



# Guidance for Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy



February 13, 2009

# Foreword

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The *Review and Update of the 1995 Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy (January 2001)* is the primary interagency wildland fire policy document. The *Interagency Strategy for the Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy (June 20, 2003)* was developed and approved under the authority of the Wildland Fire Leadership Council (WFLC) to set forth direction for consistent implementation of the federal fire policy. It has been used since that time.

On May 2, 2008, the WFLC issued a memorandum entitled *Modification of Federal Wildland Fire Policy Guidance*. This memorandum directed federal agencies to test and implement new guidelines for wildland fire management. The modifications were tested in a number of field units in the 2008 fire season.

In 2009 the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) issued a memorandum to the NWCG executive board (NWCG#001-2009, January 7, 2009) that 1) affirms the soundness of the *Review and Update of the 1995 Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy (January 2001)*, 2) reiterates the policy changes stated in the May 2, 2008 WFLC memorandum entitled *Modification of Federal Wildland Fire Policy Guidance*, 3) states that the Wildland Fire Decision Support System (WFDSS) will replace existing analysis and decision processes, and 4) confirms that the *Interagency Strategy for the Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy (June 20, 2003)* will be replaced in 2009.

This document, *Guidance for Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy (February, 2009)*, is that replacement.

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# Fire Executive Council

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February 13, 2009

Memorandum

To: Chief, USDA Forest Service  
Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs  
Director, Bureau of Land Management  
Director, Fish and Wildlife Service  
Director, National Park Service

From: Chair, Fire Executive Council

Subject: Guidance for Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Policy

On February 13, 2009, the Fire Executive Council (FEC) approved Guidance for the Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy. This Guidance provides for consistent implementation of the 1995/2001 Federal Fire Policy, as directed by the Wildland Fire Leadership Council.

Successful implementation of the Guidance requires that each of the federal wildland fire agencies work together through development of unified direction and guidance for agency/bureau manuals, directives, handbooks, guidebooks, plans agreements and other pertinent documents to complete final implementation of this guidance.

In approving the Guidance the FEC:

- directs the National Wildfire Coordinating Group to adopt the guidance and review and revise, as appropriate, all interagency training courses, operational guides, standards, terminology, reporting requirements, skill/competency/qualification/certification requirements and other pertinent documents.
- directs the federal fire directors to work collaboratively with state, local and tribal fire managers and public and nongovernment organizations to communicate direction stated in the guidance with internal and external audiences to foster understanding and support for the complexity of wildland fire management.
- directs the federal fire directors to revise or develop accountability standards, performance measures and tracking systems to assess if resource and protection objectives are met during the course of management on all wildland fires.

We thank the interagency team that produced this implementation guidance and extend special appreciation to the National Association of State Forest, International Association of Fire Chiefs, National Association of Counties, The Wilderness Society, and The Nature Conservancy for the support and commitment in completing the document.


## APPROVAL


The *Guidance for Implementation of the Federal Wildland Fire Policy (February, 2009)* is hereby approved by the Fire Executive Council. Implementation actions are to begin immediately.


 22 Feb 09  
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U.S. Department of Agriculture Date  
Forest Service, Fire & Aviation Management  
Tom Harbour, Director

 2/18/09  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Department of the Interior Date  
Office of Wildland Fire Coordination  
Kirk Rowdabaugh, Director

 Feb. 13, 2009  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Bureau of Land Management Date  
Fire and Aviation Management Directorate  
Jim Douglas, Assistant Director

 2/19/09  
\_\_\_\_\_  
National Park Service Date  
Visitor and Resource Protection  
Karen Taylor-Goodrich, Associate Director

 2/20/09  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Fish and Wildlife Service Date  
National Wildlife Refuge System  
Division Natural Resource and Conservation  
Planning  
Andy Loranger, Chief

 2/15/09  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Bureau of Indian Affairs Date  
Trust Services  
Vicki Forrest, Deputy Director

 2-17-09  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Department of the Interior Date  
National Business Center –  
Aviation Management Directorate  
Mark Bathrick, Associate Director

 2/20/09  
\_\_\_\_\_  
National Wildfire Coordinating Group Date  
Ex officio  
Brian McManus, Chair

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## Introduction

The *Review and Update of the 1995 Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy (January 2001)* remains sound and presents a single cohesive federal fire policy for the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture. However, some issues associated with implementation of this policy need closer attention and clarification to fully achieve the intent of the policy.

