year 2001 request, and;
- 8,000 new jobs created.

Summary

We will continue to provide the national leadership and to work with our federal, State, and local firefighting cooperators, and Congress to ensure that the federal firefighting agencies and their cooperators have the resources needed to fight fire.

The Forest Service and other federal agencies with firefighting responsibilities are committed to minimizing the losses from future unnaturally intense fires such as those in New Mexico, Idaho, Montana, and across the interior West. We are committed to working with communities to implement a strategy to restore and maintain healthy ecosystems on National Forest System lands. That means reducing hazardous fuels, while ensuring safe and effective use of prescribed fire.

Our strategic approach and guiding principles will enable us to treat areas that pose the highest risk to people, property, and natural resources, and to do so in the most expeditious manner possible. This will require partnerships, resources, and common sense approaches that avoid needless controversy.

This concludes my statement. I would be happy to answer any questions you or the members of your subcommittee might have.

For more information contact Gene Blankenbaker or Bud Risner

Attachment A

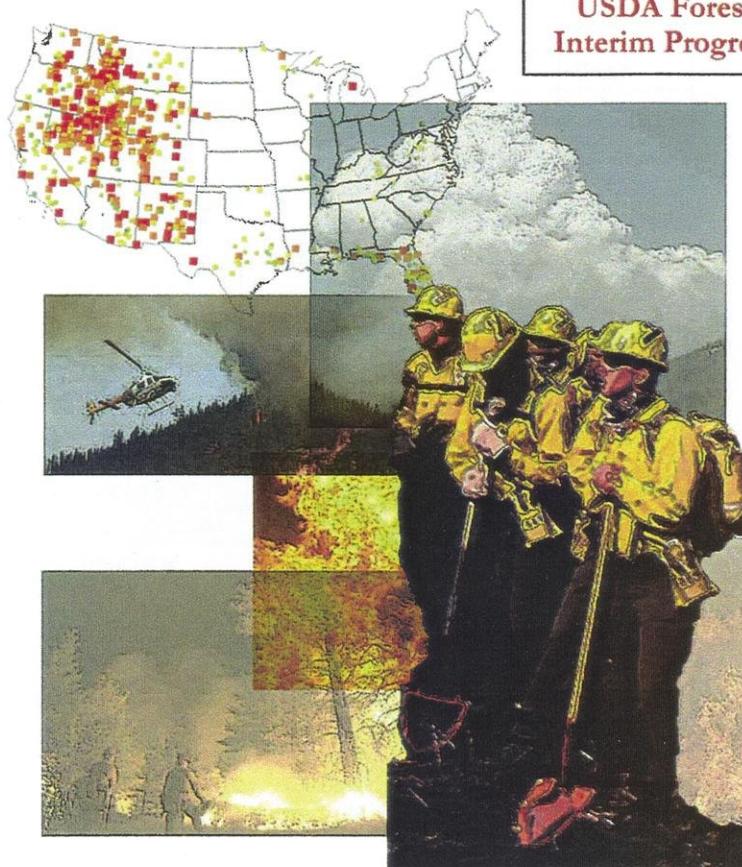
Wildland Preparedness Funding History

Department of the Interior and USDA Forest Service

	<i>(BA in millions)</i>		
	FY 1999	FY 2000	FY 2001
	Enacted	Enacted	Request
Department of the Interior	\$157	\$176	\$182
USDA Forest Service	\$325	\$360	\$404*
Total	\$482	\$536	\$586

* BA reflects the revised USDA Forest Service budget structure in FY 2001

USDA Forest Service
Interim Progress Report



Managing The Impacts of Wildfires on Communities and the Environment

*A Report to the President
In Response to the
Wildfires of 2000*

January 12, 2001

Table of Contents

Managing the Impacts of Wildfires

Description	Page
Foreword	3
Table 1. National Fire Plan Funding	3
Table 2. Budget Synopsis and Activities	4
Key Points of the National Fire Plan	5
Operating Principles	5
Actions	5
Table 3. Selected Accomplishments (matrix)	6
Tentative Funding Allocations	6
Table 4. Tentative Funding Allocation (by region)	7
Outputs	8
Table 5. Estimated Outputs	8
Congressional Reporting Requirements	9
Table 6. Reporting Requirements (matrix)	9
Appendix A-1. Management Structure	9
Appendix A-2. Contact List	10
Appendix A-3. Title IV Funding for the National Fire Plan	11
Appendix A-4. Funding Levels to the National Fire Plan	12
Appendix A-5. Selected Target Allocations	13
Appendix A-6, Fuels Management on Federal Lands	14

In emergency situations, Appendix A-3, page 11, provides for other programs and expenditures necessary to carry out the goals and objectives of the National Fire Plan. This includes the funding for the National Fire Plan by the USDA Forest Service. Table 1, Page 3, illustrates an additional \$1,103,421,000 is available.

Table 1. FY 2001 Funding for the National Fire Plan, USDA Forest Service

Programs in the National Fire Plan	FY 2000 Plan	FY 2001 Budget	FY 2001 National Fire Plan	FY 2001 Total
Fire Suppression	\$425,471,000	\$704,347,000	\$226,317,000	\$612,831,000
Preventive Fire Control	\$10,901,000	\$10,100,000	\$76,000,000	\$126,001,000
Fire Operations	\$20,148,000	\$20,000,000	\$101,000,000	\$122,048,000
Wildland Fire Research	\$1,929,000	\$2,000,000	\$6,700,000	\$7,729,000
Wildland Fire Training	\$1,414,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,414,000
Fire Prevention	\$2,017,000	\$2,700,000	\$12,500,000	\$17,217,000
Wildland Fire Equipment	\$0,136,000	\$0,136,000	\$7,500,000	\$7,636,000
Wildland Fire Protection	\$0,000,000	\$0,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000
Total	\$1,117,300,000	\$105,347,000	\$1,103,421,000	\$2,206,245,000

Funding shown under the "National Fire Plan", column 4, is the increase specifically associated with the National Fire Plan, USDA Forest Service.

The intent of this document is to report interim progress on the National Fire Plan by the USDA Forest Service.

The Website address for the National Fire Plan is www.na.fs.fed.us/nfp



Managing the Impacts of Wildfires on Communities and the Environment: *A Report to the President In Response to the Wildfires of 2000*

An Interim Progress Report by the USDA Forest Service¹

Foreword. On August 8, 2000, President Clinton asked Secretaries Babbitt and Glickman to prepare a report that recommends how best to respond to this year's severe fires, reduce the impacts of these wildland fires on rural communities, and ensure sufficient firefighting resources in the future.

The President also asked for actions that federal agencies, in cooperation with States and local communities, can take to reduce immediate hazards to communities in the wildland-urban interface, and to ensure that fire management planning and firefighter personnel and resources are prepared for extreme fire conditions in the future.

The report is officially entitled, *Managing the Impacts of Wildfire on Communities and the Environment: A Report to the President In Response to the Wildfires of 2000*, and is being implemented in close coordination with the US Department of the Interior.

The report to the President, along with preliminary adjustments by Congress, calls for **\$1,103,421,000** in additional funding for the USDA Forest Service (see Appendix A-4, page 12) to implement what the USDA Forest Service is calling the National Fire Plan. This amount includes **\$484,147,000** in additional base funding for fire preparedness and **\$619,274,000** in emergency funds (see Appendix A-3, page 11 for detail) for others programs components necessary to carryout the goals and objectives of the plan. Table 1 illustrates the funding for the National Fire Plan for the USDA Forest Service. Table 2, Page 4, illustrates the additional \$1,103,421,000 in detail.

Table 1. FY 2001 Funding for the National Fire Plan, USDA Forest Service

Programs in the National Fire Plan ¹	FY 2000 Final	FY 2001 Initial Estimate	FY 2001 National Fire Plan	FY 2001 Total
Fire Preparedness	\$408,768,000	\$404,343,000	\$208,147,000	\$612,490,000
Emergency Fire Contingency	390,000,000	150,000,000	276,000,000	426,000,000
Fire Operations	209,188,000	226,639,000	501,000,000	727,639,000
State Fire Assistance	23,929,000	25,000,000	50,494,000	75,494,000
Volunteer Fire Assistance	3,240,000	5,000,000	8,280,000	13,280,000
Forest Health Management	62,075,000	63,944,000	12,000,000	75,944,000
Economic Action Programs	20,198,000	30,336,000	12,500,000	42,836,000
Community and Private Land Fire Assistance	0	0	35,000,000	35,000,000
Totals	\$1,117,398,000	\$905,262,000	\$1,103,421,000	\$2,008,683,000

¹Funding shown under the "National Fire Plan", column 3, is the increase specifically associated with the National Fire Plan, USDA Forest Service.

The intent of this document is to report interim progress on the National Fire Plan by the USDA Forest Service.

¹This document represents an interim status report for the USDA Forest Service portion of what is known as the National Fire Plan. The US Department of the Interior is working on a similar report. A year-end *Status Report* will be prepared summarizing both Departments. For more information about the National Fire Plan, USDA Forest Service, contact: Lyle Laverty, National Fire Plan Coordinator @ (720) 480-0452; e-mail: llaverty@fs.fed.us or, Denny Truesdale, Deputy National Fire Plan Coordinator @ (202) 205-1588; (202) 205-1174 (Fax); e-mail: dtruesdale@fs.fed.us

Table 2. FY 2001 Budget Synopsis and Description of Activities, National Fire Plan, USDA Forest Service

