



NIFC and Human Resources

The nation's wildland fire community is a large and complex organization across the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service and Bureau of Indian Affairs; and the US Department of Agriculture's Forest Service. These agencies manage wildland fire on more than 700 million acres of federal public land.

Suppression of wildfires to protect lives and communities continues to be the top priority and the fire agencies have achieved and maintain a high rate of success. Each year, tens of thousands of wildfires ignite, and consistently more than 95 percent of these starts are successfully suppressed within 24 hours. Given the current unhealthy condition of much of our land, however, the few percent that escape to become large fires tend to be severe. Suppressing them requires a complex but well-orchestrated and coordinated effort among agencies and fire management organizations across the country.

The National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) is home to eight separate federal and state agencies, including the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs; the US Department of Agriculture's Forest Service; the National Association of State Foresters; the US Fire Administration; the National Weather Service; and the Department of Defense. Working together, these interagency partners develop national wildland fire policy and lead in its implementation; and serve as the logistical and support center for the nation's wildland fires, as well as other national disasters and emergencies.

NIFC is a place. This place is the home of a diverse workforce. There is the National Interagency Coordination Center, a command hub where teams, crews, aircraft, engines, equipment and other resources are mobilized quickly throughout the nation. The radio cache is capable of providing communication support to 32,000 firefighters and more than 50 major incidents at one time. There also is the training building, where specialists develop consistent and state-of-the-art training for use across the nation. The Remote Automated Weather base manages and maintains more than 2,000 nationally dispersed remotely located stations that automatically measure weather conditions. Another office is the Predictive Services group, where weather and wildland fuels data is turned into forecasts that are critical to fire managers. Other NIFC facilities include the Great Basin Cache, the largest of 11 supply warehouses located across the country, along with the Returns Warehouse, where tools and equipment are refurbished. There are also fire and fuels management planners, operations chiefs, fire scientists, Boise BLM smokejumpers, Boise National Forest airtanker base and more. NIFC is the epitome of interagency cooperation and collaboration.

NIFC - Human Resources



The BLM Fire and Aviation (FA) Human Resources Office (HR) provides comprehensive human resources services to each of the DOI employees located at NIFC through separate Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs). The sharing of human resources services among the co-located agencies provides economical and operational efficiencies. Costs are shared equitably among the agencies based on the number of employees serviced.

The HR Office provides services to the following customers:

- BLM Fire & Aviation: 370 employees
- BLM Office of Law Enforcement & Security (WO-120): 20 employees
- BIA Branch of Wildland Fire Management: 76 employees
- FWS Fire Management Branch: 22 employees
- NPS Division of Fire & Aviation: 61 employees

In addition, the DOI FIRES Office provides wildland fire temporary seasonal recruitment services for BLM (agency-wide), NPS (specific locations) and FWS (specific locations).

The HR Office recognizes that each agency has its own distinct culture and adheres to its human resources policies and procedures. The HR Office works closely with each agency's Washington level HR Office to ensure that information on policies and procedures are implemented in a timely manner.

The HR Office also works very closely with the BLM Washington Office HR and other State HR offices to provide expertise on fire-related HR issues such as:

- **Interagency Fire Program Management (IFPM)**
The HR Officer and the DOI FIRES Program Manager represent the BLM on the Interagency IFPM Team.
- **BLM Liaison for DOI Services for Accountability, OWCP, Accountability and Retirement (SOAR) Office**
The HR office acts as the BLM liaison for the SOAR office, with all special retirement coverage requests being routed through this office for preparation of the request package and submission to DOI SOAR.
- **Maximum Entry Age (MEA) and Mandatory Separation Waiver**
All waiver requests for MEA and mandatory separation are routed through the HR office, which assists in preparing the request package and coordinates with the WO HR Office for submission to the DOI HR Office for approval.
- **Recruitment, Relocation and Retention Incentives (3 Rs)**
The FA Assistant Director (FA, AD) has the delegated authority to approve all BLM 3 Rs for positions filled under the DOI National Fire Plan. All requests are routed to the FA HR Office through the State HR office. The FA HR office reviews the package and coordinates approval by the FA, AD.
- **DOI Wildland Firefighter Medical Standards Program (DOI MSP)**
The Human Resources Officer and Employee Relations Specialist are key participants and provide advice and counsel BLM State HR Offices on various aspects of the DOI MSP. The Human Resources Officer is a member of the DOI MSP Oversight Committee providing policy guidance and direction for the program. The Human Resources Officer and Employee Relations Specialist are members of the DOI Medical Review Board providing advisory services regarding human resources issues.

In short, NIFC is a unique place and the employees there perform a mission like no other in the federal government. Similarly, the BLM NIFC HR Office is distinct and provides services to a wide variety of employees with specialized, and often complex, responsibilities.

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