One such policy area is the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). WUI is more complex and extensive than previously considered in the 1995 and 2001 Federal Fire Policy reviews. Fire management activities affecting WUI areas require closer coordination and more engagement between with federal, state, local and tribal land and fire managers to ensure firefighter and public safety and mitigate property loss from wildland fire.

A key finding of the 2001 review of the 1995 policy was that “multiple terms for various management options to respond to wildland fire have confused agency managers and employees, operators, partners, and the public, and have perpetuated multiple fire management program elements”. This important communications issue will be resolved only through federal, state, local and tribal engagement in building a foundation for common terms (see Appendix A) with understanding and support by all.

The current policy clearly states that wildland fire analysis will carefully consider the long-term benefits in relation to risks both in the short and long term:

“Fire, as a critical natural process, will be integrated into land and resource management plans and activities on a landscape scale, and across agency boundaries. Response to wildland fire is based on ecological, social, and legal consequences of fire. The circumstances under which a fire occurs, and the likely consequences on firefighter and public safety and welfare, natural and cultural resources, and values to be protected dictate the appropriate management response to fire.”

*1995/2001 Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy*

The intent of this framework is to solidify that the full range of strategic and tactical options are available and considered in the response to every wildland fire. These options are to be used to achieve objectives as described in Land and Resource Management Plans and/or Fire Management Plans, subject to clear processes defined to manage fire that crosses jurisdictional boundaries. Mutually developed objectives with adjoining jurisdictions for managing fires that crosses jurisdictional boundaries will also be recognized.

This guidance also calls for increased dialogue and collaboration between federal agencies and tribal, local, and state agencies as plans are updated and implemented to manage wildfires in order to accomplish resource and protection objectives.

This document, *Guidance for Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy (February 2009)*, replaces the *Interagency Strategy for the Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy (June 20, 2003)*. This updated guidance consolidates and clarifies

changes that have occurred since the 2003 strategy document was issued, and provides revised direction for consistent implementation of the *Review and Update of the 1995 Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy (January 2001)*

## Guidance for Implementation

The following guidelines should be used to provide consistent implementation of federal wildland fire policy. Further guidance is provided in the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy section Table 1.

1. Wildland fire management agencies will use common standards for all aspects of their fire management programs to facilitate effective collaboration among cooperating agencies.
2. Agencies and bureaus will review, update, and develop agreements that clarify the jurisdictional inter-relationships and define the roles and responsibilities among local, state, tribal and federal fire protection entities.
3. Responses to wildland fire will be coordinated across levels of government regardless of the jurisdiction at the ignition source.
4. Fire management planning will be intergovernmental in scope and developed on a landscape scale.
5. Wildland fire is a general term describing any non-structure fire that occurs in the wildland. Wildland fires are categorized into two distinct types:
  - a. Wildfires – Unplanned ignitions or prescribed fires that are declared wildfires
  - b. Prescribed Fires - Planned ignitions.
6. A wildland fire may be concurrently managed for one or more objectives and objectives can change as the fire spreads across the landscape. Objectives are affected by changes in fuels, weather, topography; varying social understanding and tolerance; and involvement of other governmental jurisdictions having different missions and objectives.
7. Management response to a wildland fire on federal land is based on objectives established in the applicable Land/ Resource Management Plan and/or the Fire Management Plan.
8. Initial action on human-caused wildfire will be to suppress the fire at the lowest cost with the fewest negative consequences with respect to firefighter and public safety.
9. Managers will use a decision support process to guide and document wildfire management decisions. The process will provide situational assessment, analyze hazards and risk, define implementation actions, and document decisions and rationale for those decisions.

## Implementation

Each of the departments or agencies participating in the review will adopt the *Guidance for Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy (February 2009)* and review and revise, as appropriate, all manuals, handbooks, guidebooks, plans, agreements and other pertinent documents.

The National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) will adopt the *Guidance for Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy (February 2009)* and review and revise, as appropriate, all interagency training courses, operational guides, standards, terminology, reporting requirements, skill/competency/qualification/certification requirements and other pertinent documents.

The federal fire directors, in collaboration with state, local and tribal fire managers and public and nongovernment organizations, will communicate direction stated in the *Guidance for Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy (February 2009)* with internal and external audiences to foster understanding and support for the complexity of wildland fire management.

