Gila National Forest
Fire Management Plan
2008

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Firefighter and public safety is the <u>principle</u> consideration on every wildland fire response.

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SECTION I - INTRODUCTION

I.   **Purpose**

This 2008 Fire Management Plan formally documents the implementation of the fire management program for the approved Gila National Forest Plan 1986. It provides specific details of the fire program that most efficiently meets fire management direction for the planning period, including organization, facilities, equipment, activities, timing, locations, and related costs. Each year adjustments are made in the plan to reflect changes in annual planning processes. This document is a working reference for fire program management.

This plan was developed for all areas subject to wildland fires on the Gila National Forest in compliance with the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy and Program Review, the Wildland and Prescribed Fire Management Policy and Implementation Procedures Reference Guide Forest Service Manual (FSM 5101, 5103, 5106, 5108), and to meet the requirements of (FSM) 5121.2 and Forest Service Handbook 5109.19, 50.3.

II.   **Collaboration**

Many sources were included in the development of the Gila National Forest Plan 1986. Comments were received from the public, USFS employees, other agencies, and tribal relations. The Gila National Forest Plan 1986 was consulted in development of this document.

Collaboration in the development and planning of fire and fuels related projects occurs with interested and affected Local, County, State, and other Federal Agencies and Private Individuals and Organizations. The Forest collaborates continually with the local County Commissioners in support of the development and maintenance of their County Fire Plans.

With the introduction of Fire Program Analysis (FPA) the Forest has begun collaboration with all represented Federal, State, and Local agencies with our designated Fire Planning Unit (FPU). The list of agencies includes but may not be limited to:

- Bureau of Land Management
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- National Park Service

- Bureau of Reclamation
- State of New Mexico Forestry Department.

III.   **Link to Policy**

This plan is a detailed program of action to carry out fire management policies and will provide direction to achieve resource and fire management objectives as defined in the Gila Nation Forest Plan, approved 1986, amended 2005. This current Fire Management Plan has been re-written to comply with the new direction as stated in FSH 5109.19, Chapter 50. This plan takes into account the concept of interagency relationships.

IV. Link to Land and Resource Management Planning

The Fire Management Plan follows the goals and objectives identified in the Gila National Forest Plan 1986. The Forest Plan meets the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements as well as other State and Federal regulatory requirements.

V. Authorities

FSM 5101 describes the authority for fire management activities on National Forest System Lands.

FSM 5108 lists pertinent references for guidance on the minimum standards and procedures for wildland fire management.

VI. Acronyms Used in the Fire Management Plan Format

FMU- Fire Management Unit
FMZ- Fire Management Zone
FMA- Fire Management Analysis Area
MMA- Maximum Manageable Area
NAAQS- National Ambient Air Quality Standard
FSH- Forest Service Handbook
FSM- Forest Service Manual

LRMP- Forest Land and Resource Management Plan
T&E- Threatened and Endangered Species
WFIP- Wildland Fire Implementation Plan
WFSA- Wildland Fire Situation Analysis

SECTION II – RELATIONSHIP TO LAND MANAGEMENT PLANNING AND FIRE POLICY

I.   Documents used to develop this Fire Management Plan:

- Land Management Plan, Correction of June 2000, Gila National Forest
- Environmental Assessment, Biological Assessment and Evaluation 1994, Biological Opinion and Decision Notice associated, Gila National Forest
- Forest Service Manual (FSM) 5100
- Forest Service Handbook (FSH) 5109
- The National Fire Plan, August 2000
- Gila National Forest, 1999 NFMAS Analysis, FY 2000
- Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations ("The Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations "-2007)
- Wildland Fire Use, Implementation Procedures Reference Guide, May 2006 Minor Revisions March and April 2006
- Interagency Prescribed Fire, Planning and implementation Procedures Reference Guide, September 2006
- Federal Review and Update of the 1995 Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy and Program Review, January 2001   - 7 -
- Healthy Forests Restoration Act, 2003
- Interagency Strategy for the Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy, June 20, 2003
- Gila National Forest Wildland Fire Use Guide, 2005
- Restoring the Functionality of Fire Adapted Ecosystems, Gila National Forest, An Assessment of Reference and Current Conditions of Vegetation and Disturbance Regimes of the Gila National Forest, New Mexico (draft)

II.   Management Policies Concerning Fire Management

The following laws and policies address or affect fire management direction and program guidance:

- Mexican Spotted Owl – Region-wide Standard and Guidelines
- Northern Goshawk – Region-wide Standard and Guidelines
- 1995 Review and 2001 update - Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy
- Interagency Strategy for the Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy
- National Environmental Policy Act
- The Endangered Species Act, 1973
- Region 3 Supplement to FSM 5140, 5100-2000-1, Effective date December 22, 2000
- A Collaborative Approach for Reducing Wildland Fire Risks to Communities and the Environment: 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy, May 2002
- Managing the Impact of Wildfires on Communities and the Environment; A Report to the President
- Wildland Fire Use, Implementation Procedures Reference Guide, May 2006 Minor Revisions March and April 2006

The 2001 Federal Fire Management Policy (updated from 1995 policy) and the Gila National Forest Plan (1986 with 2000 amendments) are the guiding policies for fire management on the Gila National Forest.

The 2001 Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy directs Federal agencies to achieve a balance between suppression to protect life, property, and resources, and fire use to regulate fuels and maintain healthy ecosystems. The policy provides nine guiding principles that are fundamental to the success of the Federal Wildland Fire Management program:

- Firefighter and public safety is the first priority in all fire management activities.
- The role of wildland fire as an essential ecological process and natural change agent is incorporated into the planning process.
- Fire management plans, programs, and activities support land management plans and their implementation.
- Sound risk management is a foundation for all fire management activities.
- Fire management programs and activities are economically viable, based upon values to be protected, costs, and land and resource management objectives.
- Fire management plans and activities are based on the best available science.
- Fire management plans and activities incorporate public health and environmental quality considerations.
- Federal, State, tribal, local, interagency, and international coordination and cooperation are essential.
- Standardization of policies and procedures among federal agencies is an ongoing objective.

III. 2001 Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy:

1. Safety
Firefighter and public safety is the first priority. All Fire Management Plans and activities must reflect this commitment.

2. Fire Management and Ecosystem Sustainability
The full range of fire management activities will be used to help achieve ecosystem sustainability, including its interrelated ecological, economic, and social components.

3. Response to Wildland Fire
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 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 management response to the fire.

4. Use of Wildland Fire
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 approved Fire Management Plans and will follow specific prescriptions contained in operational plans.