Programs in the National Fire Plan	Amount	Description of Activities to be Accomplished
Fire Preparedness:	\$175,147,000	Bring fire readiness up to optimal level of efficiency.
Fire Workforce Development and Maintenance	17,000,000	Develop and maintain adequate workforce for fire management.
New Technology Development, including the JFSP	16,000,000	Develop new fire management technology and emphasize the continued implementation of the Joint Fire Science Program.
Subtotal, Preparedness	208,147,000	
Emergency Fire Contingency	276,000,000	Provide necessary funds for fire suppression activities and restore unmet FY 2000 expenditures.
Subtotal	484,147,000	
Fire Operations:		
Suppression	179,000,000	Provide necessary funds for fire suppression activities.
Facilities:		
Reconstruction and Repair of Air Tanker Bases	12,000,000	Reconstruct and repair of air tanker bases.
Reconstruction and Repair of Fire Facilities	32,000,000	Reconstruct and repair fire facilities.
Fuels Management:	88,500,000	Reduce hazardous fuel accumulation on 1.8 million acres in high-risk areas, primarily on Federal lands.
Analysis, monitoring, and planning for NEPA	11,500,000	Conduct planning, analysis, and monitoring for National Environmental Policy Act requirements.
Research and Development	16,000,000	Conduct research on fuels management treatments and its effect on fire behavior and damage.
Community Forestry Restoration in New Mexico	5,000,000	
Quincy Library Group	15,000,000	Implement the Quincy Library Group Plan
Subtotal, Fuels Management	136,000,000	
Rehabilitation and Restoration	142,000,000	Restore and rehabilitate burned areas.
Subtotal, Operations	501,000,000	
Subtotal, Wildland Fire Management	985,147,000	
Cooperative Fire Protection:		
State Fire Assistance:	9,632,500	Improve state fire readiness to complement Federal capability.
Firewise	4,340,000	Provide fire prevention education to improve community and homeowner readiness to prepare for wildland fires.
Hazard Mitigation and Prevention	28,990,500	Reduce hazardous fuel accumulation on 395,000 acres in high-risk areas and develop defensible space for improved fire protection.
Kenai Peninsula Borough	7,500,000	Improve forest health and fire protection capability as outlined in the spruce bark beetle task force action plan.
Subtotal, State Fire Assistance	50,494,000	
Volunteer Fire Assistance	8,280,000	Equip and train 4,000 rural volunteer fire departments to improve the fire protection readiness capability of local communities.
Subtotal, Cooperative Fire Protection	58,774,000	
Forest Health Management (Invasive Species)	12,000,000	Reduce the spread of invasive species, including noxious weeds, due to fires.
Economic Action Programs	12,500,000	Expand and develop markets for woods products resulting from fuel removal.
Community and Private Land Fire Assistance:		
Fence Reconstruction	9,000,000	Reconstruct fire-damaged fences in the Western States.
Hazard Mitigation	6,000,000	Reduce hazardous fuel accumulation in high-risk areas and develop defensible space for improved fire protection.
Multi-resource Stewardship Planning	7,000,000	Enhanced multi-resource stewardship planning to ensure effective fire protection treatments in the wildland-urban interface.
Economic Action Programs Pilot Projects	8,000,000	Pilot projects for improved utilization of removed fuel, including biomass conversion.
Community Planning for Fire Protection	5,000,000	Community planning to develop and maintain protection capabilities in high-risk areas in the wildland-urban interface.
Subtotal, Community and Private Land Fire Assistance:	35,000,000	
Subtotal, State and Private Forestry	118,274,000	
Total, National Fire Plan ¹	\$1,103,421,000	

¹This is the funding increase specifically associated with the National Fire Plan, USDA Forest Service.

Key Points. The National Fire Plan includes five key points:

- Firefighting.** Continue to fight the fires for the rest of this fire season and be adequately prepared for next year.
- Rehabilitation and Restoration.** Restore landscapes and rebuild communities damaged by the wildfires of 2000.
- Hazardous Fuel Reduction.** Invest in projects to reduce fire risk.
- Community Assistance.** Work directly with communities to ensure adequate protection.
- Accountability.** Be accountable and establish adequate oversight, coordination, program development, and monitoring for performance.

Operating Principles. The following are the nine Operating Principles that guide the work of the USDA Forest Service in the implementation of the National Fire Plan:

- Firefighting Readiness.** Increase firefighting capability and capacity for initial attack, extended attack, and large fire support that will reduce the number of small fires becoming large, to better protect natural resources, to reduce the threat to adjacent communities, and reduce the cost of large fire suppression.
- Prevention Through Education.** Assist state and local partners to take actions to reduce fire risk to homes and private property through programs such as FIREWISE.
- Rehabilitation.** Focus rehabilitation efforts on restoring watershed function including, protection of basic soil, water resources, biological communities, and prevention of invasive species.
- Hazardous Fuel Reduction.** Assign highest priority for hazardous fuels reduction to communities at risk, readily accessible municipal watersheds, threatened and endangered species habitat, and other important local features, where conditions favor uncharacteristically intense fires.
- Restoration.** Restore healthy, diverse, and resilient ecological systems to minimize uncharacteristically intense fires on a priority watershed basis. Methods will include removal of excessive vegetation and dead fuels through thinning, prescribed fire, and other treatment methods.
- Collaborative Stewardship.** Focus on achieving the desired future condition on the land in collaboration with communities, interest groups, and state and federal agencies. Streamline process, maximize effectiveness, use an ecologically conservative approach, and minimize controversy in accomplishing restoration projects.
- Monitoring.** Monitor to evaluate the effectiveness of various treatments to reduce unnaturally intense fires while restoring forest ecosystem health and watershed function.
- Creating Jobs.** Encourage new stewardship industries and collaborate with local people, volunteers, Youth Conservation Corps members, service organizations, and Forest Service work crews, as appropriate.
- Applied Research and Technology Transfer.** Focus research on the long-term effectiveness of different restoration and rehabilitation methods to determine those methods most effective in protecting and restoring watershed function and forest health. Seek new uses and markets for byproducts of restoration.

Actions. Implementation of the National Fire Plan is well underway. Some of the most important activities accomplished to date include:

- Naming a National Fire Plan Coordinator (see Appendix A-1, page 9).
- Developing a national and field Management Structure (see Appendix A-1, page 9).
- Finalizing a Plan of Work, including:
 - 1.8 million acres of fuels reduction on Federal lands – about 1,500 projects (see Appendix A-6, page 14).
 - 395,000 acres of fuels reduction on nonfederal lands (see Appendix A-5, page 13).
 - 500 burned area rehabilitation and restoration projects.
 - 4,000 additional volunteer fire departments assisted to improve protection capabilities of communities.
- Establishing a National Fire Plan Information system.
- Defining criteria for allocation of funds.
- Requesting the release of \$619,274,000 in Emergency Funds (Title IV) (see Appendix A-3, page 11).
- Identifying communities in high-risk areas to enhance protection capabilities for inclusion into the Federal Register.
- Identifying additional resource requirements for NEPA processes, including Section 7 (of the Endangered Species Act) consultation and streamlining the process to the maximum extent feasible.
- Starting a national recruitment effort to hire 3,000 new firefighters to produce an optimal level of protection efficiency.

The following Table 3, page 6, provides additional detail of completed actions on the National Fire Plan:

Table 3. Selected Accomplishments and Next Steps in the Implementation of the National Fire Plan

National Fire Plan Key Point	Key Accomplishments	Next Steps
Firefighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ National vacancy announcement advertised for MEL resource positions. ▪ Location and allocations of 12 new Interagency Hotshot Crews coordinated with DOI. ▪ 5 major employment outreach efforts have been completed to reach target groups. ▪ Established groundwork to facilitate design and construction of fire facilities to support firefighting resources. ▪ National Facilities Coordinator assigned to manage and expedite facilities program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Begin selection and hiring of firefighters to attain optimal level of efficiency. ▪ Develop national design standards for fire facilities. ▪ Consolidate facilities contracting efforts beginning in mid-February.
Rehabilitation/Restoration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interagency Report on Rehabilitation Project Criteria has been delivered to Congress (11/30/00). ▪ Review of project proposals and tentative allocation of funds completed (12/15/00). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Finalize the Report on Compliance With Laws Requiring Clearance.
Hazardous Fuels Reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nation-wide Fuels Treatment Project list published in the request for release of Emergency Funds (Title IV) for FY2001. ▪ A summary of planned fuels treatment projects by State has been developed. ▪ Research proposals supporting the National Fire Plan have been selected for funding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Data management Website scheduled for completion in mid-Jan. ▪ Finalize establishment of Science Stakeholder Advisory Group ▪ Complete coarse scale analysis of fire risk and integrate with other resource information to prioritize treatment areas
Community Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The States have developed and prioritized hazardous fuels mitigation projects. ▪ 24 FIREWISE workshops have been scheduled over 3 years with 7 scheduled for 2001 (very successful session held in early December). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identification of fence post replacement needs and development of allocation processes to allocate funds. ▪ Allocation of funds to States. ▪ January 18-19, 2000 Community Leadership Coordination Meeting discussing the application of collaborative stewardship to the National Fire Plan. ▪ Working with CEQ on community employment.
Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Request for release of Emergency Funds (Title IV) has been developed and forwarded to USDA for processing. ▪ The "Cohesive Strategy" has been finalized and published in the Federal Register (11/09/00). ▪ A draft framework of the interagency "Multi-agency Comprehensive Plan" (for the coordinated ten-year comprehensive National Fire Plan strategy) has been developed in collaboration with the Western Governors Association and the National Association of State Foresters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secure release of Title IV funding. ▪ Finalize the draft "Multi-agency Comprehensive Plan." ▪ Publish the list of communities in high-risk areas. ▪ Finalize Accomplishment Reporting System. ▪ Arrange for funding of regulatory agency consultations linked to National Fire Plan Implementation. ▪ Coordinate and finalize responses to Congress: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Apprise Congress of any need for expedited NEPA procedures. ▪ ICBEMP Fire Report ▪ Financial Plan ▪ Action Plan ▪ 2002 Budget Justification

Tentative Funding Allocations. The following Table 4, page 7, illustrates the tentative funding allocations for the National Fire Plan. Funds shown in the column entitled, "National Reserve" or items illustrated as "0", typically indicates that the determination of the allocation has not been completed at this time. Allocations will be finalized with the release of the Title IV funds, completion of specific funding criteria, and the determination of additional projects.

Table 4. Tentative Funding Allocations, National Fire Plan Increment, USDA Forest Service