The federal fire directors will revise or develop accountability standards, performance measures and tracking systems to assess if resource and protection objectives are met during the course of management on all wildland fires.

## **Federal Wildland Fire Policy - Guiding Principles and Policy Statements**

The following guiding principles and policy statements are excerpted from the *Review and Update of the 1995 Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy (January 2001)*. These remain the foundational principles for Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy.

### **Guiding Principles**

- 1. Firefighter and public safety is the first priority in every fire management activity.**
- 2. The role of wildland fire as an essential ecological process and natural change agent will be incorporated into the planning process.** Federal agency land and resource management plans set the objectives for the use and desired future condition of the various public lands.
- 3. Fire Management Plans, programs, and activities support land and resource management plans and their implementation.**
- 4. Sound risk management is a foundation for all fire management activities.** Risks and uncertainties relating to fire management activities must be understood, analyzed, communicated, and managed as they relate to the cost of either doing or not doing an activity. Net gains to the public benefit will be an important component of decisions.



**5. Fire management programs and activities are economically viable, based upon values to be protected, costs, and land and resource management objectives.** Federal agency administrators are adjusting and reorganizing programs to reduce costs and increase efficiencies. As part of this process, investments in fire management activities must be evaluated against other agency programs in order to effectively accomplish the overall mission, set short- and long-term priorities, and clarify management accountability.

**6. Fire Management Plans and activities are based upon the best available science.** Knowledge and experience are developed among all federal wildland fire management agencies. An active fire research program combined with interagency collaboration provides the means to make these tools available to all fire managers.

**7. Fire Management Plans and activities incorporate public health and environmental quality considerations.**

**8. Federal, State, tribal, local, interagency, and international coordination and cooperation are essential.** Increasing costs and smaller work forces require that public agencies pool their human resources to successfully deal with the ever-increasing and more complex fire management tasks. Full collaboration among federal wildland fire management agencies and between the federal wildland fire management agencies and international, State, tribal, and local governments and private entities result in a mobile fire management work force available for the full range of public needs.

**9. Standardization of policies and procedures among federal wildland fire management agencies is an ongoing objective.** Consistency of plans and operations provides the fundamental platform upon which federal wildland fire management agencies can cooperate, integrate fire activities across agency boundaries, and provide leadership for cooperation with State, tribal, and local fire management organizations.

## **Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy**

Each of the seventeen policy areas are assessed in depth in the following table (Table 1). The policy area's guiding principle is restated first. The left column provides statements to help clarify the Management Intent of the policy statement. The right column specifies actions needed to implement the policy statement.

**Table 1 – Policy Clarification of Management Intent and Implementation Actions**

<b>Policy Statement</b>	
<b>Management Intent</b>	<b>Implementation Actions</b>
<b>1. Safety</b>	
Firefighter and public safety is the first priority. All Fire Management Plans and activities must reflect this commitment.	
No natural or cultural resource, home, or item of property is worth a human life. All strategies and tactics should seek to mitigate the risk to firefighters and the public.	Agency administrators will develop and establish process, procedures and objectives that ensure firefighter and public safety.  Incident Commanders will develop and establish incident objectives, strategies and operational tactics that ensure firefighter and public safety.
<b>2. Fire Management and Ecosystem Sustainability</b>	
The full range of fire management activities will be used to help achieve ecosystem sustainability, including its interrelated ecological, economic, and social components.	
<p>“Full range of fire management activities” may include any vegetative management treatment tool.</p> <p>Ecosystem sustainability provides a supply of goods, services, social values, and natural processes in perpetuity.</p> <p>Economic intent is to provide for sustainable supplies of goods, services, and social values through implementation of appropriate fire management activities.</p>	<p>Land/Resource Management Plan’s (L/RMP) will be developed consistent with both ecological conditions, and fire regime dynamics, and consider the short and long term effects of both action and no action alternatives for planned vegetation management activities as well as responses to wildfire.</p> <p>Agencies will exploit the full range of fire management options to sustain healthy ecosystems within acceptable risk levels as identified in the L/RMP, or Fire Management Plan (FMP).</p> <p>Fire management activities will be based on planning and decision analysis processes that address current and anticipated situational conditions.</p>
<b>3. Response to Wildland Fire</b>	
Fire, as a critical natural process, will be integrated into land and resource management plans and activities on a landscape scale, and across agency boundaries. Response to wildland fires is based on ecological, social and legal consequences of the fire. The circumstances under which a fire occurs, and the likely consequences on firefighter and public safety and welfare, natural and cultural resources, and, values to be protected, dictate the appropriate response to the fire.	
<p>The L/RMP will define and identify fire’s role in the ecosystem. The response to an ignition is guided by the strategies and objectives outlined in the L/RMP and/or the Fire Management Plan.</p> <p>Values to be protected from and/or enhanced by wildland fire are defined in the L/RMP and/or the Fire Management Plan.</p> <p>L/RMP and fire management planning is coordinated across jurisdictional boundaries.</p>	<p>FMP’s assist in developing the management response to meet L/RMP objectives in designated Fire Management Units (FMU).</p> <p>Fire management strategies will consider current landscape conditions and spatial and temporal components of the fire regime.</p> <p>Responses to wildland fires will be coordinated across jurisdictional boundaries.</p>