5. Rehabilitation and Restoration
Rehabilitation and restoration efforts will be undertaken to protect and sustain ecosystems, public health, and safety, and to help communities protect infrastructure.

6. Protection Priorities

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 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.

7. Wildland Urban Interface

The operational roles of federal agencies as partners in the Wildland Urban Interface are wildland firefighting, hazardous fuels reduction, cooperative prevention and education, and technical assistance. Structural fire suppression is the responsibility of tribal, State, or local governments. Federal agencies may assist with exterior structural protection activities under formal Fire Protection Agreements that specify the mutual responsibilities of the partners, including funding. (Some federal agencies have full structural protection authority for their facilities on lands they administer, and may also enter into formal agreements to assist State and local governments with full structural protection.)

8. Planning

Every area with burnable vegetation must have an approved Fire Management Plan. Fire Management Plans are strategic plans that define a program to manage wildland and prescribed fires based on the area's approved land management plan. Fire Management Plans must provide for firefighter and public safety; include fire management strategies, tactics, and alternatives; address values to be protected and public health issues; and be consistent with resource management objective, activities of the area, and environmental laws and regulations.

9. Science

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.

10. Preparedness

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.

11. Suppression

Fires are suppressed at minimum cost, considering firefighter and public safety, benefits, and values to be protected, consistent with resource objectives.

12. Prevention

Agencies will work together with local partners and other affected groups and individuals to prevent unauthorized ignition of wildland fires.

13. Standardization

Agencies will use compatible planning processes, funding mechanisms, training and qualification requirements, operational procedures, value-to-be-protected methodologies, and public education programs for all fire management activities.

14. Interagency Cooperation and Coordination

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.

15. Communication and Education

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.

16. Agency Administrators and Employee Roles

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.

17. Evaluation

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.

18. FSM 5103

a. Integrate consideration of fire management into Forest land and resource management plan (Forest plan) objectives, prescriptions, and practices. When developing fire management direction in the forest plan, identify the foreseeable effects of fire on environmental, social, and economic conditions and outputs. Identify a range of protection levels and fire use alternatives. Estimate the economic and social effects based on analysis that incorporates consideration of commodity, non-commodity, and social values.

b. Develop a fire management plan based on direction in land and resource management plans and interagency plans and assessments. Amend Forest plans where necessary to meet fire management objectives. Use the best available science to assess and plan on a landscape scale, across agency boundaries.

c. Conduct fire management planning, preparedness, suppression, monitoring, and research, and fire use on an interagency basis and involve affected partners. Integrate with forest planning whenever possible.

d. Observe these fire management priorities on all fires: first, ensure firefighter and public safety; and, second, protect property and natural and cultural resources based on the relative values to be protected.

e. Designate a prescribed fire, or a wildland fire managed for resource benefits, as a wildfire, when it exceeds, or is anticipated to exceed, one or more prescription parameters. Once a fire has been declared a wildfire, it may not be redesignated either as a prescribed fire or as a wildland fire managed for resource benefits.

f. Do not manage human-caused wildland fires to achieve resource benefits.

IV.   The Endangered Species Act, 1973

The regulations for implementing the Act call for expedited consultation during fire emergencies. Section 7 regulations recognize that an emergency (natural disaster or other calamity) may require expedited consultation (50 CFR &402.05). Chapter 8.1 of the <u>Fish and Wildlife Service Consultation Handbook</u> outlines procedures for protecting Endangered species while handling situations such as wildland fires.
"Where emergency actions are required that may affect listed species and/or critical habitats, a Federal agency may not have the time for the administrative work required by the consultation regulation under non-emergency conditions. Emergency consultations should be handled with as much understanding of the action agency's critical mission as possible while ensuring that anticipated actions will not violate sections 7(a) (2) or 7(d). Emergency consultation procedures allow action agencies to incorporate endangered species concerns into their actions during the response to an emergency."

Chapter 8.2 of the *Handbook* makes clear the Fish and Wildlife Service's approach to emergency situations:

". . . During this initial contact, or soon thereafter, the Service's role is to offer recommendation to minimize the effects of the emergency response action on listed species or their critical habitat (the informal consultation phase)".

(Additional details on the emergency consultation process can be found at the following website: http://endangered.fws.gov/consultations/s7hndbk/ch5-9.pdf)

V. The National Fire Plan, August 2000

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. Congress then mandated the implementation of the National Fire Plan through its appropriation action and written direction. Five key objectives were identified in the National Fire Plan, Managing the Impacts of Wildfires on Communities and the Environment: A Report to the President in Response to the Wildfires of 2000:

1. **Firefighting**. Ensure adequate preparedness for future fire seasons.
2. **Rehabilitation and Restoration**. Restore landscapes and rebuild communities damaged by wildfire.
3. **Hazardous Fuel Reduction.** Reduce fuels in wildland areas at risk from uncharacteristic fire effects, especially near communities. Invest in projects to reduce fire risk.
4. **Community Assistance**. Work directly with communities to ensure adequate protection.
5. **Accountability**. Be accountable and establish adequate oversight, coordination, program development, and monitoring for results.

VI. Forest Wide Desired Condition, Goals, and Objectives

Forest wide goals related to fire as described by the Gila National Forest Plan 1986. The Forest Plan and its Amendments were developed to reduce the risks of uncharacteristic wildland fires while recognizing that fire, alone or in combination with other tools, is appropriate and desirable in many areas of the forest. The plan also acknowledges that there are areas or conditions on the Forest where fire effects are undesirable or should be limited to meet social, economic, or in some cases, biophysical resource concerns. It is a primary objective of Region 3 to restore functionality to fire adapted ecosystems; provide for a variety of condition classes while reducing the threat of severe wildfire; work with resource professionals to establish baseline needs for management indicator species, Region 3 sensitive species, and all federally protected species; implement standards and guidelines outlined in Species Recovery Plans and the Gila National Forest Plan; and to establish species specific guidelines with resource professional input where necessary. The end result and desired condition would exist when there is minimum impact to air, water, soil and species at risk, by the natural range of variables and fire return intervals have been reestablished.

VII. Forest-Wide Desired Conditions

The Gila National Forest Plan Land Management Area (FLMA) addresses specific standards and guidelines for each management area. A Forest Plan revision began at the end of Fiscal Year 2007.