Summary Allocation		National Fire Plan Budget	West Allocation	South Allocation	Northeast Allocation	National Reserve	Total Allocation	Balance
Wildland Fire Management:	Column No. >	1	2	3	4	5	6=(2+3+4+5)	7=(1-6)
Fire Preparedness:		\$175,147,000	\$119,100,000	\$40,284,000	\$15,763,000	\$0	\$175,147,000	\$0
Fire Workforce Development and Maintenance		17,000,000	12,970,000	2,340,000	1,690,000	0	17,000,000	0
New Technology Development, including the JFSP		16,000,000	0	0	0	8,000,000	8,000,000	8,000,000
Subtotal, Preparedness		208,147,000	132,070,000	42,624,000	17,453,000	8,000,000	200,147,000	8,000,000
Emergency Fire Contingency		276,000,000	0	0	0		0	276,000,000
Subtotal		484,147,000	132,070,000	42,624,000	17,453,000	8,000,000	200,147,000	284,000,000
Fire Operations:								
Suppression		179,000,000	0	0	0	0	0	179,000,000
Facilities:								
Reconstruction and Repair of Air Tanker Bases		12,000,000	12,000,000	0	0	0	12,000,000	0
Reconstruction and Repair of Fire Facilities		32,000,000	26,773,000	2,140,000	2,005,000	0	30,918,000	1,082,000
Fuels Management:		88,500,000	82,573,680	11,046,000	4,483,000	3,500,000	101,602,680	-13,102,680
<i>Analysis, monitoring, and planning for NEPA</i>		11,500,000	0	0	0	11,500,000	11,500,000	0
Research and Development		16,000,000	10,615,000	2,591,000	2,794,000	0	16,000,000	0
Community Forestry Restoration in New Mexico		5,000,000	5,000,000	0	0	0	5,000,000	0
Quincy Library Group		15,000,000	15,000,000	0	0	0	15,000,000	0
Subtotal, Fuels Management		136,000,000	113,188,680	13,637,000	7,277,000	15,000,000	149,102,680	-13,102,680
Rehabilitation and Restoration		142,000,000	129,250,000	0	0	12,750,000	142,000,000	0
Subtotal, Operations		501,000,000	281,211,680	15,777,000	9,282,000	27,750,000	334,020,680	166,979,320
Subtotal, Wildland Fire Management		985,147,000	413,281,680	58,401,000	26,735,000	35,750,000	534,167,680	450,979,320
Cooperative Fire Protection:								
State Fire Assistance:		9,632,000	3,689,000	3,381,000	2,562,000	0	9,632,000	0
Firewise		4,464,000	0	0	0	4,464,000	4,464,000	0
Hazard Mitigation and Prevention		28,898,000	17,358,000	7,212,000	4,328,000	0	28,898,000	0
Kenai Peninsula Borough		7,500,000	7,500,000	0	0	0	7,500,000	0
Subtotal, State Fire Assistance		50,494,000	28,547,000	10,593,000	6,890,000	4,464,000	50,494,000	0
Volunteer Fire Assistance		8,280,000	4,140,000	2,070,000	2,070,000	0	8,280,000	0
Subtotal, Cooperative Fire Protection		58,774,000	32,687,000	12,663,000	8,960,000	4,464,000	58,774,000	0
Forest Health Management (Invasive Species)		12,000,000	7,180,000	566,000	1,554,000	2,700,000	12,000,000	0
Economic Action Programs		12,500,000	9,878,000	338,000	2,132,000	152,000	12,500,000	0
Community and Private Land Fire Assistance:								
Fence Reconstruction		9,000,000	8,500,000	500,000	0	0	9,000,000	0
Hazard Mitigation		6,000,000	4,932,000	823,000	245,000	0	6,000,000	0
Multi-resource stewardship Planning		7,000,000	6,171,000	734,000	95,000	0	7,000,000	0
Economic Action Programs Pilot Projects		8,000,000	7,096,000	310,000	145,000	449,000	8,000,000	0
Community Planning for Fire Protection		5,000,000	4,069,000	679,000	203,000	49,000	5,000,000	0
Subtotal, Community and Private Land Fire Assistance		35,000,000	30,768,000	3,046,000	688,000	498,000	35,000,000	0
Subtotal, State and Private Forestry		118,274,000	80,513,000	16,613,000	13,334,000	7,814,000	118,274,000	0
Total, National Fire Plan¹		\$1,103,421,000	\$493,794,680	\$75,014,000	\$40,069,000	\$43,564,000	\$652,441,680	\$450,979,320
	<i>Percent ></i>		44.8%	6.8%	3.6%	3.9%	59.1%	40.9%

¹Funding increase specifically associated with the increase for the National Fire Plan, USDA Forest Service.

Outputs. The National Fire Plan for the USDA Forest Service includes several outputs. The following Table 5 illustrates some selected year-one outputs and accomplishments to date. Due to the timing of the appropriations and necessary preparations for plan implementation, most the planned accomplishments will occur this spring and summer. For example, a national recruitment effort for hiring about 3,000 new firefighters is taking place now. Also, some accomplishments have not been reported. See Appendix A-5, page 13, for allocations of selected targets by regions of the country.

Table 5. Estimated Outputs, National Fire Plan, USDA Forest Service

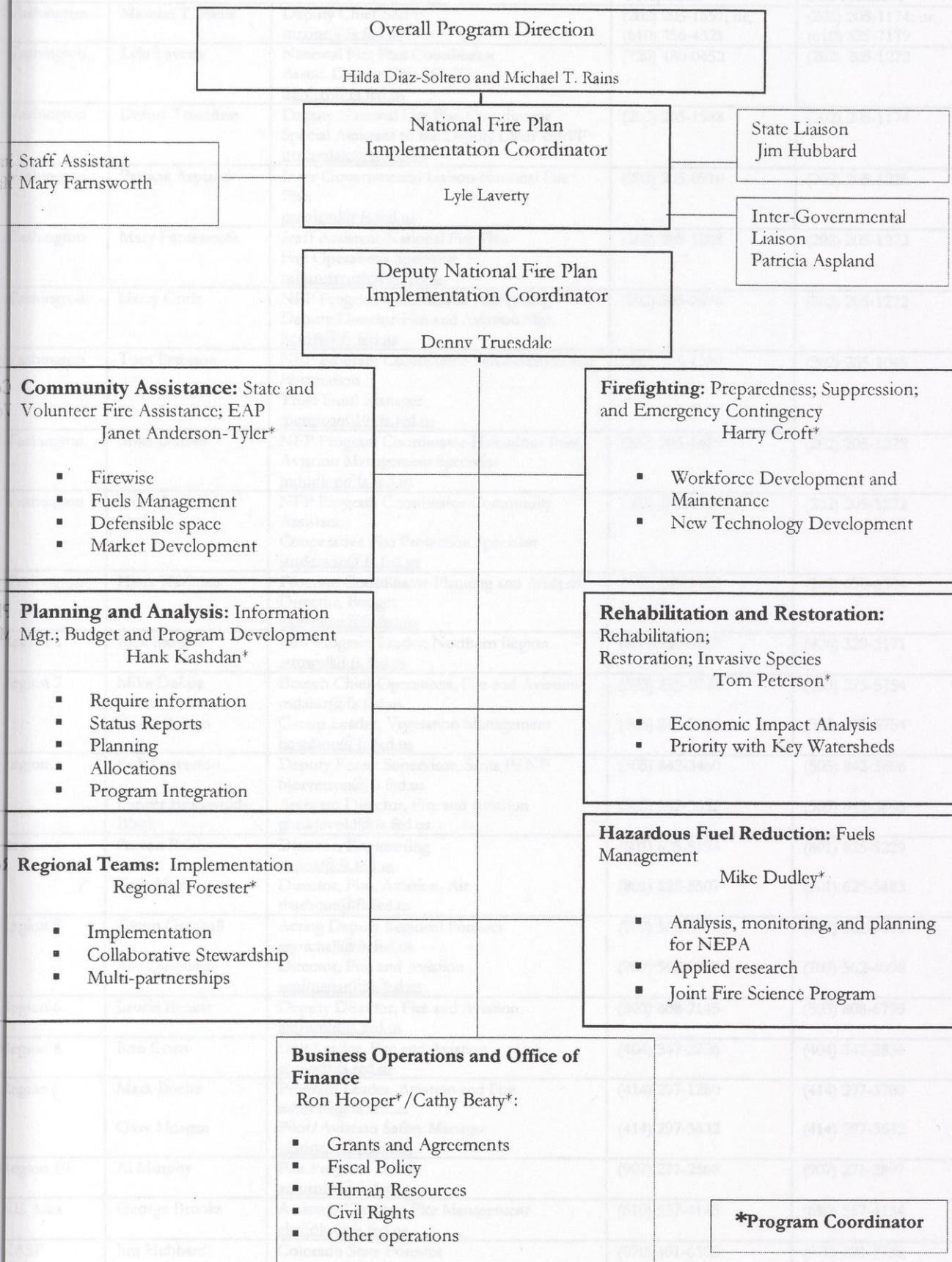
Activity	Units	Target	Accomplishments	Balance
Fuels Management:				
Federal Lands (Appendix A-6)	Acres	1,800,000	87,000	1,713,000
Nonfederal Lands	Acres	395,000	0	395,000
Rehabilitation and Restoration	Projects	500	50	450
Volunteer Fire Departments	No. Assisted	4,000	0	4,000
Jobs created	No.	8,000	100	7,900

Congressional Reporting Requirements. The FY 2001 Appropriations includes several reporting requirements for the National Fire Plan. The following Table 6 illustrates these reporting requirements and current progress. A shaded area indicates an activity that is overdue.

Table 6. FY 2001 Congressional Reporting Requirements and Accomplishments for the National Fire Plan

Due Date	Department; Agency	Reporting Requirement	Product ¹	Status; Contact
11/13/00	USFS	Within 30 days publish FS Cohesive Strategy in Federal Register	Publish Cohesive Strategy	Complete 11/09/00
12/01/00	DoI/USDA	Report to the Appropriations Committee on criteria for rehabilitation projects to be funded from this appropriation	Report on Rehabilitation Project Criteria	Complete 11/29/00
12/11/00	DoI/USDA/CEQ	Evaluate the need for revised or expedited environmental compliance procedures including preparation of documentation required by NEPA	Report on Compliance with Laws Requiring Clearance	Underway; Contact: Dinah Bear/CEQ
12/11/00	DoI/USDA	Publish, within 60 days, a list of all communities within the vicinity of Federal lands that are at "high risk" from wildfire, including communities around which treatments are on-going; and around which the Secretaries are preparing to begin treatments in 2001	Listing of Communities in high-risk areas	Complete; 1/04/01 Contact: Dick Bahr
12/31/00	DoI/USDA	The managers are concerned that nearly three years have passed without establishment of the Stakeholder Advisory Group, a group of technical experts to advise the Joint Fire Science Program Governing Board. The managers direct the Secretaries to establish the group.	Establish Science Stakeholder Advisory Committee. (FACA approval needed)	Underway; Contact: Jim Douglas/DoI
01/01/01	DoI/USDA	Prior to issuance of the record of decision for the Interior Columbia River Basin Ecosystem Management Project, report to Congress on: the fire's effects on the project area, and the significance of the President's fire report on the project area (Gen. Provision #332).	ICBEMP Fire Report	Underway; Contact: Andy Brunelle
01/09/01	DoI/USDA	Within 90 days, deliver a financial plan showing how the agencies intend to spend all of the funds included under Title IV.	Financial Plan	Underway; Contact: Hank Kashdan/FS
01/09/01	DoI/USDA	Within 90 days deliver an action plan describing proposed accomplishments by funding; estimates of the number of personnel to be hired; description of equipment to purchased and/or leased; description of services to be contracted; description of research projects funded by unit; estimate of acres to be treat by treatment type; estimate of treatments in the WUI; and, the estimate of rural communities assisted by state.	Action Plan	Underway; Contact: Hank Kashdan/FS
02/01/01	DoI/USDA	Show planned and actual funding and accomplishments for stabilization and rehabilitation activities in the 2002 budget request.	2002 Budget Justification	Underway; Contact: Hank Kashdan/FS
05/01/01	DoI/USDA	Publish in the Fed. Reg. A list of all communities at "high risk" from wildfire for which treatments will not have been implemented during 2001; identify reason why; and, recommend any additional fund or authority needs.	Report to Congress on High Risk Communities; Impediments to Success	Contact: Dick Bahr/DoI
05/01/01	DoI/USDA	Secretaries are to engage Governors in a collaborative structure to cooperatively develop a coordinated, national 10-year comprehensive strategy. States are to be full partners in the planning, decision-making and implementation of the plan.	Collaborative structure, strategy with states	Underway; Contact: Lyle Laverty/FS
12/31/01	DoI/USDA	With 90 days following the end of FY01, provide a report on: an update financial report showing final expenditures; an updated action report showing final accomplishments	Performance Report	Underway; Contact: Hank Kashdan/FS

Appendix A-1. National Fire Plan Management Structure (USDA Forest Service)