<b>Policy Statement</b>	
<b>Management Intent</b>	<b>Implementation Actions</b>
<b>4. Use of Wildland Fire</b>	
Wildland fire will be used to protect, maintain, and enhance resources and, as nearly as possible, be allowed to function in its natural ecological role. Use of fire will be based on L/RMP and associated Fire Management Plans and will follow specific prescriptions contained in operational plans.	
<p>Use planned and unplanned ignitions to achieve land and resource management goals. Fire management is one tool in the restoration process and should be integrated with other land management activities.</p> <p>Preference will be given for natural ignitions to be managed in meeting the role of fire as an ecological process.</p> <p>Decision support process encourages strategies to manage fire to restore and maintain the natural fire regime where safe and possible.</p>	<p>Incident objectives will identify resource objectives for wildfires managed to achieve resource objectives.</p> <p>Beneficial accomplishments will be measured through specific quantified objectives.</p>
<b>5. Rehabilitation and Restoration</b>	
Rehabilitation and restoration efforts will be undertaken to protect and sustain ecosystems, public health and safety, and to help communities protect infrastructure.	
<p>Conduct emergency stabilization of burned areas such that no further harm is done.</p> <p>Probability of success will be evaluated for rehabilitation and restoration efforts.</p>	<p>Burned areas will be assessed to determine suitable and effective emergency stabilization and rehabilitation needs to meet current and anticipated environmental conditions.</p> <p>Rehabilitation and restoration activities will be evaluated to assess effectiveness of treatments.</p>
<b>6. Protection Priorities</b>	
The protection of human life is the single, overriding priority. Setting priorities among protecting human communities and community infrastructure, other property and improvements, and natural and cultural resources will be done based on the values to be protected, human health and safety, and the costs of protection. Once people have been committed to an incident, these human resources become the highest value to be protected.	
<p>Resources are allocated nationally, geographically, and locally based on protection priorities.</p> <p>Protection of human life overrides all other priorities should response capability limits be reached.</p> <p>Local protection priorities are established in the L/RMP and/or FMP.</p>	<p>NMAC establishes national protection priorities considering maintenance of initial attack capability; protection of communities, infrastructure, property, cultural and natural resources; costs; local agency objectives; and national response framework and tasking.</p> <p>Geographic and local area coordination groups will establish a process to set protection priorities.</p> <p>The Agency Administrator will convey protection priorities, based on the L/RMP and FMP, to the geographic and national groups through an incident status report and ensure that protection priorities are known and carried out by the incident commander(s).</p>