1. Prescribed fire and wildland fire use are tools to achieve and maintain desired vegetative conditions and fuel loadings.
2. Fire plays its natural role where appropriate and desirable, but is actively suppressed where necessary to protect life, investments, and valuable resources.
3. Fire operates within historical fire regimes appropriate to the vegetation type and management objectives

VIII. Forest-Wide Goals

1. Firefighter and public safety is the priority in all fire management activities.
2. Fire is allowed to play its natural role where appropriate and desirable to reduce the risk of uncharacteristic wildland fires.
3. Fire, alone or with other management activities, is used to restore or maintain desirable plant community attributes including fuel levels, as well as ecological processes.
4. Fire is used alone or with other management activities to treat natural and activity fuels to a level that reduces the risk of uncharacteristic or undesirable wildland fires.
5. Life, investments, and valuable resource are protected through appropriate vegetation, fuel, and wildland fire management.
6. Land managers are encouraged to participate in partnerships with citizens and community centered approaches to manage fire risks and hazards in wildland/urban interface areas.
7. Smoke is managed to provide for desirable air quality and visibility while achieving land management objectives.

IX. Forest-Wide Objectives

1. Reduce fire fighter and public injuries and loss of life, and damage to communities from severe, unplanned and unwanted wildland fires by prioritizing fire fighter, public, and community safety above other concerns in fire management activities.
2. During project planning, identify appropriate areas where prescribed fire could be used to meet management objectives. These areas may include intermingled landownership, and areas of concentrated investments, structures, or other resource concerns.
3. Following identification of areas where wildland fire use is appropriate within management areas, aggregate common areas between management areas to fully describe the extent of wildland fire use implementation areas to be included in the Fire Management Plan. Develop the necessary implementation information for the areas and include in the Fire Management Plan.
4. Continue to identify high fire hazard areas in wildland/urban interface areas. Develop and prioritize vegetation treatment plans in coordination with local and tribal governments, agencies, and landowners to reduce the risk from wildland fire.
5. Enhance public awareness of the fundamental importance of fire through educational programs about the role of fire in the ecosystem.
6. Coordinate vegetation management activities and partnership opportunities with local land managers and owners for wildland fire suppression, wildland fire use, and prescribed fire.

Restoration of fire adapted ecosystems:

The objective is to allow fire to play its natural role in the ecosystem, consistent with safety of persons, property, and other resources. Fire is used to maintain a wide variety of plant communities; perpetuate the natural ecosystem; permit natural fire to once again become a component of the ecosystem; and enhance forest values through perpetuation of natural conditions, thereby reducing the risks and consequences of wildland fire within the forest. The intent of the Forest Plan is to allow fire use for resource benefit. (GNFP page 39.P08) and (Page 43.P01, P12). For the Management Area Direction for each Management Area, see the Gila National Forest Plan (1986).

SECTION III – WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

I. General Management Considerations

There is a broad range of considerations while achieving the wildland fire management program goals listed below. Fire fighter and pubic safety is the primary consideration. Other considerations while managing wildland fire and fuels include:

- Public information and involvement
- Cooperator coordination
- Forest Service Policy
- Collaborative processes
- Information, marketing and education of the wildland fire environment

Wildland fire will be managed to meet the goals and objectives set forth in the Gila National Forest Plan, the core principles of the 10-year Comprehensive Strategy, and the National Fire Policy Plan.

Annual coordination occurs among agencies in order to establish guidance for the management of fire use events that may impact each other's lands.

The Forest has agreements and MOU's with other agencies and private landowners within the SDC Zone for the management of fire on Forest boundary lands. The 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy was developed to address the risk of wildland fire to communities and the environment as a result of a "high level of growth in the wildland urban interface that is placing citizens and property at risk from wildland fire . . . ."

Additionally, the Strategy recognizes the following:

> *". . . many of the past century's traditional approaches to land management, the development of unnaturally dense, diseased or dying forests, and treatment of wildland fire have contributed to more severe wildland fires and created widespread threats to communities and ecosystems. Millions of acres of land nationwide are presently classified as being at high risk from wildland fire." General Management Considerations*

This Strategy includes goals, guiding principles, performance measures, and implementation tasks in which the Secretaries, Governors, Tribes, local officials, and other endorsers emphasize a unified national commitment to reduce the risk of wildland fire across the landscape. They also understand the need to cooperate with affected landowners.

The four goals of the 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy are:

1. Improve Fire Prevention and Suppression
2. Reduce Hazardous Fuels
3. Restore Fire-Adapted Ecosystems
4. Promote Community Assistance

Its three guiding principles are addressed through the 20 Communities Plan and the Healthy Forest Restoration Act. These are:

1. Priority setting that emphasizes the protection of communities and other high-priority watersheds at risk.
2. Collaboration among governments and broadly representative stakeholders.
3. Accountability through performance measures and monitoring for results.

To reduce the threat of wildland fire to people, communities, and ecosystems, the following are essential:

- Firefighter and public safety are the highest priority.
- A sustained, long-term, and cost-effective investment of resources by all public and private parties, recognizing overall budget parameters affecting Federal, State, Tribal, and local governments.
- A unified effort to implement the collaborative framework called for in the Strategy in a manner that ensures timely decisions at each level.
- Accountability for measuring and monitoring performance and outcomes and a commitment to factoring findings into future decision making activities.
- The achievement of national goals through action at the local level with particular attention to the unique needs of cross-boundary efforts and the importance of funding on-the-ground activities.
- Communities and individuals in the wildland urban interface to initiate personal stewardship and volunteer actions that will reduce wildland fire risks.
- Active management, both in the wildland-urban interface and in at-risk areas across the border landscape
- Active forest and rangeland management, including thinning that produces commercial or pre-commercial products, biomass removal and utilization, prescribed fire and other fuels reduction tools to simultaneously meet long-term ecological, economic, and community objectives.

II.   Wildland Fire Management Goals

The following are goals identified in the Gila National Forest Plan (1986):

- Achieve a program where firefighter and public safety is the highest priority in every fire management activity.
- Manage wildland fire and implement the use of prescribed fire wherever appropriate as tools to meet resource management objectives as described in the Gila National Forest Plan.
- Efficiently utilize fire management resources in an interagency setting with focus on reduced cost of operation for all cooperators.
- Maintain an efficient and effective organization for the suppression of wildland fires at a minimum cost consistent with the values at risk.

III.   Wildland Fire Management Options

The Gila National Forest Plan directs the appropriate management response. These include:

- Wildland Fire Suppression
- Wildland Fire Use
- Prescribed Fire
- Non-fire Applications

This section displays the scope of fire management program elements that will be implemented within the administrative unit and further developed through the Fire Management Plan. It includes the full range of options authorized under current policy.

i.   General Resource Concerns

Each management area identified in the Gila National Forest Plan has an inherent level of fire adapted ecosystem attributes that can benefit from fire use as well as resource concerns that can inhibit the probability of a successful outcome if fire is allowed to play its natural role. Three categories are used to describe the general level of resource concerns within management areas:

Blue Category   High level of resource concerns. The potential for successful application of wildland fire use may be limited.