Appendix A-2. National Fire Plan Management Structure Contacts (USDA Forest Service)

Unit	Name	Position and E-Mail	Telephone	Fax Number
Washington	Michael T. Rains	Deputy Chief-S&PF mrains@fs.fed.us	(202) 205-1657; or, (610) 356-4321	(202) 205-1174; or, (610) 325-7179
Washington	Lyle Laverty	National Fire Plan Coordinator Assoc. Deputy Chief-S&PF llaverty@fs.fed.us	(720) 480-0452	(202) 205-1272
Washington	Denny Truesdale	Deputy National Fire Plan Coordinator Special Assistant to the Deputy Chief-S&PF dtruesdale@fs.fed.us	(202) 205-1588	(202) 205-1174
Washington	Patricia Aspland	Inter-Governmental Liaison-National Fire Plan paspland@fs.fed.us	(202) 205-0910	(202) 205-1225
Washington	Mary Farnsworth	Staff Assistant-National Fire Plan Fire Operations Specialist mfarnsworth@fs.fed.us	(202) 205-1298	(202) 205-1272
Washington	Harry Croft	NFP Program Coordinator-Firefighting Deputy Director-Fire and Aviation Mgt. hcroft@fs.fed.us	(202) 205-2496	(202) 205-1272
Washington	Tom Peterson	NFP Program Coordinator-Rehabilitation and Restoration Trust Fund Manager tpeterson01@fs.fed.us	(202) 205-1180	(202) 205-1045
Washington	Mike Dudley	NFP Program Coordinator-Hazardous Fuels Aviation Management Specialist mdudley@fs.fed.us	(202) 205-1489	(202) 205-1272
Washington	Janet Anderson-Tyler	NFP Program Coordinator-Community Assistance Cooperative Fire Protection Specialist janderson@fs.fed.us	(202) 205-1494	(202) 205-1272
Washington	Hank Kashdan	Program Coordinator-Planning and Analysis Director, Budget hkashdan@fs.fed.us	(202) 205-1123	(202) 690-6304
Region 1	Rick Stowell	Fish Program Leader, Northern Region rstowell@fs.fed.us	(406) 329-3287	(406) 329-3171
Region 2	Mike DaLuz	Branch Chief-Operations, Fire and Aviation mdaluz@fs.fed.us	(303) 275-5749	(303) 275-5754
	Bruce Wilson	Group Leader, Vegetation Management bwilson@fs.fed.us	(303) 275-5002	(303) 275-5754
Region 3	Bob Leaverton	Deputy Forest Supervisor, Santa Fe NF bleaverton@fs.fed.us	(505) 842-3460	(505) 842-3806
	Ginger Brudevold-Black	Assistant Director, Fire and Aviation gbrudevold@fs.fed.us	(505) 842-3352	(505) 842-3806
Region 4	Steven Brink	Director, Engineering sbrink@fs.fed.us	(801) 625-5194	(801) 625-5229
	Tom Harbour	Director, Fire, Aviation, Air tharbour@fs.fed.us	(801) 625-5507	(801) 625-5483
Region 5	Glenn Gotchall	Acting Deputy Regional Forester ggotchall@fs.fed.us	(707) 562-8992	(707) 562-9091
	Ray Quintanar	Director, Fire and Aviation rquintanar@fs.fed.us	(707) 562-8927	(707) 562-4098
Region 6	Laurie Perrett	Deputy Director, Fire and Aviation lperrett@fs.fed.us	(503) 808-2145	(503) 808-6799
Region 8	Ron Coats	Unit Leader, Fire and Aviation rcoats@fs.fed.us	(404) 347-2726	(404) 347-2836
Region 9	Mark Boche	Program Leader, Aviation and Fire mboche@fs.fed.us	(414) 297-1280	(414) 297-3700
	Gary Morgan	Pilot/Aviation Safety Manager gmorgan@fs.fed.us	(414) 297-3632	(414) 297-3642
Region 10	Al Murphy	Fire Program Leader amurphy@fs.fed.us	(907) 271-2568	(907) 271-2897
NE Area	George Brooks	Assistant Director, Fire Management gbrooks@fs.fed.us	(610) 557-4145	(610) 557-4154
NASF	Jim Hubbard	Colorado State Forester jhubbard@lamar.colostate.edu	(970) 491-6303	(970) 491-7736

Appendix A-3. FY 2001 Emergency Funding (Title IV) (Column 2), National Fire Plan,
USDA Forest Service

Programs in the National Fire Plan	FY 2001 Base	FY 2001 Title IV	FY 2001 Total
<i>Columns ></i>	1	2	3=(1+2)
Fire Preparedness:	\$574,890,000	\$0	\$574,890,000
Fire Workforce Development and Maintenance	17,000,000	0	17,000,000
New Technology Development, including the JFSP	20,600,000	0	20,600,000
Subtotal, Preparedness	612,490,000	0	612,490,000
Emergency Fire Contingency	426,000,000	0	426,000,000
Subtotal	1,038,490,000	0	1,038,490,000
Fire Operations:			
Suppression	141,029,000	179,000,000	320,029,000
Facilities:			
Reconstruction and Repair of Air Tanker Bases	0	12,000,000	12,000,000
Reconstruction and Repair of Fire Facilities	0	32,000,000	32,000,000
Fuels Management:	85,610,000	88,500,000	174,110,000
Analysis, monitoring, and planning for NEPA	0	11,500,000	11,500,000
Research and Development	0	16,000,000	16,000,000
Community Forestry Restoration in New Mexico	0	5,000,000	5,000,000
Quincy Library Group	0	15,000,000	15,000,000
Subtotal, Fuels Management	85,610,000	136,000,000	221,610,000
Rehabilitation and Restoration	0	142,000,000	142,000,000
Subtotal, Operations	226,639,000	501,000,000	727,639,000
Subtotal, Wildland Fire Management	1,265,129,000	501,000,000	1,766,129,000
Cooperative Fire Protection:			
State Fire Assistance:	25,000,000	9,632,500	34,632,500
Firewise	0	4,464,000	4,464,000
Hazard Mitigation and Prevention	0	28,898,000	28,898,000
Kenai Peninsula Borough	0	7,500,000	7,500,000
Subtotal, State Fire Assistance	25,000,000	50,494,500	75,494,500
Volunteer Fire Assistance	5,000,000	8,280,000	13,280,000
Subtotal, Cooperative Fire Protection	30,000,000	58,774,000	88,774,000
Forest Health Management	63,944,000	12,000,000	75,944,000
Economic Action Programs	30,336,000	12,500,000	42,836,000
Community and Private Land Fire Assistance	0	35,000,000	35,000,000
Subtotal, State and Private Forestry	124,280,000	118,274,000	242,554,000
Total, National Fire Plan	\$1,389,409,000	\$619,274,000	\$2,008,683,000

Table A-4. FY 2001 Funding Levels Leading to the National Fire Plan Budget, USDA Forest Service

Programs in the National Fire Plan	FY 2000 Final	FY 2001 President's Budget	FY 2001 Adjustments	FY 2001 Subtotal	FY 2001 National Fire Plan	FY 2001 Total
Columns >	1	2	3	4	5	6=(4+5)
Fire Preparedness:	\$402,768,000	\$399,743,000	\$0	\$399,743,000	\$175,147,000	\$574,890,000
Fire Workforce Development and Maintenance	0	0	0	0	17,000,000	17,000,000
New Technology Development, including the JFSP	6,000,000	4,600,000	0	4,600,000	16,000,000	20,600,000
Subtotal, Preparedness	408,768,000	404,343,000	0	404,343,000	208,147,000	612,490,000
Emergency Fire Contingency	390,000,000	150,000,000	0	150,000,000	276,000,000	426,000,000
Subtotal	798,768,000	554,343,000	0	554,343,000	484,147,000	1,038,490,000
Fire Operations:						
Suppression	135,188,000	141,029,000	0	141,029,000	179,000,000	320,029,000
Facilities:						
Reconstruction and Repair of Air Tanker Bases	0	0	0	0	12,000,000	12,000,000
Reconstruction and Repair of Fire Facilities	0	0	0	0	32,000,000	32,000,000
Fuels Management:	70,000,000	71,000,000	14,610,000	85,610,000	88,500,000	174,110,000
Analysis, monitoring, and planning for NEPA	0	0	0	0	11,500,000	11,500,000
Research and Development	4,000,000	0	0	0	16,000,000	16,000,000
Community Forestry Restoration in NM	0	0	0	0	5,000,000	5,000,000
Quincy Library Group	0	0	0	0	15,000,000	15,000,000
Subtotal, Fuels Management	74,000,000	71,000,000	14,610,000	85,610,000	136,000,000	221,610,000
Rehabilitation and Restoration	0	0	0	0	142,000,000	142,000,000
Subtotal, Operations	209,188,000	212,029,000	14,610,000	226,639,000	501,000,000	727,639,000
Subtotal, Wildland Fire Management	1,007,956,000	766,372,000	14,610,000	780,982,000	985,147,000	1,766,129,000
Cooperative Fire Protection:						
State Fire Assistance:	21,929,000	30,006,000	-5,006,000	25,000,000	9,632,000	34,632,000
Firewise	0	0	0	0	4,464,000	4,464,000
Hazard Mitigation and Prevention	0	0	0	0	28,898,000	28,898,000
Kenai Peninsula Borough	2,000,000	0	0	0	7,500,000	7,500,000
Subtotal, State Fire Assistance	23,929,000	30,006,000	-5,006,000	25,000,000	50,494,000	75,494,000
Volunteer Fire Assistance	3,240,000	2,510,000	2,490,000	5,000,000	8,280,000	13,280,000
Subtotal, Cooperative Fire Protection	27,169,000	32,516,000	-2,516,000	30,000,000	58,774,000	88,774,000
Forest Health Management	62,075,000	62,842,000	1,102,000	63,944,000	12,000,000	75,944,000
Economic Action Programs	20,198,000	17,267,000	13,069,000	30,336,000	12,500,000	42,836,000
Community and Private Land Fire Assistance	0	0	0	0	35,000,000	35,000,000
Subtotal, State and Private Forestry	109,442,000	112,625,000	11,655,000	124,280,000	118,274,000	242,554,000
Total	\$1,117,398,000	\$878,997,000	\$26,265,000	\$905,262,000	\$1,103,421,000	\$2,008,683,000

Table A-5. FY 2001 Selected Target Allocations, National Fire Plan, USDA Forest Service