<b>Policy Statement</b>	
<b>Management Intent</b>	<b>Implementation Actions</b>
<p><b>9. Science</b></p> <p>Fire Management Plans and programs will be based on a foundation of sound science. Research will support ongoing efforts to increase our scientific knowledge of biological, physical, and sociological factors. Information needed to support fire management will be developed through an integrated interagency fire science program. Scientific results must be made available to managers in a timely manner and must be used in the development of land management plans, Fire Management Plans, and implementation plans.</p>	
<p>Increase the body of scientific knowledge and understanding about fire management programs through the development of management tools and transfer of knowledge to practitioners and decision makers.</p> <p>Social sciences are a part of the research need.</p>	<p>Agencies will integrate science in planning and monitoring processes.</p> <p>Agencies will coordinate fire-related research to improve fire management program capability.</p> <p>Agencies will emphasize applied science including fire and fuels, physics, social science, and operations research areas.</p> <p>Agencies will seek to improve decision support tools through updated data sets and advances in technology.</p>
<p><b>10. Preparedness</b></p> <p>Agencies will ensure their capability to provide safe, cost-effective fire management programs in support of land and resource management plans through appropriate planning, staffing, training, equipment, and management oversight.</p>	
<p>Recognize that particular budget processes and external influences will affect capability and capacity.</p> <p>Size the organization to meet realistic and sustainable management objectives by effective preparedness planning on an interagency basis.</p> <p>Realize efficiencies by incorporating other federal, tribal, state, and local agencies and nongovernmental organizations to meet peak demands for resources.</p> <p>Preseason agreements are an integral part of preparedness.</p>	<p>Agencies will identify and realign organizational staffing and equipment mixes to implement a safe and cost effective fire management program that meets the fire management guidance identified in the L/RMP.</p> <p>Agencies will develop a common process for determining budget needs and cost sharing for all aspects of fire management operations.</p> <p>Implement training program to meet staffing levels (qualification requirements) with the emphasis on managing fires for both protection and resource management objectives.</p> <p>Agencies will develop agreements to efficiently utilize other federal, state, local, and non governmental resources.</p>

<b>Policy Statement</b>	
<b>Management Intent</b>	<b>Implementation Actions</b>
<b>11. Suppression</b>	
Wildland fires are suppressed at minimum cost, considering firefighter and public safety, benefits, and values to be protected, consistent with resource objectives.	
Suppression considerations will be addressed in L/RMP and FMP's.  Notwithstanding protection of life, the cost of suppression, emergency stabilization and rehabilitation must be commensurate with values to be protected.	Use a decision support process to assess conditions, analyze risk and document decisions.  Predictive services products will be used to support pre-positioning resources.  Agencies will coordinate staffing levels through common trend analysis of environmental indicators
<b>12. Prevention</b>	
Agencies will work together and with their partners and other affected groups and individuals to prevent unauthorized ignition of wildfires.	
Prevention focuses on the activities needed to reduce human-caused ignitions.  Prevention includes mitigating risks and loss to ecosystems and communities.	Agencies will work with all partners to develop and implement risk assessment, prevention, and mitigation plans to reduce the frequency of wildfires due to human-caused ignitions..
<b>13. Standardization</b>	
Agencies will use compatible planning processes, funding mechanisms, training and qualification requirements, operational procedures, values-to-be-protected methodologies, and public education programs for all fire management activities.	
All processes are compatible and transparent so that individuals from cooperating agencies (federal, tribal, state, and local) can more effectively work together.  Enhance public and cooperator understanding of wildland fire management processes.	To the extent possible, agencies will use common standards in all aspects of fire management programs so that planning and budgeting methodologies applied in one situation will provide the same results in similar circumstances.  Agencies will develop and implement common operational field guidance and operational procedures to deal with all aspects of fire management operations.  Agencies will streamline interagency transfer of funds to reduce fiscal inconsistencies.
<b>14. Interagency Cooperation and Coordination</b>	
Fire management planning, preparedness, prevention, suppression, fire use, restoration and rehabilitation, monitoring, research, and education will be conducted on an interagency basis with the involvement of cooperators and partners.	
Involve all participating agencies, federal, tribal, state, local, and non-governmental organizations in fire management activities.  Get everyone working in concert, rather than in opposition to each other.	Ensure that fire management program actions are implemented in collaboration with cooperators and affected partners with due consideration of all management objectives.  Agencies will engage cooperators and affected partners at the strategic, and program planning levels, as well as the tactical, program implementation level.