Yellow Category   Low to Moderate level of resource concerns. The potential for successful application of wildland fire use is generally moderate.

White Category – Low level of resource concerns. The potential for successful application of wildland fire use is generally moderate to high.

Designated Wilderness (Gila, Aldo Leopold, Blue Range) and Proposed Wilderness are included in the categories where natural processes are encouraged.

ii.   State and Private lands

Defined as State and private lands adjacent to or intermingled with National Forest System lands. The jurisdictional agency or local cooperator will make the decision as to which appropriate management response to select in managing wildland fire occurring in these areas.

The following are the elements of the wildland fire management program on the Gila National Forest. They include all the options for managing wildland fire and fuels.

IV.   Wildland Fire

i.   Wildland fire suppression:

All wildland fire starts are sized up to determine fire cause, potential for spread and potential to cross-jurisdictional boundaries. A suppression response is implemented unless the fire is confirmed as a lightning start and is identified by the District/Forest Fire Duty Officer as a candidate Wildland Fire Use Incident.

The Forest Supervisor is responsible for establishing priorities and coordinating all fire management activities on the Forest. The management of the Forest fire program has been delegated to the Forest Fire Management Officer.

District Fire Management Officers manage all aspects of the fire management program in coordination with the responsible sub-unit Line Officer or Officers (District Ranger).

The Forest completed a draw down and up guide that will address how many resources that will be needed for initial attack and large fire support on the Forest. This guide will be tiered from the NFDRS plan that will have strong ties to Energy Release Component. This plan will be utilized as a guide by Forest and Districts to assist in Fire Management decisions concerning resource and duty officer roles and responsibilities. This plan will be utilized for the 2008 fire season as a tool and guide and be revalidated annually. (INSERT APPENDIX Enter NFDRS plan here.)

Types of organizations used by the Forest for fire suppression and related activities are:

Initial Attack	Type 4 and 5 incidents
Initial Management Group	Type 3 incidents
Incident Management Teams	Type 2 and 1 incidents
Fire Use Teams	Complex Fire Use
Burned Area Rehabilitation Team	Expanded Dispatch
Buying Teams	

A Burned Area Rehabilitation (BAER) Team may be used to evaluate impacts to resource values resulting from wildland fires as well as to design resource mitigation efforts. Rehabilitation actions required as a result of suppression activities are coordinated with key resource specialists separately from a BAER team.

Initial attack resources include hand crews, engines, helicopters, rappellers, smokejumpers, air tankers and local cooperating agencies resources. Initial attack resources staffed by participating agencies in the Gila / Las Cruces Interagency Fire Management Dispatch Zone are dispatched through the Silver City Dispatch Center based on the closest resources concept. Air tankers, smokejumpers and air attack resources are located at the Grant County Airport.

Wildland fire suppression management employs all the strategies available as defined by the appropriate management response. These strategies include, but are not limited to Confine, Contain and Control or a combination of these strategies. These strategies will always be implemented with firefighter and public safety as the primary determining factor.

ii.   Wildland fire use

As defined by the Gila National Forest Plan, implementation of wildland fire use to benefit resources will be allowed under prescriptive parameters. These prescriptive parameters are identified and located in the each Fire Management Unit (FMU) description located in the Appendix A of this plan. All human caused ignitions will be suppressed. This program will always use firefighter and public safety as the determining factor.

All wildland fire use planning and actions will be in accordance with the "Wildland Fire Use Implementation Procedures Reference Guide", May 2005, minor revisions March and April 2006, Minor correction May 2007. A copy of this Guide is located in the Reference Documents folder of Appendix B.

Declare a Wildland Fire Use a wildfire if;

- The fire exceeds or is anticipated to exceed the Maximum Manageable Area: or
- The fire is no longer achieving the intended resource management objectives; or
- The fire is exceeding established air quality thresholds; and
- The Fire Use Manager (FUM1, FUM2, or ICT4) (FSH 5109.17) determines that:
    - The situation cannot be mitigated with available resources within 48 hours.
    - Or the mitigation actions specified in the WFIP have failed.

A Wildland Fire Situation Analysis (WFSA) will then be prepared and the appropriate management action.

a.   Skills, Qualifications, and Organization

The skills, qualifications, and organization needed to manage a wildland fire use program vary depending on the fire situation. Individuals involved in Wildland Fire Implementation Plan (WFIP) development and daily revalidation should have completed the appropriate academic or on-the-job training listed below. The qualifications of personnel assigned to the fire from a cooperating agency will be accepted, provided the qualifications meet the requirements established in PMS 310.1 Wildland and Prescribed Fire Qualification System Guide.

During implementation, as fire activity and management needs escalate, implementation qualification needs ascend to a higher level. But as conditions moderate and management needs drop, implementation qualifications can descend to lower levels. Qualifications can descend back to an ICT4 after either Stage II or Stage III has been completed.

Line officers at the District or Forest Level are responsible for determining whether or not they will manage a natural ignition. If a "Go" decision is made, they will meet with the district ID Team to develop a WFIP. The Forest Fire Management Staff must be informed of decisions to manage wildland fires. The daily assessment will determine if the complexity has increased and transition to a FUM1 is necessary. Direct coordination with the Forest fire and resource staff is essential at this junction in the management process. Agency administrator or Fire Staff have the prerogative to direct the local unit to move up and complete the next or all WFIP stages for any or all wildland fires at any time.

As complexity increases, line officers should consider assigning a formal Fire Use Team. Indicators of increasing complexity include safety, the number of fires being managed, rate or number of acreage increases, anticipated severe or critical weather, increasing coordination needs, smoke issues, threatened resources, and logistical needs. Fire Use Management Teams (FUMT), Type I Incident Commanders, or

Type II Incident Commanders may be designated as FUMAs provided they meet the qualification standards. If a FUMA must be replaced or relieved, the line officer must designate a replacement at the same level of authority as made the initial FUMA assignment.

When the Planning Needs Assessment Chart indicates progression to a higher level and that stage of the WFIP is completed, the fire will be managed under that WFIP stage either for its duration or until the chart indicates a need to progress to the next higher level.

When needed, a Long-Term Fire Analyst (LTAN) or Fire Behavior Analyst (FBAN) will provide long-term fire behavior predictions, based on the best scientific process available. The LTAN, FBAN, or planning specialist used must have experience in long-term fire behavior predictions.