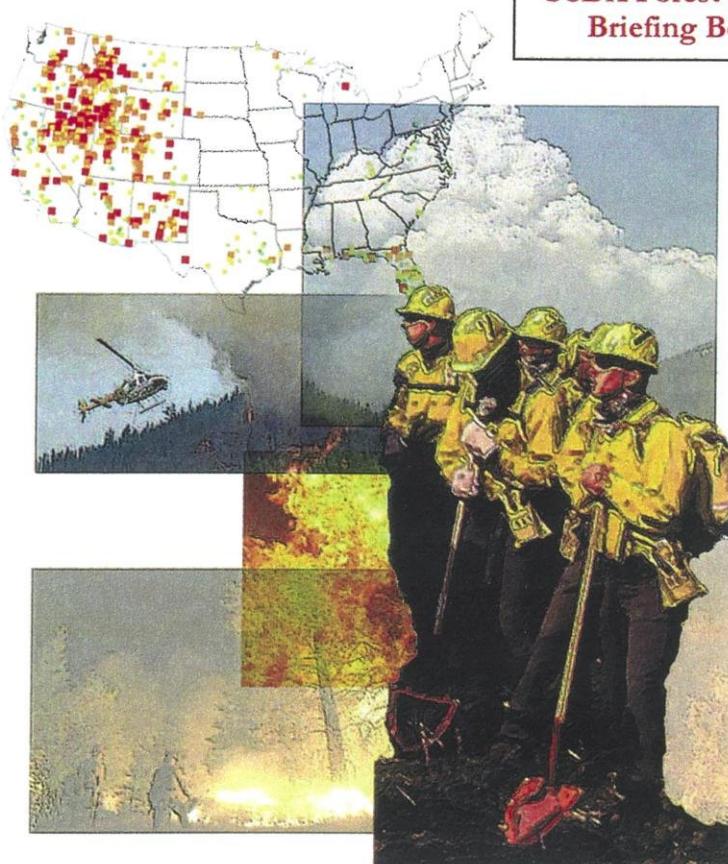
Activity	National Fire Plan Target	West Allocation	South Allocation	Northeast Allocation	National Allocation	Total Allocation	Balance
Fuels Management:							
Hazardous fuels reduction on Federal lands (acres)	1,800,000	844,194	899,848	35,696	0	1,779,738	20,262
Hazardous fuels reduction on nonfederal lands (acres)	395,000	305,000	65,000	25,000	0	395,000	0
Rehabilitation and restoration (projects)	582	582			0	582	0
Volunteer Fire Departments assisted (number)	4,000	2,650	825	525	0	4,000	0
Jobs created (number)	8,000	6,245	1,460	290	5	8,000	0
Added firefighting equipment (engines; helicopters; etc.) (number of pieces)	788	583	131	74	0	788	0

Table A-6. Fuels Management on Federal Lands (FY 2001 Titles II and IV), National Fire Plan, USDA Forest Service

Activity	Initial Budget or Target	West Allocation	South Allocation	Northeast Allocation	National Reserve	Total Allocation	Balance
	1	2	3	4	5	6=(2+3+4+5)	7=(1-6)
Fuels Reduction on Federal Lands (Title II):							
Number of Projects	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Number of Acres	327,950	509,000	8,600	0	845,550		
Funding:							
Base Program	\$49,662,000	\$11,892,000	\$1,030,000	\$10,916,000	\$73,500,000		
Special Projects:							
<i>Quincy Library Group</i>	1,000,000	0	0	0	1,000,000		
<i>Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit</i>	1,500,000	0	0	0	1,500,000		
<i>Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest, Arizona interface</i>	263,000	0	0	0	263,000		
<i>Windstorm Damage in Minnesota</i>	0	0	6,947,000	0	6,947,000		
<i>Giant Sequoia National Monument</i>	2,400,000	0	0	0	2,400,000		
Subtotal, Special Projects, Title II	5,163,000	0	6,947,000	0	12,110,000		
Total Funding, Title II	\$85,610,000	\$54,825,000	\$11,892,000	\$7,977,000	\$10,916,000	\$85,610,000	\$0
Fuels Reduction on Federal Lands (Title IV):							
Number of Projects	1,047	154	155	0	1,356		
Number of Acres	516,244	390,848	27,096	0	934,188		
Funding:					0		
Base Program							
Special Projects:							
<i>\$82,573,680</i>	<i>\$11,046,000</i>	<i>\$4,483,000</i>	<i>\$3,500,000</i>	<i>101,602,680</i>			
<i>Analysis, monitoring, and planning for NEPA</i>	0	0	0	11,500,000	11,500,000		
<i>Research and Development</i>	10,615,000	2,740,000	2,444,000	114,000	15,913,000		
<i>Community Forestry Restoration in New Mexico</i>	5,000,000	0	0	0	5,000,000		
<i>Quincy Library Group</i>	15,000,000	0	0	0	15,000,000		
Subtotal, Special Projects, Title IV	30,615,000	2,740,000	2,444,000	11,614,000	47,413,000		
Total Funding, Title IV	\$136,000,000	\$113,188,680	\$13,786,000	\$6,927,000	\$15,114,000	\$149,015,680	-\$13,015,680
Fuels Reduction on Federal Lands (Totals):							
Number of Projects	1,047	154	155	0	1,356		
Number of Acres	1,800,000	844,194	899,848	35,696	0	1,779,738	20,262
Funding:							
Base Program							
Special Projects Funding							
Total Funding	\$221,610,000	\$168,013,680	\$25,678,000	\$14,904,000	\$26,030,000	\$234,625,680	-\$13,015,680

1

USDA Forest Service
Briefing Book



2

3

4

5

Managing The Impacts of Wildfires on Communities and the Environment

*A Report to the President
In Response to the
Wildfires of 2000*

January 26, 2001

Table of Contents

Tab	Description	Page
Tab 1	National Fire Plan at a Glance	3
Tab 2	Summary and Immediate Actions	4
Tab 3	Budget Synopsis	6
Tab 4	Budget Overview	8
Tab 5	Management Structure	14
Tab 6	Information Center	17

1

2

3

4

For More Information: Please contact:

Lyle Laverty, National Fire Plan Coordinator or, Denny Truesdale @ (202) 205-1588; (202) 205-1174 (Fax);
e-mail: dtruesdale@fs.fed.us

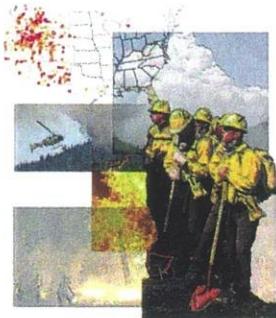
1

2

3

4

5



Managing the Impacts of Wildfires on Communities and the Environment: *A Report to the President In Response to the Wildfires of 2000*

The National Fire Plan for the USDA Forest Service at a Glance

- Total additional funds in FY 2001 for both Departments: \$1,789,995,000
 - +\$1,103,421,000 for the USDA Forest Service
 - +\$ 686,574,000 for the US Department of the Interior
- The additional funds for the USDA Forest Service:
 - \$484,147,000 in "base" funds (Title II):
 - +\$208,147,000 for optimal fire fighting readiness
 - +\$276,000,000 for Emergency Contingency for fire suppression
 - \$619,274,000 in emergency funds (Title IV):
 - +\$501,000,000 for Fire Operations
 - +\$118,274,000 for State and Private Forestry
- Fuels Management funding for the USDA Forest Service totals \$221,610,000:
 - \$85,610,000 in "base" funds
 - \$136,000,000 in emergency funds
- The Management Structure for the USDA Forest Service includes:
 - A National Coordinator
 - Five Program Coordinators at the national level
 - Nine regional field teams
- A National Information Center has been established. The web site address is:
www.na.fs.fed.us/nfp.
- Estimated outputs for year one of the National Fire Plan for the USDA Forest Service:
 - 1,800,000 acres of fuels management on federal lands
 - 395,000 acres of fuels management on nonfederal lands
 - 500 burned area rehabilitation and restoration projects
 - 4,000 rural volunteer fire departments assisted
 - 8,000 new jobs created

6

2

3

4

51

6

2

3

4

5

The National Fire Plan

Summary and Immediate Actions by the USDA Forest Service

Foreword. On August 8, 2000, the Administration requested the Secretaries of Agriculture and Interior to develop a plan to respond to the severe fire season, reduce the impacts of wildland fires on rural communities, and ensure sufficient firefighting resources in the future. The Secretaries of Agriculture and Interior developed an interagency approach to respond to this request.

The request called for actions that federal agencies, in cooperation with States and local communities, can take to reduce immediate hazards to communities in the wildland-urban interface, and ensure that fire management and firefighter personnel and resources are prepared for extreme fire conditions in the future.

The report is officially entitled, *Managing the Impacts of Wildfire on Communities and the Environment: A Report to the President In Response to the Wildfires of 2000* – The National Fire Plan for short by the USDA Forest Service.

The National Fire Plan calls for **\$1,103,421,000** in additional funding for the USDA Forest Service. This amount includes **\$484,147,000** in additional base funding for an optimal level of fire fighting, and **\$619,274,000** in emergency funds for other programs necessary to carry out the goals and objectives of the plan. Congress fully supported implementation of the Plan in FY2001 through its appropriation actions and written direction.

Key Points. The National Fire Plan includes five Key Points:

- **Firefighting.** Continue fighting fire during the 2000 fire season and be adequately prepared for future years.
- **Rehabilitation and Restoration.** Restore landscapes and rebuild communities damaged by the wildfires of 2000.
- **Hazardous Fuel Reduction.** Invest in projects to reduce fire risk.
- **Community Assistance.** Work directly with communities to ensure adequate protection.
- **Accountability.** Be accountable and establish adequate oversight, coordination, program development, and monitoring for performance.

Operating Principles. The following are the nine Operating Principles (OP) that guide the work as the USDA Forest Service implements the National Fire Plan:

- **Firefighting Readiness.** Increase firefighting capability and capacity for initial attack, extended attack, and large fire support that will reduce the number of small fires becoming large, to better protect natural resources, to reduce the threat to adjacent communities, and to reduce the cost of large fire suppression.
- **Prevention Through Education.** Assist state and local partners to take actions to reduce fire risk to homes and private property through programs such as FIREWISE.
- **Rehabilitation.** Focus rehabilitation efforts on restoring watershed function, including protection of basic soil, water resources, biological communities, and prevention of invasive species.
- **Hazardous Fuel Reduction.** Assign highest priority for hazardous fuels reduction to communities at risk, readily accessible municipal watersheds, threatened and endangered species habitat, and other important local features, where conditions favor uncharacteristically intense fires.
- **Restoration.** Restore healthy, diverse, and resilient ecological systems to minimize uncharacteristically intense fires on a priority watershed basis. Methods will include removal of excessive vegetation and dead fuels through thinning, prescribed fire, and other treatment methods.
- **Collaborative Stewardship.** Focus on achieving the desired future condition on the land in collaboration with communities, interest groups, and state and federal agencies. Streamline process, maximize effectiveness, use an ecologically conservative approach, and minimize controversy in accomplishing restoration projects.
- **Monitoring.** Monitor to evaluate the effectiveness of various treatments to reduce unnaturally intense fires while restoring forest ecosystem health and watershed function.

- **Creating Jobs.** Encourage new stewardship industries and collaborate with local people, volunteers, Youth Conservation Corps members, organizations, and Forest Service work crews, as appropriate.
- **Applied Research and Technology Transfer.** Focus research on the long-term effectiveness of different restoration and rehabilitation methods to determine those methods most effective in protecting and restoring watershed function and forest health. Seek new uses and markets for byproducts of restoration.