<b>Policy Statement</b>	
<b>Management Intent</b>	<b>Implementation Actions</b>
<b>15. Communication and Education</b>	
<p>Agencies will enhance knowledge and understanding of wildland fire management policies and practices through internal and external communication and education programs. These programs will be continuously improved through the timely and effective exchange of information among all affected agencies and organizations.</p>	
<p>Knowledge and understanding reach all personnel in the field, across agencies.</p> <p>Develop and provide consistent communication, education and outreach with shared messages for the public and internal staff.</p> <p>Have a public that understands the risk, benefits and complexity of wildland fire management.</p>	<p>Develop a consistent and uniform message using common terminology on importance and role of wildland fire in natural resource management.</p> <p>Develop understanding with the public on what we're trying accomplish with fire management.</p> <p>Build understanding with the public on their role when living and recreating in fire prone ecosystems.</p>
<b>16. Agency Administrator and Employee Roles</b>	
<p>Agency administrators will ensure that their employees are trained, certified, and made available to participate in the wildland fire program locally, regionally, and nationally as the situation demands. Employees with operational, administrative, or other skills will support the wildland fire program as necessary. Agency administrators are responsible and will be held accountable for making employees available.</p>	
<p>Employees participate in wildland fire operations to obtain understanding, expand capabilities, and increase organizational capacity.</p> <p>Assure that we maximize use of the local workforce for efficiencies of knowledge, cost and involvement.</p> <p>Maintain a competent and capable workforce to implement the wildland fire management program to include fuels, aviation, suppression, planning, monitoring, research, communication, finance, etc.</p>	<p>Agency administrators will train, qualify, and certify available personnel for local fire needs and interagency fire management priorities.</p> <p>Agencies will consider adjustment of annual performance expectations based on employee and program contribution to the fire effort.</p>
<b>17. Evaluation</b>	
<p>Agencies will develop and implement a systematic method of evaluation to determine effectiveness of projects through implementation of the 2001 Federal Fire Policy. The evaluation will assure accountability, facilitate resolution of areas of conflict, and identify resource shortages and agency priorities.</p>	
<p>Use adaptive management process to evaluate and improve the fire management program at all levels.</p> <p>Provide a formal review process to monitor and evaluate performance, suggest revisions, and make necessary adaptations to the implementation guidance at all organizational levels on a regular basis.</p>	<p>Conduct interagency, internal and periodic reviews of the fire management program (all agencies) to determine: 1) consistency of policy implementation; 2) effectiveness of interagency coordination; 3) progress towards ecosystem sustainability; 4) cost management; 5) safety.</p>

# Appendices

## Appendix A: Glossary

The hierarchy of terminology will be those defined in law, those defined in policy, those defined in this guidance and then all other agency and interagency documentation. The NWCG Glossary of Wildland Fire Terminology will be maintained as the source of record.

**Controlled burn** – synonymous with Prescribed Fire.

**Escaped Prescribed Fire** – a prescribed fire that has exceeded or is expected to exceed prescription parameters or otherwise meets the criteria for conversion to wildfire. Criteria is specified in “Interagency Prescribed Fire – Planning and Implementation Procedures Reference Guide”.

**Fire Management Plan (FMP)** – a plan that identifies and integrates all wildland fire management and related activities within the context of approved land/resource management plans. It defines a program to manage wildland fires (wildfire and prescribed fire). The plan is supplemented by operational plans, including but not limited to preparedness plans, preplanned dispatch plans, prescribed fire burn plans and prevention plans. Fire Management Plan’s assure that wildland fire management goals and components are coordinated.

**Initial Action** – the actions taken by the first resources to arrive at a wildfire.

**Land/Resource Management Plan (L/RMP)** – a document prepared with public participation and approved by an agency administrator that provides general guidance and direction for land and resource management activities for an administrative area. The L/RMP identifies the need for fire’s role in a particular area and for a specific benefit. The objectives in the L/RMP provide the basis for the development of fire management objectives and the fire management program in the designated area.

**Planned Ignition** –the intentional initiation of a wildland fire by hand-held, mechanical or aerial device where the distance and timing between ignition lines or points and the sequence of igniting them is determined by environmental conditions (weather, fuel, topography), firing technique, and other factors which influence fire behavior and fire effects (see prescribed fire).

**Prescribed Fire**—is a wildland fire originating from a planned ignition to meet specific objectives identified in a written, approved, prescribed fire plan for which NEPA requirements (where applicable) have been met prior to ignition (see planned ignition).

**Protection** - the actions taken to limit the adverse environmental, social, political, and economical effects of fire (FEC Briefing Paper, 3/14/2008).

**Response to wildland fire** - the mobilization of the necessary services and responders to a fire based on ecological, social, and legal consequences, the circumstances under which a fire occurs,



and the likely consequences on firefighter and public safety and welfare, natural and cultural resources, and values to be protected.

**Suppression** - all the work of extinguishing a fire or confining fire spread.

**Unplanned Ignition** – the initiation of a wildland fire by lightning, volcanoes, unauthorized and accidental human-caused fires (see wildfire).