All planning and implementation actions must be based on a sound decision process and documented in the WFIP. Modeling runs must be validated by experienced fire personal on the ground.

iii.   **Line Officer Responsibility (Forest Supervisor and District Ranger)**

   a.   **Forest Supervisors are responsible for:**

- Integrating the role and use of fire.
- Approving or rejecting the Prescribed Fire Burn Plans and Wildland Fire Implementation Plans, and delegating this authority to District Rangers on the basis of qualification, experience, and demonstrated ability.
- Requesting approval for new prescribed fire and wildland fire use actions under National Preparedness Levels IV and V.
- Providing specific direction on fire use through annual approval of the Forest Fire Management Plan.
- Ensuring that the RxBP or WFIP, and the personnel implementing them, including contractors, meet Service wide and Regional requirements.
- Ensuring accomplishment reporting within 30 days of completion of fire use projects.
- The Forest Supervisor is responsible for conducting administrative reviews of all prescribed fires that are converted to wildfire status and that expend an estimate of less than $1,000,000 for suppression costs and property damage. Administrative reviews for prescribed fires that are converted to wildfire status and exceed $1,000,000 for suppression cost or could result in a tort claim determination are the responsibility of the Regional Forester.
- Reporting the administrative review results to the Regional Forester within 60 days after the prescribed fire was declared a wildfire.
- Reporting all wildfires resulting from fire use actions to the Regional Forester within 24 hours of the wildfire declaration.

   b.   **District Rangers (with official delegation form the Forest Supervisor) are responsible for:**

- Integrating the role and use of fire and establishing fire management direction to meet resource objectives in the Forest Land Management Plan.
- Under National Preparedness Level IV and V, requesting approval for new prescribed fire and wildland fire use actions.
- Ensuring that the RxBP or WFIP, and the personnel implementing them, including contractors, meet Servicewide and Regional requirements.

- Ensuring adequate oversight and status reporting of all prescribed or wildland fire use at the District level.
- Ensuring timely accomplishment reporting.
- Reporting all wildfires resulting from fire use actions to the Forest Supervisor within 12 hours of the wildfire declaration.

The Forest Supervisor is responsible for annual Certification of Abatement for the Gila National Forest. Of the 34 items addressed based upon the Thirtymile, South Canyon, and Cramer Fire Reviews, actual implementation is the responsibility of various fire personnel and line officers, with final certification provided by the Forest Supervisor. This abatement certification is to be completed at the end of each year and provided to the Regional Forester. The 2004 version of the Gila Certification of Abatement is located in the 30 Mile Reports folder in the Appendix D. (MAKE SURE THIS IS IN APPENDIX AND REVIED AT FMO MEETING)

c.   Forest Fire Duty Officer (FFMO or Acting)

The Forest Fire Duty Officer is responsible for assisting and advising the District Ranger and Forest Supervisor in the decision process for candidate wildland fire use fires.

d.   District Fire Duty Officer (FFMO, DFMO, AFMO or Acting)

The District Fire Duty Officer is responsible for assisting and advising the District Ranger in the decision process for candidate wildland fire use fires and for managing the transition of the wildland fire from initial response to either wildland fire use or suppression tactics. The District Duty officer will also ensure the coordination is complete with the Forest Fire Duty Officer and resource staff in the Supervisors office for Wildland Fire Use events.   They will also ensure that the assigned Fire Use Manager is transitioning all electronic files to the official shared files under the J drive in a timely fashion.

e.   Fire Use Manager (FUM1 or FUM2)

The Fire Use Manager is responsible for the development of the Wildland Fire Implementation Plan (WFIP), on site fire management operations, daily revalidation of the WFIP, any necessary revisions to the WFIP, and complying with provisions in the New Mexico Smoke Management Plan. They will also coordinate with the local duty officer to ensure all files are updated and forest coordination is taking place.

f.   Long-Term Fire Analyst (LTAN)

The Long-Term Fire Analyst has the responsibility to provide projections of fire spread based on current and expected conditions or average worse conditions, assist in the development of a Maximum Manageable Area (MMA) or validation of a preplanned MMA for Stage III of the Wildland Fire Implementation Plan, and prepare risk assessments when requested by the Fire Use Manager, Incident Commander, Line Officer(s), or Forest Fire Duty Officer.

g.   Wildland Fire Use Resource Specialists

Wildland Fire Use Resource Specialists are consulted in the Gila National Forest Stage I through III WFIP analysis and in the on-going management of a wildland fire use event. Specialists potentially involved include, but are not limited to: designated resource advisor, archeologist, public affairs officer, fisheries biologist, wildlife biologist, hydrologist, range management specialist, and fire operations personnel. Each FMU description identifies specific resources specialist needs.

V.   Fire Management Units

The Fire Management Units (FMUs) on the Gila National Forest were established based upon a combination of existing administrative boundaries, vegetation types, fire history and occurrence, risk to improvements and resources as defined by the Gila National Forest Plan. There are 2 separate FMUs on the Gila National Forest. Risks in the FMUs are separated into two categories: low and moderate. Within the FMUs, general resource concerns and specific risk are more defined.

i.   Gila National Forest Fire Management Units

There are 12 distinct FMUs on the Gila National Forest. FMU descriptions are updated annually by a combination of Forest and District resource personnel. Additional FMUs and their descriptions are located in the FMU folder of the Appendix.