Immediate Actions. Implementation of the National Fire Plan is well underway and significant progress has been made. Some of the most important activities accomplished to date include:

- Naming a National Fire Plan Coordinator.
- Developing national and field Management Structures.
- Continuing coordination between the Department of Interior agencies and the Department of Agriculture-Forest Service.
- Finalizing a Plan of Work , including:
 - 1.8 million acres of fuels reduction on Federal Lands-about 1,500 projects.
 - 395,000 acres of fuels reduction on non-federal lands.
 - 500 rehabilitation and restoration projects.
 - 4,000 additional volunteer fire departments assisted to improve protection capabilities of communities.
- Establishing a National Fire Plan Information system.
- Release of \$619,274,000 in Emergency Funds.
- Identification of Urban Wildland Communities at High Risk from Wildfire-Posted in the Federal Register.
- Starting a national recruitment effort to hire 3,000 new firefighters, for an optimal level of protection efficiency.
- Identifying additional resource requirements for NEPA processes, including Section 7 (of the Endangered Species Act) consultation, and streamlining the process.
- Delivering an Interagency Report on Rehabilitation Project Criteria to Congress.
- Drafting a framework for the coordinated ten-year comprehensive National Fire Plan strategy-the “Multi-agency Comprehensive Plan” developed in collaboration with governors and other stakeholders.
- Submitting the Action and Financial Plans to Congress per the directions in the Appropriations Bill.

Next Steps. The following are the next immediate actions to be taken by the USDA Forest Service to continue implementation of the National Fire Plan:

- Finalize and allocate the Emergency Funds (Title IV).
- Develop a long-term strategy for the National Fire Plan (2002-2010). Emphasize community protection, market development for underutilized wood (excess fuels), education for self-help, and applied research to ensure all decisions are based on best science.
- Complete the hiring of 3,000 new firefighters to produce an optimal level of firefighting capability.
- Strengthen the role of applied research, especially predictive modeling for overall fire management, including budgeting.
- Finalize Accomplishment Reporting System development.
- Produce selected information products (e.g., Fuels Management Projects; Funding Allocation Tables; Volunteer Fire Department Assisted; etc.) and insure that information on implementation, progress and monitoring is available and accessible.
- Continue to provide information to Congress as per directions in the Appropriation Bill; coordinate closely with the US DOI.
- Complete the fuels management projects underway and continue planning for 2002.
- Complete coarse scale analysis of fire risk and integrate with other resource information to prioritize treatment areas.
- Conduct field trips to show the significant amount of work being accomplished to date.

6

3

4

51

6

The National Fire Plan Budget Synopsis for the USDA Forest Service

Foreword. The additional funding provided for The National Fire Plan for the USDA Forest Service is **\$1,103,421,000**. This amount includes \$484,147,000 in additional base funding for optimal fire fighting readiness and \$619,274,000 in emergency funds for other programs designed to meet the key points of the National Fire Plan.

The following Table 1 provides a synopsis of the total funding increase specifically associated with the National Fire Plan.

Table 1. Funding for the National Fire Plan, USDA Forest Service

Major Programs	FY 2000 Final	FY 2001 Conference Base	FY 2001 National Fire Plan	FY 2001 Total
Fire Preparedness	\$402,768,000	\$404,343,000	\$208,147,000	\$612,490,000
Emergency Fire Contingency	390,000,000	150,000,000	276,000,000	426,000,000
Fire Operations	209,188,000	226,639,000	501,000,000	727,639,000
State Fire Assistance	23,929,000	25,000,000	50,494,000	75,494,000
Volunteer Fire Assistance	3,240,000	5,000,000	8,280,000	13,280,000
Forest Health Management	62,075,000	63,944,000	12,000,000	75,944,000
Economic Action Programs	20,198,000	30,336,000	12,500,000	42,836,000
Community and Private Land Fire Assistance	0	0	35,000,000	35,000,000
Totals	\$1,117,398,000	\$905,262,000	\$1,103,421,000	\$2,008,683,000

Table 2 on the following page summarizes the programs in expanded detail and the activities to be accomplished for the USDA Forest Service for the additional **\$1,103,421,000** that is specifically associated with the National Fire Plan in FY 2001. Specific projects for many of the programs, like fuels management and rehabilitation and restoration have been proposed. Criteria for the allocation of funds are being finalized and project selections completed.

Table 2. Budget Synopsis and Description of Activities to be Accomplished, National Fire Plan, USDA Forest Service, FY 2001

Programs	Amount	Description of Activities to be Accomplished
Fire Preparedness:	\$175,147,000	Bring fire readiness up to optimal level of efficiency.
<i>Fire Workforce Development and Maintenance</i>	17,000,000	Develop and maintain adequate workforce for fire management.
<i>New Technology Development, including the JFSP</i>	16,000,000	Develop new fire management technology and emphasize the continued implementation of the Joint Fire Science Program.
Subtotal, Preparedness	208,147,000	
<i>Emergency Fire Contingency</i>	276,000,000	Provide necessary funds for fire suppression activities and restore unmet FY 2000 expenditures.
Subtotal	484,147,000	
Fire Operations:		
<i>Suppression</i>	179,000,000	Provide necessary funds for fire suppression activities.
<i>Facilities:</i>		
<i>Reconstruction and Repair of Air Tanker Bases</i>	12,000,000	Reconstruct and repair of air tanker bases.
<i>Reconstruction and Repair of Fire Facilities</i>	32,000,000	Reconstruct and repair of fire facilities.
<i>Fuels Management:</i>	88,500,000	Reduce hazardous fuel accumulation on 1.8 million acres in high-risk areas, primarily on Federal lands.
<i>Analysis, monitoring, and planning for NEPA</i>	11,500,000	Conduct planning, analysis, and monitoring for National Environmental Policy Act requirements.
<i>Research and Development</i>	16,000,000	Conduct research on fuels management treatments and their effects on fire behavior and damage.
<i>Community Forestry Restoration in New Mexico</i>	5,000,000	
<i>Quincy Library Group</i>	15,000,000	Implement the Quincy Library Group Plan.
Subtotal, Fuels Management	136,000,000	
<i>Rehabilitation and Restoration</i>	142,000,000	Restore and rehabilitate burned areas.
Subtotal, Operations	501,000,000	
Subtotal, Wildland Fire Management	985,147,000	
Cooperative Programs:		
Cooperative Fire Protection:		
<i>State Fire Assistance:</i>	9,632,500	Improve state fire readiness to complement Federal capability.
<i>Firewise</i>	4,464,000	Provide fire prevention education to improve community and homeowner readiness to prepare for wildland fires.
<i>Hazard Mitigation and Prevention</i>	28,898,000	Reduce hazardous fuel accumulation on 395,000 acres in high-risk areas and develop defensible space for improved fire protection.
<i>Kenai Peninsula Borough</i>	7,500,000	Improve forest health and fire protection capability as outlined in the spruce bark beetle task force action plan.
Subtotal, State Fire Assistance	50,494,000	
<i>Volunteer Fire Assistance</i>	8,280,000	Equip and train 4,000 rural volunteer fire departments to improve the fire protection readiness capability of local communities.
Subtotal, Cooperative Fire Protection	58,774,000	
<i>Forest Health Management (invasive species)</i>	12,000,000	Reduce the spread of invasive species due to fires.
<i>Economic Action Programs</i>	12,500,000	Expand and develop markets for woods products resulting from fuel removal.
Community and Private Land Fire Assistance:		
<i>Fence Reconstruction</i>	9,000,000	Reconstruct fire damaged fences in the Western States.
<i>Hazard Mitigation</i>	6,000,000	Reduce hazardous fuel accumulation in high-risk areas and develop defensible space for improved fire protection.
<i>Multi-resource Stewardship Planning</i>	7,000,000	Enhance multi-resource stewardship planning to ensure effective fire protection treatments in the wildland-urban interface.
<i>Economic Action Programs Pilot Projects</i>	8,000,000	Initiate pilot projects for improved utilization of removed fuel, including biomass conversion.
<i>Community Planning for Fire Protection</i>	5,000,000	Support community planning to develop and maintain protection capabilities in high-risk areas in the wildland-urban interface.
Subtotal, Community and Private Land Fire Assistance:	35,000,000	
Subtotal, Cooperative Programs	118,274,000	
Total	\$1,103,421,000	

6

4

5

The National Fire Plan Budget Overview for the USDA Forest Service

Foreword. The following is a summary of the USDA Forest Service FY 2001 funding for the National Fire Plan in detail. Funding is illustrated in two primary ways:

- FY 2001 Conference Action, including emergency (Title IV) funds (Table 1).
- Funding increases associated specifically with the National Fire Plan (Table 2).

The additional funding provided for the National Fire Plan for the USDA Forest Service is **\$1,103,421,000**.

This amount includes \$484,147,000 in additional base funding and \$619,274,000 in emergency funds (Title IV). The base level funding includes an additional \$208,147,000 in fire preparedness and \$276,000,000 in emergency contingency funds.

Table 1. FY 2001 Appropriations, Including Emergency Funding (Title IV), for the National Fire Plan, USDA Forest Service.

Programs (Dollars in thousands)	FY 2000 Final	FY 2001 President's Budget	FY 2001 Conference Base Action	FY 2001 Title IV Emergency	FY 2001 Total
<i>Columns ></i>	1	2	3	4	5=(3+4)
Fire Preparedness:					
<i>Fire Workforce Development and Maintenance</i>	\$402,768	\$399,743	\$574,890	\$0	\$574,890
<i>New Technology Development, including the JFSP</i>	10,000	4,600	20,600	0	20,600
Subtotal, Preparedness	412,768	404,343	612,490	0	612,490
Emergency Fire Contingency	90,000	150,000	426,000	0	426,000
Subtotal, Preparedness and Contingency	502,768	554,343	1,038,490	0	1,038,490
Fire Operations:					
Suppression	139,188	141,029	141,029	179,000	320,029
Facilities:					
<i>Reconstruction and Repair of Air Tanker Bases</i>	0	0	0	12,000	12,000
<i>Reconstruction and Repair of Fire Facilities</i>	0	0	0	32,000	32,000
Fuels Management:					
<i>Fuels Management:</i>	66,000	71,000	85,610	88,500	174,110
<i>Analysis, monitoring, and planning for NEPA</i>	0	0	0	11,500	11,500
<i>Research and Development</i>	0	0	0	16,000	16,000
<i>Community Forestry Restoration in New Mexico</i>	0	0	0	5,000	5,000
<i>Quincy Library Group</i>	0	0	0	15,000	15,000
Subtotal, Fuels Management	66,000	71,000	85,610	136,000	221,610
Rehabilitation and Restoration	0	0	0	142,000	142,000
Subtotal, Operations	205,188	212,029	226,639	501,000	727,639
Subtotal, Wildland Fire Management	707,956	766,372	1,265,129	501,000	1,766,129
Cooperative Fire Programs:					
Cooperative Fire Protection:					
State Fire Assistance:	21,929	30,006	25,000	9,632	34,632
<i>Firewise</i>	0	0	0	4,464	4,464
<i>Hazard Mitigation and Prevention</i>	0	0	0	28,898	28,898
<i>Kenai Peninsula Borough</i>	2,000	0	0	7,500	7,500
Subtotal, State Fire Assistance	23,929	30,006	25,000	50,494	75,494
Volunteer Fire Assistance	3,240	2,510	5,000	8,280	13,280
Subtotal, Cooperative Fire Protection	27,169	32,516	30,000	58,774	88,774
Forest Health Management	62,075	62,842	63,944	12,000	75,944
<i>Emergency Priority Pest Contingency</i>	0	0	12,500	0	12,500
Economic Action Programs	20,198	17,267	30,336	12,500	42,836
Community and Private Land Fire Assistance	0	0	0	26,000	26,000
<i>Fence Reconstruction</i>	0	0	0	9,000	9,000
Subtotal, Cooperative Programs	109,442	112,625	136,780	118,274	255,054
Total	\$817,398	\$878,997	\$1,401,909	\$619,274	\$2,021,183