**Use of Wildland Fire** - management of either wildfire or prescribed fire to meet resource objectives specified in Land/Resource Management Plans.

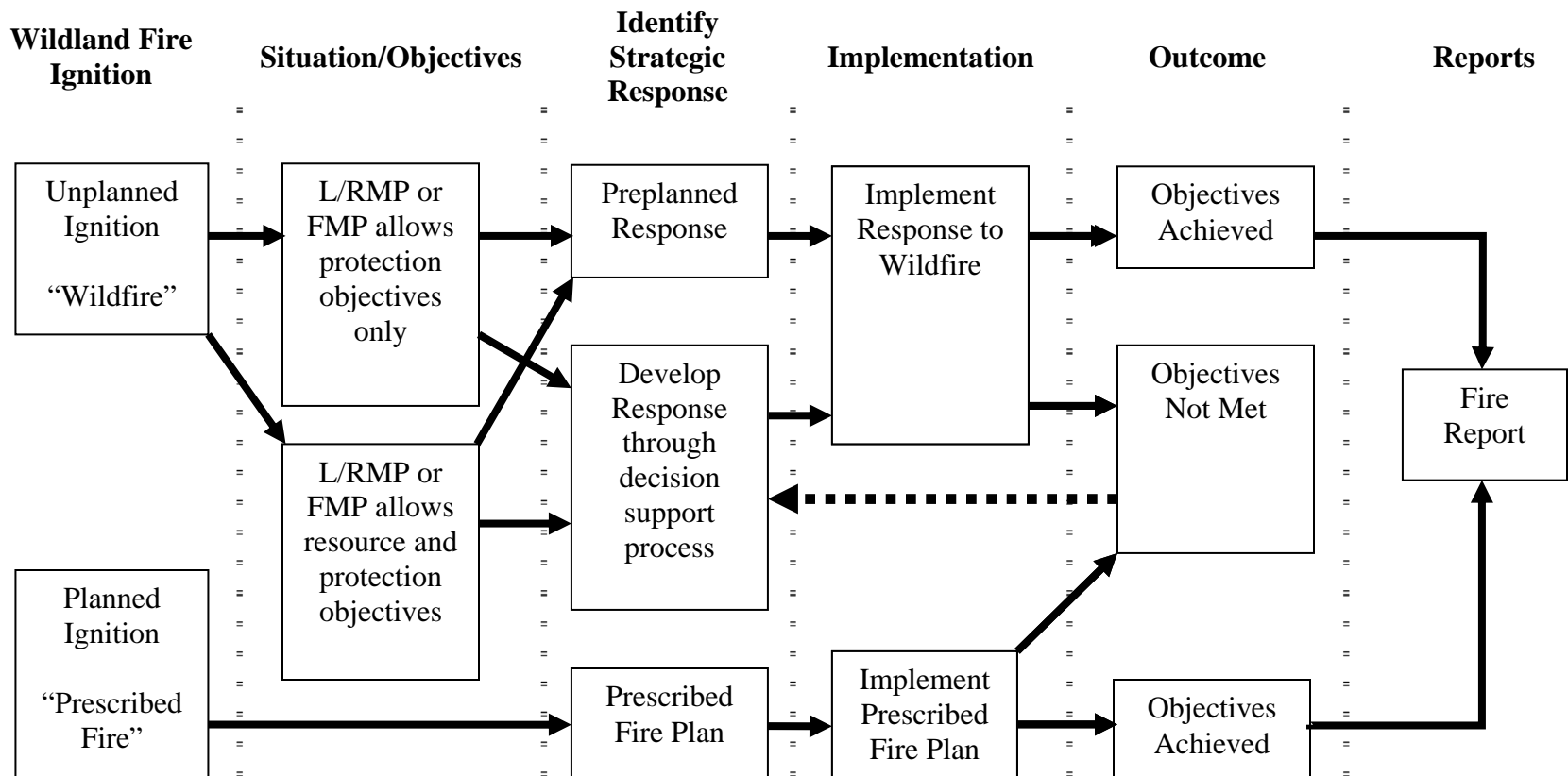
**Wildfire** – unplanned ignition of a wildland fire (such as a fire caused by lightning, volcanoes, unauthorized and accidental human-caused fires) and escaped prescribed fires.  
(See unplanned ignition and escaped prescribed fire).