Black Range RD
   FMU 1 – Black Range Moderate
   FMU 2 – Black Range Low

Quemado RD
   FMU 3 – Quemado Moderate
   FMU 4 – Quemado Low

Glenwood RD
   FMU 5 – Glenwood Moderate
   FMU 6 – Glenwood Low

Wilderness RD
   FMU 7 – Wilderness Moderate
   FMU 8 – Wilderness Low

Reserve RD
   FMU 9 – Reserve Moderate
   FMU 10 – Reserve Low

Silver City RD
   FMU 11 – Silver City Moderate
   FMU 12 – Silver City Low

Gila National Forest
Fire Management Units
DRAFT

Legend
District Boundaries
Moderate Complexity
Low Complexity
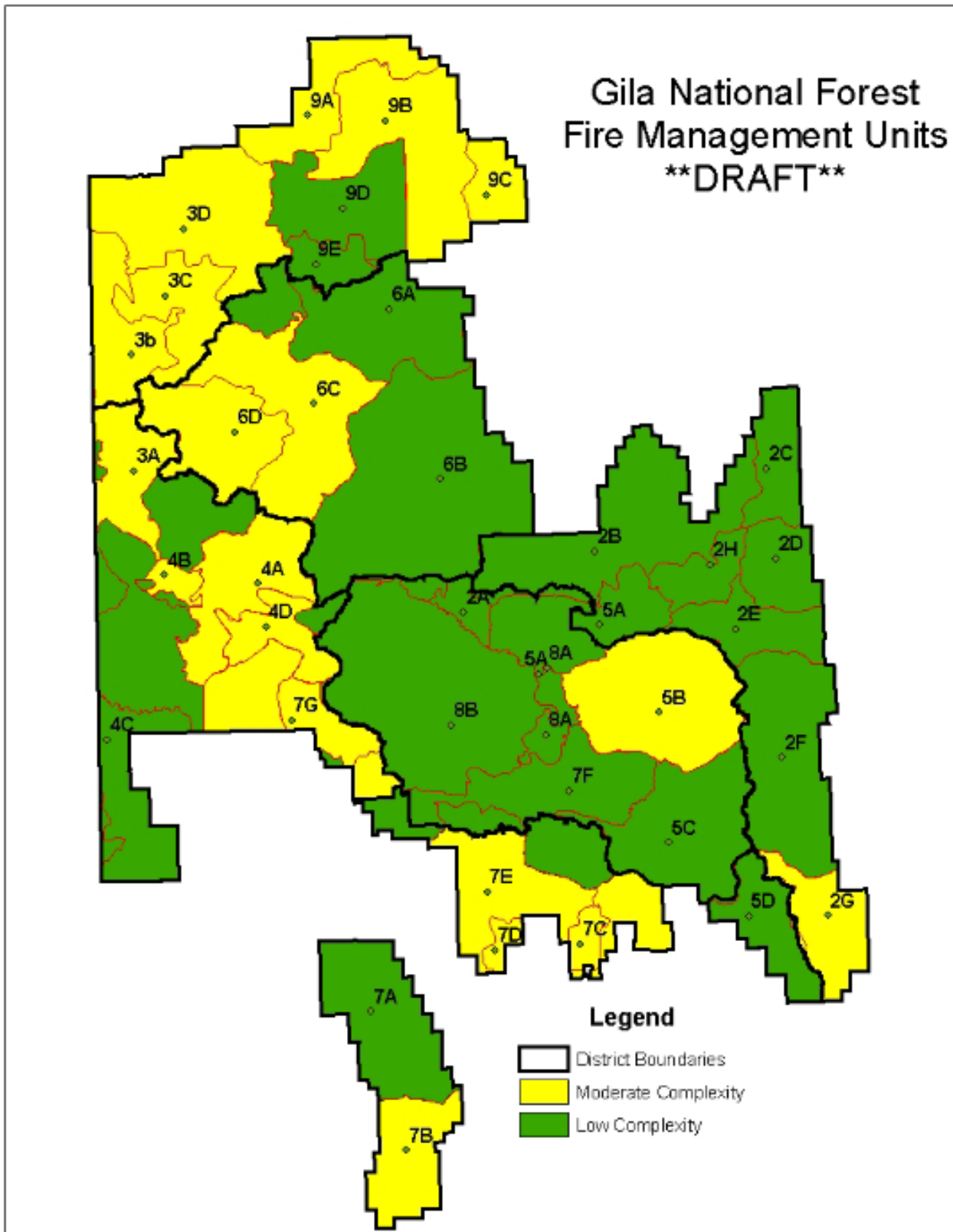
ii.   General Resource Concerns

Each management area identified in the Gila National Forest Plan has an inherent level of fire adapted ecosystem attributes that can benefit from fire use as well as resource concerns that can inhibit the probability of a successful outcome if fire is allowed to play its natural role. Three categories are used to describe the general level of resource concerns within the FMUs:

<u>Blue Category</u>   High level of resource concerns. The potential for successful application of wildland fire use may be limited.

<u>Yellow Category</u>   Low to Moderate level of resource concerns. The potential for successful application of wildland fire use is generally moderate.

<u>White Category –</u>   Low level of resource concerns. The potential for successful application of wildland fire use is generally moderate to high.

A map displaying Forest wide General Resource concerns is located in Appendix L.

iii.   Specific Risk

Specific risks are subsets of the general resource concern category. They are individual improvements or resource values that have the potential to be at risk under identified fire behavior. General resource concerns and specific risk are displayed through several geographic information system (GIS) layers that are a companion to this plan. The GIS layers and the FMU descriptions are decision support tools to assist land managers in determining the appropriate management response to a wildland fire.

Examples of specific risk include:

- Administrative sites
- Areas of fire fighter safety concerns
- Developed recreation sites
- Summer home sites
- Designated communication sites
- Oil and gas facilities
- Historic Resource areas
- Capable range lands
- Municipal watersheds
- Research Natural Areas

- Wildlife habitat / TES
- M Mining facilities
- Above-ground utility corridors
- High-use travel corridors
- Private land with structures
- Noxious Plants
- Timber Emphasis Area

FMU 2 – Black Range (Low Risk)
The Following is the FMU description for FMU 02 – Black Range Moderate located on the Black Range RD. Additional FMUs and their descriptions are located in the FMU folder of the Appendix.

   A. FMU Description:

1. FMU Identifier: Black Range Low
2. FMU Number: 02
3. General Risk category: Low (Green)
4. Fire Behavior indicator: ERC
5. NFDRS Weather station: Beaverhead (292001)
6. Nearest weather station: Beaverhead (292001)
7. Acres: 579,305 acres
8. Gila National Forest Plan Management Areas 2B (185,613 acres), 2C (45,762 acres), 2D (45,348 acres), 2E (58,636 acres), 2F (127,668 acres), 2H (32,404 acres) and 5A (83,874 acres).
9. Predominant Vegetation Types:
     - 8% – Mixed conifer
     - 38% – Ponderosa pine
     - 53% -- Pinyon pine, Juniper, Oak Woodland, Grassland
     - 1% -- Riparian
10. Administration: Black Range Ranger District
11. Fire Management Duty Officer Responsibility: Black Range FMO
12. Office responsible for stage 1 assessment: Black Range
13. Forest funded fire response units: E-236, E-237, H-306
     Communities at risk adjacent to this FMU: Winston, Chloride, Beaverhead

14. Prescriptive Parameters for Wildland Fire Use: Beaverhead RAWS, Fuel Model K, 7-day average ERC of <95 Percentile.

   B. FMU Characteristics:

This FMU's boundaries directly correlate with the boundaries of Gila National Forest Plan Management Areas 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E, 2F, 2H and 5A.

