

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Office of Fire and Aviation
3833 South Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

October 21, 2003

In Reply Refer To:
9214 (FA-630) P

EMS Transmission 10/21/03
Instruction Memorandum No. OF&A 2004-003
Expires: 09/30/05

To: State Directors
From: Director, Office of Fire and Aviation
Subject: Prescribed Fire Policy and Direction

Program Area: Prescribed Fire Management.

Purpose: This Instruction Memorandum (IM) issues updated prescribed fire guidance.

Policy/Action:

1. On July 12, 2000, the Office of Fire and Aviation (OF&A) issued IM No. OF&A 2000-020, which provided the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) direction for prescribed fire operations. Guidance was reissued on June 10, 2002 via IM No. OF&A 2002-027, which expired on September 30, 2003. This IM reissues that prescribed fire guidance with the following changes.
 - a. The National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) has issued a new Prescribed Fire Complexity Analysis (NFES 2474, PMS 424). This analysis becomes the new BLM standard. All new prescribed fire plans are to use the new Prescribed Fire Complexity Analysis. Existing plans that have been signed by the line officer do not need to be amended. The new analysis may be found at www.nwcg.gov/pms/pms.htm.
 - b. NWCG has also issued a new Go/No-Go Checklist. The current BLM checklist, as issued in IM NO. OF&A 2002-020, exceeds the new NWCG standard and will remain the BLM standard.

- c. IM No. OF&A 2000-020, issued on July 12, 2000, lists specific training requirements for personnel involved in prescribed fire planning and implementation. On page 34 of the attachment (Prescribed Fire Management) to that IM, item number 5 states, “*BLM personnel currently Red Carded for prescribed fire positions, but who have not had the additional “required training” as identified in this section, may retain their prescribed fire qualifications for a period not to exceed two years. During this two year period the individual is expected to attend the additional required training classes.*” This text is deleted.
- d. Delete the requirement for S-381 and S-481 from the suggested training on page 33 of the attachment to IM No. OF&A 2000-020. The development of these courses was never completed.

The revisions outlined above have been made to the attachment (Prescribed Fire Management, July 2000, Updated October 2003) to this IM.

- 2. After the Cerro Grande Fire this office issued IM No. OF&A 2000-136, which required: (a) all prescribed fire plans to be reviewed at the State Office, and (b) prior to ignition, on the day of the burn, the Field Manager and Burn Boss, or Burn Coordinator, were to certify that they had reviewed the burn objectives, and that they had reviewed and were in agreement on the complexity analysis. In addition, the Go/No-Go Checklist had to be completed, with specific attention directed at fuel loadings and conditions.

OF&A IM No. 2000-136 has expired. State and Field Offices should develop their own guidance related to prescribed fire plan review and approval. The minimum BLM standards for technical review are provided on page 19 of the attachment to this IM. Furthermore, the State and Field Offices should develop their own guidance related to Field Manager involvement/approval prior to ignition. Field Managers are encouraged to be actively involved in the planning and implementation of prescribed fire projects.

Time Frame: This IM is effective upon receipt.

Budget Impact: None.

Background: After the Cerro Grande Fire this office issued IM No. OF&A 2000-020 and IM No. OF&A 2000-136 to address recommendations from the Cerro Grande Fire. NWCG has since made changes to some prescribed fire documents, and the interim guidance provided by OF&A has expired. This IM adds the NWCG changes and extends our existing prescribed fire guidance.

Manual/Handbook Sections Affected: Manual Section 9214, Prescribed Fire Management and H-9214-1, Prescribed Fire Management Handbook.

Coordination: Several State Fire Management Officers, as well as State and Field Office Fuels Management Specialists, were contacted for input to this IM.

Contact: Al Carriere (208) 387-5168 or Roy Johnson (208) 387-5163 – Fuels Management, Planning and Resources, OF&A.

Signed by:
Tim Bozorth
Acting Director
Office of Fire and Aviation

Authenticated by:
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1 Attachment

Prescribed Fire Management, July 2000, Updated October 2003 (104 pages)

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