**Wildland Fire** – a general term describing any non-structure fire that occurs in the wildland.

**Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)** – The line, area, or zone where structures and other human development meet or intermingle with undeveloped wildland or vegetation fuels.

## Appendix B: Wildland Fire Flowchart

This chart depicts, in general, the process to be taken given an ignition, regardless of source. Management actions depend on the provisions in the approved Land, Resource and Fire Management Plan and/or Fire Management Plan for an area. This chart is generally applicable to most agencies' fire management programs. However, specific exceptions may exist.



## Appendix C: What Changed 2004 to 2009

The following provide some of the significant modifications that were made to the guidance in the “Interagency Strategy for the Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy (2004)” in drafting the “Guidance for Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy (2009).” To simplify the discussion the “Interagency Strategy for the Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy (2004)” will be referred to as “Strategy” and the “Guidance for Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy (2009)” will be referred to as “Guidance”.

Strategy: Provided seven operational clarification statements

Guidance: Provides nine statements of guidance for implementation.

Strategy: Operational Clarification statement 1) “Only one management objective will be applied to a wildland fire. Wildland fires will either be managed for resource benefits or suppressed. A wildland fire cannot be managed for both objectives concurrently. If two wildland fires converge, they will be managed as a single wildland fire.”

Guidance: “A wildland fire may be concurrently managed for one or more objectives and objectives can change as the fire spreads across the landscape. Objectives are affected by changes in fuels, weather, topography; varying social understanding and tolerance; and involvement of other governmental jurisdictions having different missions and objectives.”

Strategy: Operational Clarification statement 2) “Human caused wildland fires will be suppressed in every instance and will not be managed for resource benefits.

Guidance: “Initial action on human-caused wildfire will be to suppress the fire at the lowest cost with the fewest negative consequences with respect to firefighter and public safety.”

Strategy: Operational Clarification statement 3) “Once a wildland fire has been managed for suppression objectives, it may never be managed for resource benefit objectives.”

Guidance: “A wildland fire may be concurrently managed for one or more objectives and objectives can change as the fire spreads across the landscape. Objectives are affected by changes in fuels, weather, topography; varying social understanding and tolerance; and involvement of other governmental jurisdictions having different missions and objectives.”

Strategy: Operational Clarification statement 4) “The Appropriate Management Response (AMR) is any specific action suitable to meet Fire Management Unit (FMU) objectives. Typically, the AMR ranges across a spectrum of tactical options (from monitoring to intensive management actions). The AMR is developed by using FMU strategies and objectives identified in the Fire Management Plan.”

Guidance: The term Appropriate Management Response is removed from implementation guidance with “Response to Wildland Fire” as the policy area defining the actions for managing a wildland fire.

Strategy: Operational Clarification statement 5) “The Wildland Fire Situation Analysis process is used to determine and document the suppression strategy from the full range of responses available for suppression operations. Suppression strategies are designed to meet the policy objectives of suppression.”

Guidance: “Managers will use a decision support process to guide and document wildfire management decisions. The process will provide situational assessment, analyze hazards and risk, define implementation actions, and document decisions and rationale for those decisions.”

Strategy: Operational Clarification statement 6) “Wildland fire use is the result of a natural event. The Land/Resource Management Plan, or the Fire Management Plan, will identify areas where the strategy of wildland fire use is suitable. The Wildland Fire Implementation Plan (WFIP) is the tool that examines the available response strategies to determine if a fire is being considered for wildland fire use.”

Guidance: “Managers will use a decision support process to guide and document wildfire management decisions. The process will provide situational assessment, analyze hazards and risk, define implementation actions, and document decisions and rationale for those decisions.”

Strategy: Operational Clarification statement 7) “When a prescribed fire or a fire designated for wildland fire use is no longer achieving the intended resource management objectives and contingency or mitigation actions have failed, the fire will be declared a wildfire. Once a wildfire, it cannot be returned to a prescribed fire or wildland fire use status.”

Guidance: “Managers will use a decision support process to guide and document wildfire management decisions. The process will provide situational assessment, analyze hazards and risk, define implementation actions, and document decisions and rationale for those decisions.”

Strategy: Policy Implementation Flowchart

Guidance: Updated Appendix F: Wildland Fire Flowchart from Review and Update of the 1995 Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy (2001) to reflect implementation terminology of planned and unplanned ignitions. (See Appendix B)