Management Area 2B
   b. Description
This 165,613 acre Management Area is on the Black Range Ranger District. It includes an area north of Black Mountain to the forest boundary above State Road 78 north of Indian Peaks and two miles west of Indian Peaks. It is approximately bounded on the south by State Highway 59 and in the vicinity of the Gila Wilderness boundary. Elevations range from 9,287 feet on the top of Black Mountain to approximately 6,500 feet. Vegetation includes approximately 1,433 acres of mixed conifer, 90,410 acres of Ponderosa pine, 121 acres of riparian, 42,053 acres of woodland, 16,319 acres of plains grassland, and 15,277 acres of mountain grassland.

The Management Area is made up of three grazing allotments; Black Mountain, Corduroy, and V cross T. The present permitted use on these allotments is 23,506 AUM's.

This Management Area contains Cooney Prairie grassland representing the southern most extension of the San Augustin plains. The Hardcastle area contains 20,000 acres of very sensitive soils with very high erosion hazard. The Beaverhead Work Center is located within this area and is accessed by the only surfaced road; State Highway 59. The Black Mountain Lookout is also located within this area. Some mineral activity has occurred within the past ten years. Approximately 5,125 acres of this Management Area are in the Gila Wilderness. The estimated levels of primary game species include 180 elk, 294 deer, 520 turkey, and 10 antelope. Other game and nongame species occupy the area, including those that are associated with riparian habitats.

Management Area 2C
c. Description
This 45,762 acre Management Area is on the Black Range Ranger District. It includes an area bounded on the west by the Continental Divide, on the north and east by the Forest boundary, in the vicinity of State Highway 59 on the south. Elevations range from approximately 8,570 feet to about 6,880 feet. Vegetation includes approximately 14,071 acres of Ponderosa pine, 217 acres of riparian, 29,830 acres of woodland, and 1,644 acres of mountain grassland. This area has no suitable timber areas. The estimated levels of the primary game species include 15 elk, 108 deer, 75 turkey, and 10 antelope. Other game and nongame species occupy the area, including those species associated with riparian habitats.

The Management Area is made up of three grazing allotments; North Wahoo, South Wahoo, and Silver Creek. The present permitted use on these allotments is 4,189 AUM's.

This Management Area has a history of mineral activity along the south end of the area. The Sheep Canyon drainage has had extensive watershed restoration work over the past 20 years.

Management Area 2D
d. Description
This 45,348 acre Management Area is on the Black Range Ranger District. It is approximately bounded on the north by State Highway 59, on the east by the Forest boundary, and on the south by Little Mineral Creek. The western boundary is in the approximate vicinity of the Continental Divide. Elevations range from about 8,900 feet to approximately 6,900 feet. Vegetation includes approximately 2,395 acres of mixed conifer, 12,014 acres of Ponderosa pine, 152 acres of riparian, 30,337 acres of woodland, 50 acres of plains grassland, and 400 acres of mountain grassland. This area includes no suitable timber areas. The estimated levels of primary game species include 10 elk, 216 deer, and 180 turkey. Other game and nongame species also occupy the area including species associated with riparian habitats.

The Management Area is made up of two grazing allotments; Black Range and Poverty Creek. The present permitted use on these allotments is 4,931 AUM's.

This Management Area has a history of heavy mineral activity centered around silver and gold mineralization. Public access is limited. Lookout Mountain Lookout is located along the western edge of the area.

Management Area 2E
e. Description

This 58,636 acre Management Area is on the Black Range Ranger District. It includes an area bounded on the north in a line even with Little Mineral Creek, on the east by the Forest boundary, on the west two miles west of Diamond Creek, and on the south just below Byers Run. Elevations range from approximately 8,870 feet to approximately 6,000 feet. Vegetation includes approximately 17,427 acres of mixed conifer, 20,572 acres of Ponderosa pine, 537 acres of riparian and 20,099 acres of woodland. The estimated numbers of priority game species include 30 elk, 171 deer, and 370 turkey. Other game and nongame also occupy the area, including species associated with riparian habitats.

The Management Area is made up of two grazing allotments; Turkey Run and South Fork. The present permitted use on these allotments is 4,800 AUM's.

This Management Area has a history of heavy mineral activity. The Chloride and Winston communities are remnants of former mining towns. These communities are also located adjacent to Management Areas 2D and 2E.

Approximately 17,011 acres of this area are in the Aldo Leopold Wilderness.

Management Area 2F
f. Description

This 127,668 acre Management Area is on the Black Range Ranger District. It includes the area bounded on the north approximately by Byers Run, the Continental Divide on the west, by the forest boundary on the east, and by Hillsboro Peak and Sawpit to the south. Elevations range from approximately 10,000 feet to approximately 6,000 feet. Vegetation includes approximately 24,246 acres mixed conifer; 18,754 acres of Ponderosa pine; 474 acres of riparian; and 84,194 acres of pinyon, juniper, and grassland. This Management Area has no suitable timber. The estimated numbers of primary game species include 35 elk, 574 deer, and 195 turkey. The area also supports other game and nongame species, including those associated with riparian habitats.

The Management Area is made up of three grazing allotments; North Palomas, Hermosa, and Cave Creek. The present permitted use on these allotments is 10,248 AUM's

Area 2F has a history of heavy mineral activity. The area called Hermosa is a remnant of former mineral activity.

Public access is limited to FR157, all other areas are restricted by parcels of private land.

Approximately 82,670 acres of this area falls in the Aldo Leopold Wilderness.

Management Area 2H

   g. Description

This 32,404 acre Management Area is on the Black Range Ranger District. The Management Area is bounded on the west by the former location of the Black Range – Mimbres Ranger District boundary, on the north in the vicinity of State Highway 59 to Sawmill Canyon up to Catron-Sierra County line. It is bounded on the east from a point where the Continental Divide intersects the Catron-Sierra County line in a nearly straight line south to Lookout Mountain. The southern boundary is two miles south of, and parallel to, the second standard parallel south, with a jog up to Stiver Springs. Elevations range from approximately 8,500 feet to approximately 7,500 feet. Vegetation includes approximately 577 acres of mixed conifer, 27,015 acres of Ponderosa pine, 175 acres of riparian, 3,823 acres of woodland, 693 acres of plains grassland, and 121 acres of mountain grassland. This area includes no suitable timber. The estimated numbers of primary game species include 30 elk, 150 deer, and 185 turkey. Other game and nongame species occupy the area, including species associated with riparian habitats.

The Management Area is made up of two grazing allotments; Alexander and Burnt Cabin. The present permitted use on these allotments is 1,292 AUM's.

