

Appendix B: Fire Management Unit Descriptions

FMU Type	General Description	Fire Mitigation Considerations	Fire Suppression Considerations	Fuels Treatment Considerations
A	This category includes areas where mitigation and suppression is required to prevent direct threats to life or property. It also includes areas where fire never played a large role historically in the development and maintenance of the ecosystem or because of human development fire can no longer be tolerated without significant loss or where fire return intervals were very long.	Emphasis should be focused on prevention, detection, and rapid suppression response and techniques that will reduce unwanted ignitions and threats to life, property, natural and cultural resources.	Virtually all wildland fires would be actively suppressed and no fire is prescribed except as required to combat an immediate threat to firefighter or public health and safety.	Non-fire fuel treatments should be employed. Unit costs for prescribed fire would be too prohibitive to implement efficiently. Pile burning of mechanically removed vegetation is acceptable when risk of spread is eliminated.
B	Fire plays a natural role in the function of the ecosystem, however these are areas where an unplanned ignition could have negative effects unless/until some form of mitigation takes place. Sagebrush ecosystems, for example, can fall into this category because of encroachment of cheatgrass or a prolonged lack of fire, which leads to large monotypic stands of sagebrush that won't burn as they would have historically	Emphasize prevention/ mitigation programs that reduce unplanned ignitions and threats to life, property, natural and cultural resources.	Fire suppression is usually aggressive *Category B FMU may justify deviation from this criteria if topography and fuel conditions (natural fuel breaks) create a very low probability of the fire spreading towards the values at risk. i.e., fire near border with C or D FMU and further fire spread within the B FMU can be contained.	Fuel hazard reduction as a major means of mitigation potential risks and associated loss are a priority. Fire and non-fire fuels treatments are utilized to reduce the hazardous effects of unplanned wildland fire. Restorative treatments may consist of multiple non-fire treatments before the use of fire will be considered. Unit costs for prescribed fire are high and require stringent mitigation and contingencies. Concurrently, achieve fire protection and resource benefits, when possible.
C	Fire is a desirable component of the ecosystem, however, ecological, social or political constraints must be considered. These constraints could include air quality, threatened and endangered species considerations (effect of fire on survival of species), or wildlife habitat considerations.	Programs should mitigate potential threats to values before ignitions occur and reduce unwanted human ignitions.	Ecological and resource constraints along with human health and safety, etc., are utilized in determining the appropriate suppression tactic on a case by case basis by the Incident Commander and sub-unit line officer. Areas in this category would generally receive lower suppression priority in multiple wildfire situations than would areas in "A" or "B" FMU's.	Fire and non-fire fuels treatments may be utilized to ensure constraints are met or to reduce any hazardous effects of unplanned wildfire. Significant prescribed fire activity would be expected to help attain desirable resource/ecological conditions. Prescribed fire for hazard/fuel reduction are of a lower priority than in "B" units. Prescribed fire unit costs are low to moderate and are generally non-complex. Concurrently, achieve fire protection and resource benefits, when possible.
D	These are areas where unplanned and planned wildfire fire may be used to achieve desired objectives such as improving vegetation composition, wildlife habitat or watershed conditions.	Implement programs that reduce unwanted human-caused ignitions, as needed.	These areas offer the greatest opportunity to take advantage of the full range of options available for managing wildfire under the appropriate management response. Natural occurring fires under prescribed conditions are permitted to run their course where approved Fire Management Action Plans or Prescribed Fire Plans exist. Health and safety constraints will apply. Resource use considerations similar to those described for Category C may be identified if needed to achieve resource objectives. Areas in this category would be the lowest suppression priority in a multiple fire situation.	There is generally less need for hazard fuel treatment in this category. Prescribed fire for fuel hazard reduction is not a priority except where there is an immediate threat to public health and safety. If treatment is necessary, both fire and non-fire treatments may be utilized, as allowed by the land use plan. Prescribed fire to obtain desired resource/ecological condition is appropriate.