Table 2. FY 2001 Additional Funding Specifically Associated with the National Fire Plan, USDA Forest Service

Programs (Dollars in thousands)	FY 2000 Final	FY 2001 President's Budget	FY 2001 Adjustments	FY 2001 Subtotal	FY 2001 National Fire Plan	FY 2001 Total
Columns >	1	2	3	4	5	6=(4+5)
Fire Preparedness:	\$402,768	\$399,743	\$0	\$399,743	\$175,147	\$574,890
<i>Fire Workforce Development and Maintenance</i>	0	0	0	0	17,000	17,000
<i>New Technology Development, including the JFSP</i>	10,000	4,600	0	4,600	16,000	20,600
Subtotal, Preparedness	412,768	404,343	0	404,343	208,147	612,490
Emergency Fire Contingency	90,000	150,000	0	150,000	276,000	426,000
Subtotal	502,768	554,343	0	554,343	484,147	1,038,490
Fire Operations:						
Suppression	139,188	141,029	0	141,029	179,000	320,029
Facilities:						
<i>Reconstruction and Repair of Air Tanker Bases</i>	0	0	0	0	12,000	12,000
<i>Reconstruction and Repair of Fire Facilities</i>	0	0	0	0	32,000	32,000
Fuels Management:	66,000	71,000	14,610	85,610	88,500	174,110
<i>Analysis, monitoring, and planning for NEPA</i>	0	0	0	0	11,500	11,500
<i>Research and Development</i>	0	0	0	0	16,000	16,000
<i>Community Forestry Restoration in New Mexico</i>	0	0	0	0	5,000	5,000
<i>Quincy Library Group</i>	0	0	0	0	15,000	15,000
Subtotal, Fuels Management	66,000	71,000	14,610	85,610	136,000	221,610
Rehabilitation and Restoration	0	0	0	0	142,000	142,000
Subtotal, Operations	205,188	212,029	14,610	226,639	501,000	727,639
Subtotal, Wildland Fire Management	707,956	766,372	14,610	780,982	985,147	1,766,129
Cooperative Fire Programs:						
Cooperative Fire Protection:						
State Fire Assistance:	21,929	30,006	-5,006	25,000	9,632	34,632
<i>Firewise</i>	0	0	0	0	4,464	4,464
<i>Hazard Mitigation and Prevention</i>	0	0	0	0	28,898	28,898
<i>Kenai Peninsula Borough</i>	2,000	0	0	0	7,500	7,500
Subtotal, State Fire Assistance	23,929	30,006	-5,006	25,000	50,494	75,494
Volunteer Fire Assistance	3,240	2,510	2,490	5,000	8,280	13,280
Subtotal, Cooperative Fire Protection	27,169	32,516	-2,516	30,000	58,774	88,774
Forest Health Management	62,075	62,842	1,102	63,944	12,000	75,944
<i>Emergency Priority Pest Contingency</i>	0	0	12,500	12,500	0	12,500
Economic Action Programs	20,198	17,267	13,069	30,336	12,500	42,836
Community and Private Land Fire Assistance	0	0	0	0	26,000	26,000
<i>Fence Reconstruction</i>	0	0	0	0	9,000	9,000
Subtotal, Cooperative Programs	109,442	112,625	24,155	136,780	118,274	255,054
Total	\$817,398	\$878,997	\$38,765	\$917,762	\$1,103,421	\$2,021,183

The following pages describe the Program, Program Components, and additional funding detail for Column 5 of Table 2 – the **\$1,103,421,000** specifically associated with the National Fire Plan for the USDA Forest Service.

Program Components for Funding of the National Fire Plan (+\$1,103,421,000)

The following briefly describes each program component, including additional funding guidance information for FY 2001. The amount shown in parenthesis indicates the additional amount to be funded for FY 2001 to implement the National Fire Plan. Except for Fire Preparedness (+\$208,147,000) and emergency contingency funding (+\$276,000,000), all the additional funds (+\$619,274,000) are provided for under an emergency declaration in Title IV.

Fire Preparedness (+\$208,147,000)

Provides the fire management organization with the capability to prevent, detect, or take prompt, effective initial attack suppression action on wildfires. Preparedness activities include planning, prevention, detection, information and education, pre-incident training, equipment and supply purchase and replacement, and other preparedness activities. Funding estimates are based on prediction models that determine a cost-effective level of preparedness for initial and extended attack – 100 percent of the Most Efficient Level (MEL). At 100 percent of the MEL, total cash outlays for presuppression and suppression activities, as well as changes in resources values, can be expected to be minimized over time. For the USDA Forest Service, includes \$17,000,000 for fire management workforce development and maintenance; \$4,000,000 for the Joint Fire Science Program (for a total program of \$8,000,000); and, \$12,000,000 for high priority new technology development and basic research, including adjusting the NFMAS model to include the values associated with the wildland-urban interface adjacent to the National Forest Boundary and generally improve the quality of information included in the system. Models like the Rare Event Risk Analysis Program and Fire Area Simulator will be improved.

The base program for fire preparedness includes \$600,000 for cooperative research and technology development between Federal fire research and fire management agencies and the University of Montana National Center for Landscape Fire Analysis.

Fire Operations (+\$501,000,000)

There are three major activities included in Fire Operations: Suppression, Fuel Management, and Rehabilitation and Restoration. Funding estimates in this program component are generally based on a 10-year expenditure average. For the USDA Forest Service, includes \$179,000,000 for Suppression; \$44,000,000 for capital improvement and maintenance of fire facilities; \$136,000,000 for Fuels Management (year one of the agency's Cohesive Strategy for fuels management) including \$16,000,000 for Research and Development; \$11,500,000 for NEPA (see items below); \$15,000,000 for the Quincy Library Group (QLG) (for a total program, including Title II fire operations (\$1,000,000) and NFS (\$2,000,000) of \$18,000,000 for the QLG); and \$5,000,000 for Community Forestry Restoration in New Mexico. Fire Operations also includes \$142,000,000 for emergency Rehabilitation and Restoration.

Fuels management work will be targeted to high priority areas, including wildland-urban interface areas (about 1.8 million acres for year one). The following provides expanded detail:

- Includes \$11,500,000 for assessment analyses, monitoring, consultations (Section 7 of the ESA), and planning that result in good scientific fuels management proposals and defensible NEPA documents.
- For Research and Development (\$16,000,000):
 - Rapid response research in assessing fuel management and harvesting treatments as they affect fire behavior and post-fire resource damage
 - Validation, testing, and calibration of fire behavior models under a range of fire and fuel conditions.
 - Improved data and tools for assessing social and economic impacts of wildland fire and fire management activities, especially in wildland urban interface areas.
 - Determination of effects of alternative fuel management treatments on fuels, fire behavior, and ecosystem processes.

For information purposes, the base program (Title II) for non-emergency fuels management -- \$85,610,000 (see Table 2, Column 4) – includes:

- \$263,000 for the Apache-Sitgreaves NF, AZ urban interface.
- \$1,000,000 for the Quincy Library Group (QLG) project.
- \$6,947,000 for windstorm damage in MN.
- \$1,500,000 for the Lake Tahoe Basin.
- \$2,400,000 for work on the Giant Sequoia National Monument and Sequoia National Forest.

Emergency Fire Contingency (+\$276,000,000)

Provides additional emergency funds for Fire Suppression activities that are only released to the agency upon Presidential declaration of emergency. Funding levels are based on 10-year averages plus \$276,000,000 for projected unmet FY 2000 expenditures. This amount does not include existing deficits in the KV fund from prior years.

State Fire Assistance (+\$50,494,000)

Provides an additional \$9,632,000 for traditional technical training, financial assistance, and equipment to States to ensure that Federal, State, and local agencies can deliver a uniform and coordinated suppression response to wildfire. Firewise and other high priority education programs (+\$4,464,000), fuel reduction and defensible space development (+\$28,989,000), and improved forest health and fire protection capabilities on the Kenai Peninsula (+\$7,500,000). Funding levels are based on amounts required to address the Federal role in concert with state contributions and will be allocated to states and communities using a targeted approach. Funds are cost-shared at a 50% (Federal), 50% (nonfederal) rate for this program component.

Strong readiness capability at the state and local levels go hand-in-hand with optimal efficiency at the Federal level. The level of funding will provide a more optimum efficiency level for the states and local fire departments in the impacted areas. This will complement the Most Efficient Level funded for Wildland Fire Management for the USDA Forest Service. Federal funds for State Fire Assistance will be used specifically for:

- Support to additional state fire management specialists.
- Develop multi-state fire compacts.
- Improve state readiness capability to match Federal readiness capability.
- Increase fire planning in high-risk areas.
- Emphasize and expand the Firewise program.
- Emphasize training in the Incident Command System's fire fighting structure to complement fire protection on Federal lands.

The funding level for “cost-share incentives” is based on needs identified in forest stewardship plans and estimates of fuel treatment acres for cost-shared work. For the USDA Forest Service, includes \$28,898,000 for incentives for high priority forest management practices on their lands to reduce fire risk and fuel loads. Estimate includes 395,000 acres of fuels treatment at a cost-share rate of 50% (Federal), 50% (nonfederal). Specific work will focus on reducing hazardous fuels and improving defensible space within high-risk communities and adjacent areas to improve the overall protection capability of communities at risk.

Community and Private Land Fire Assistance (+\$35,000,000)

Provides for assistance to nonfederal entities most affected by fire using all existing authorities under the State and Private Forestry appropriation. Amounts for specific program focus are suggested as follows:

- Incentives for additional fuels management and defensible space development (up to \$6,000,000), and reconstruction of fences lost to fires (up to \$9,000,000) for a total of +\$15,000,000. This provides for a total of \$34,990,500 for fuels management and defensible space development on non-federal lands

through cost-share incentives. Linking these projects with like projects on Federal lands will strengthen the program effectiveness.

- Enhanced multi-resource stewardship planning to ensure effective fire protection treatments in the wildland-urban interface (+\$7,000,000). These funds should be used in concert with the fuels management and defensible space projects.
- Pilot projects for improved utilization of removed fuel, including biomass conversion (+\$8,000,000)
- Community planning to develop and maintain protection capabilities in high-risk areas in the wildland-urban interface (+\$5,000,000).

Volunteer Fire Assistance (+\$8,280,000)

Provides technical and financial support to volunteer fire departments that protect communities with populations of less than 10,000. These local agencies are often the first line of defense in meeting the protection needs for wildland interface areas threatened by wildfire; the value of the service provided is estimated to exceed \$36 billion annually. Assistance to volunteer fire departments is an important Federal role, to help improve the effectiveness of fire protection on public lands, especially in the wildland-urban interface areas adjacent to Federal land boundaries. The funding level will increase assistance to about 4,000 volunteer fire departments in high-risk areas that have unmet training and equipment needs and can directly influence public land protection. Funds are cost-shared at a 50% (Federal), 50% (nonfederal) rate.

The Volunteer Fire Departments will receive funds to:

- Provide for modern, reliable communications equipment for more efficient action on incidents.
- Provide fire management training.
- Purchase protective fire clothing.
- Purchase firefighting equipment such as nozzles, hose, gloves, and goggles.

Funds will be provided to selected fire departments to help complement Federal firefighting forces so protection capabilities are optimized across ownerships in high-risk areas within the wildland-urban interface.

Forest Health Management (+\$12,000,000)

Provides forest health technical and financial assistance to all Federal agencies, Tribal governments, and states in carrying out a coordinated nationwide program of detecting, monitoring, evaluating, preventing and suppressing invasive forest insects and diseases. As forest health conditions improve and mortality decreases, susceptibility to fire diminishes. Funds for this plan, \$12,000,000 for the USDA Forest Service, will be used for the management and control of invasive species as a result of the fires and are based on estimates of detection, evaluation, and high priority treatments in areas most severely damaged by fires.

Economic Action Program (+\$12,500,000)

Provides technical and financial assistance to address the long-term health of rural areas, by helping communities develop opportunities and enterprises through diversified uses of forest resources. Entrepreneurial efforts incorporate wood, recreation, wildlife, cultural and heritage resources, minerals, non-timber forest products, and scenic quality. Funds will be used to develop and expand markets for traditionally underutilized wood as a tool to enhance efficient use of the removed fuels. A funding level of \$12,500,000 includes technical assistance, and grants to help develop businesses and is based on the needs identified for economic expansion prior to the fires. Program components within the EAP include rural community assistance (\$5,500,000); forest products conservation and recycling (\$5,000,000); and, market development and expansion (\$2,000,000). Funds are cost-shared at a 50% (Federal), 50% (nonfederal) rate.

Maintaining existing markets and creating new markets for better use of the small wood that will be removed as part of the fuels management program is essential. Otherwise the wood will be left to waste and value added opportunities for jobs and new businesses will be foregone. Funds will be targeted for:

- Technical assistance

- Training
- Business plan development
- Feasibility studies
- Seed funds for selected capital investments
- Marketing strategies
- Identification of value-added income producing opportunities
- Applied research, specifically for small diameter utilization

Allocation of funds will be based on the evaluation of local projects designed specifically to create jobs, markets, and enhanced income from hazardous fuel removals. The Economic Action Programs have a history of success and typically produce a benefit to cost rate that exceeds 5:1. The total amount of the EAP, including the portion suggested from the *Community and Private Land Fire Assistance* program, could be \$20,500,000 – with a total of up to \$10,000,000 for market development and expansion.

Projected Outcomes

The following tables illustrates projected outcomes for the FY 2001 additional USDA Forest Service funds:

Program	Units	Outcomes
Fuels Management:		
Federal Lands	Acres	1,800,000
Nonfederal Lands	Acres	395,000
Rehabilitation and Restoration	Projects	500
Volunteer Fire Departments	No. Assisted	4,000
Jobs created	No.	8,000

*The 1.8 million acres for fuels management is the total outcome for both base programs funds and the National Fire Plan.

The remaining activities represent additional outcomes based on the National Fire Plan.

The Management Structure for the National Fire Plan USDA Forest Service

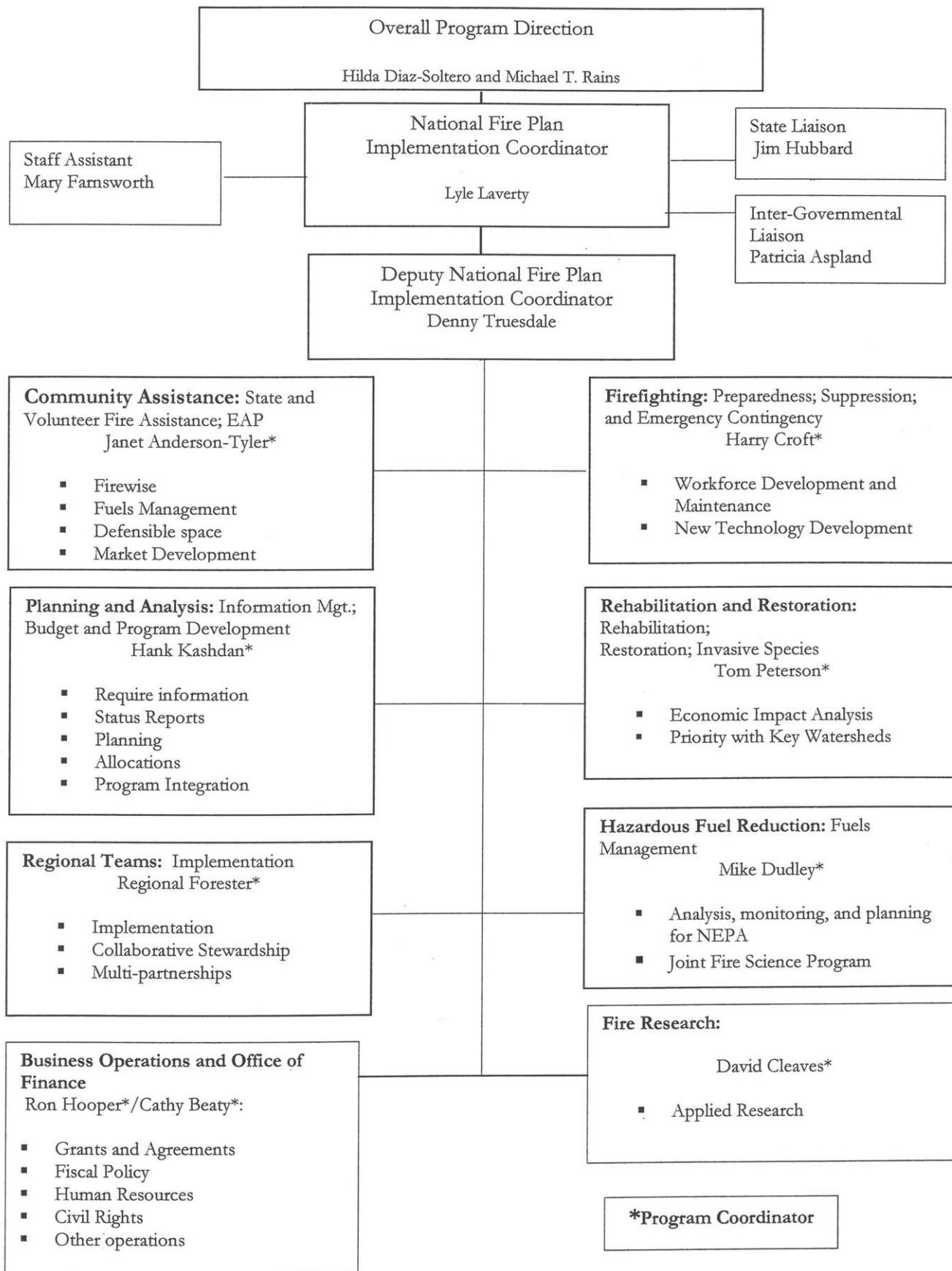
Foreword. The National Fire Plan calls for improved accountability. The following is the Management Structure at the national level for the USDA Forest Service to ensure this accountability. Lyle Laverty is the National Fire Plan Coordinator. Denny Truesdale is the Deputy National Fire Plan Coordinator. The Regional Foresters, with assistance from other partners, have developed Regional teams to implement the National Fire Plan. The composition and specific functions of these teams has been decided at the local level. Each Region and the Northeastern Area has named a Point of Contact to help coordinate the field implementation of the National Fire Plan. The Management Structure at the national level is as follows:

Fire Plan Key Point	Firefighting	Rehabilitation and Restoration	Hazardous Fuel Reduction	Community Assistance	Accountability
Program Name	Firefighting	Rehabilitation and Restoration	Hazardous Fuel Reduction	Community Assistance	Planning and Analysis
Program Coordinator	Harry Croft	Tom Peterson	Mike Dudley	Janet Anderson-Tyler	Hank Kashdan
Program Components	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Preparedness ■ Suppression ■ Emergency Contingency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Rehabilitation and Restoration ■ Invasive Species Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fuels Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ State Fire Assistance ■ Cost-share Incentives ■ Volunteer Fire Assistance ■ Economic Action Programs ■ Community and Private Land Fire Assistance 	All, with a specific focus on Information Management and Budget and Program Development
Important Roles and Other Tactical Components to Consider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Workforce Development and Maintenance ■ New Technology Development ■ Facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Economic Impact Analysis ■ Priority with Key Watersheds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Analysis, monitoring, and planning for NEPA ■ Applied research and development ■ Joint Fire Science Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Firewise ■ Other fire prevention education programs ■ Fuels Management ■ Defensible space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Required information ■ Database management ■ Communication products ■ Status reports ■ Planning ■ Allocations, including criteria ■ Out year program integration

The Program Coordinator. The Program Coordinator is responsible for the overall coordination of the program and its components in order to achieve the goals and objectives of the National Fire Plan. In addition, the Program Coordinator will:

- Coordinate the development of a Program of Work for the assigned program.
- Have input into budget planning and execution.
- Provide required information, including accomplishments, to the Information Management Coordinator as needed.
- Ensure Operating Principles are followed.

National Fire Plan Management Structure (USDA Forest Service)





NATIONAL FIRE PLAN



Welcome to USDA Forest Service National Fire Plan

Firefighting

- Continue to fight the fires for the rest of this fire season and be adequately prepared for next year.

Rehabilitation and Restoration

- Restore landscapes and rebuild communities damaged by the wildfires of 2000.

Hazardous Fuel Reduction

- Invest in projects to reduce fire risk.

Community Assistance

- Work directly with communities to ensure adequate protection.

Planning and Analysis

- Be accountable and establish adequate oversight, coordination, program development, and monitoring for performance.

Interior Department Information

[Return to National Information Center home page](#)

What's New

Lyle Laverty

Named to
Implement
National Fire
Plan

IRA

Conference
Report
(1.4 MB pdf)

HAPP

Committee
Report
(1.8 MB pdf)

SAPP

Committee
Report
(540 KB pdf)

Comments & Suggestions on this site can be sent to: tmreynolds@fs.fed.us