This Management Area contains Burnt Cabin Flats grassland with highly erodible soils. The area has experienced prospecting for tin and other minerals. Past timber harvesting has resulted in a high road density within the area. Non surfaced access by Forest Road 226 connects State Highway 59 with the communities of Chloride and Winston.

Management Area 5A

   h. Description

This 83,674 acre Management Area is on the Black Range Ranger District, but was formerly part of the Mimbres Ranger District. It is an area approximately five miles south of Beaverhead bounded on the west by the previous Wilderness-Mimbres District boundary, on the north and east by the previous Black Range-Mimbres District boundary, and on the south by the ridge between the East Fork of the Gila River and main Diamond Creek. Elevations range from approximately 9,267 feet on the top of Black Mountain to approximately 6,000 feet. Vegetation includes approximately 295 acres of mixed conifer, 30,313 acre of Ponderosa pine, 391 acres of riparian, 45,164 acres of woodland, 6,642 acres of plains grassland, and 885 acres of mountain grassland. The estimated numbers of primary game species include 200 elk, 275 deer, 345 turkey, and 20 antelope. Other game and nongame species occupy the area including species associated with riparian habitats.

The Management Area is made up of two grazing allotments; Jordan Mesa and Taylor Creek. The present permitted use on these allotments is 11,725 AUM's. Approximately 44,290 acres of the area is located in the Gila wilderness.

   C. Strategic and measurable management objectives.

Strategic objectives:
1. Human life, firefighter and public safety is the highest priority and will determine all wildland fire and fuels treatment actions.

2. Ecosystems are restored and maintained, consistent with land uses and historic fire regimes and condition class utilizing wildland fire use, prescribed fire, and mechanical fuel treatments.
3. Protect high value resources through mechanical fuel treatments and prescribed fire.
4. Increase the number of acres treated annually by prescribed fire and wildland fire use.
5. Contain unwanted fires at the smallest possible size using the most appropriate management response.
6. Encourage and participate in partnerships with citizens or community-centered approaches to manage fire risks and hazards in wildland/urban interface areas.
7. Focus fire prevention activities in and around communities at risk.

Measurable objectives:

I. Unless other resource values dictate, suppression actions will be planned to control fires at no larger than the designated sizes, if suppression is the chosen management response:

Vegetation Type	Fire Intensity Levels	Max. Size (Acres)
Riparian	Level 1 and 2	60
	Level 3 and 4	30
	Level 5	20
Grassland and PJ	Level 1 and 2	5000
	Level 3 and 4	500
	Level 5	100
Timber	Level 1 and 2	1000
(Unsuitable and Suitable)	Level 3 and 4	100
	Level 5	20

B. If greater than 10% of a fire's area is severely burned, replant areas susceptible to erosion within 1 growing season or as determined by the BAER Team or resource advisor.
C. Insure impacts to range allotments are assessed during wildland fire management operations.

D. Management constraints affecting operational implementation

i. **Forest-Wide Management Constraints**
Management Direction for T&E Species

1. Once a Wildland Fire Situation Analysis (WFSA) is approved, heavy equipment shall not be used to construct fire lines within occupied T&E plant habitat unless:
   a. The line officer or designee determines that imminent safety to human life or protection of structures is an issue; OR
   b. The incident resource advisor determines and documents an escaped fire would cause more degradation to occupied T&E plant habitat than would result from the disturbance of heavy equipment.

In no case will the decision to use heavy equipment in occupied T&E plant habitat be delayed when the line officer or designee determines safety or loss of human life or protection of structures is at imminent risk.

2. Once a WFSA is approved, incident bases, camps, helibases, staging areas, helispots, and other centers for incident activities shall be located outside of occupied T&E plant habitat unless the only suitable location for such activities is determined and documented by the line officer or designee to be within occupied T&E plant habitat.

In no case will the decision to place these activities inside occupied T&E plant habitat be delayed when the line officer or designee determines safety or loss of human life or structures is at imminent risk.

3. Once a WFSA is approved, hoses used to draft water from T&E fish-bearing streams for suppression activities shall be screened with the most appropriate mesh size (generally 3/32), or as determined through coordination with NMGF and/or FWS, unless:
    a. The line officer or designee determines that imminent safety to human life or protection of structures is an issue; OR
    b. The incident resource advisor determines and documents an escaped fire would cause more degradation to T&E fish and their habitat than risk to individuals within T&E fish-bearing streams affected by the use of unscreened, or inappropriately screened, draft hoses.

In no case will the decision to use draft hoses without screening in T&E fish-bearing streams be delayed when the line officer or designee determines safety or loss of human life or protection of structures is at imminent risk

4. Once a WFSA is approved, avoid delivery of chemical retardant, foam, or additives to all surface waters with direct drainage to T&E fish bearing streams or occupied aquatic T&E plant habitat unless:
    a. The line officer or designee determines that imminent safety to human life or protection of structures is an issue; OR
    b. The incident resource advisor determines and documents an escaped fire would cause more degradation to T&E fish and their habitat, or occupied aquatic T&E plant habitat, than would be caused by chemical, foam or additive delivery to waters containing these T&E fish or plants.

In no case will the decision to avoid delivery of chemical retardant, foam or additives to T&E fish bearing waters or occupied T&E aquatic plant habitat be delayed when the line officer or designee determines safety or loss of human life or protection of structures is at imminent risk.

5. Water dipping points and criteria for determining dipping points, shall be identified in the operation resources for T&E fish-bearing streams and occupied T&E aquatic plant habitat. In situations where dipping points have not been approved in advance, the operational resources criteria for dipping points shall be used until the line officer or designee can approve sites following a review and recommendation by a resource advisor, unless the line officer or designee determines that imminent safety to human life or protection of structures is an issue.

Management Direction for Air Quality and Smoke Management

1. Prescribed fire operations shall be conducted consistent with the State of New Mexico smoke management program.
2. Adhere to the operations and procedures of the State of New Mexico Interagency Smoke Management Program to limit potential unacceptable smoke impacts. Further restrict burning activities if local conditions indicate potential unacceptable smoke impacts to ambient air quality and/or visibility.
3. Apply control measures as directed by the appropriate Air Quality Bureau (AQB) during air pollution episodes (e.g., no new ignitions during declared episodes).

Management Direction for Non-native Plants

1. To prevent invasion/expansion of noxious weeds, the following provisions will be included in all special use authorizations, timber sale contracts, service contracts, or operating plans where land-disturbing activities are associated with the authorized land use (additional direction may be found in timber sale and service contract provisions and in Forest Service handbooks):
    a. Revegetate areas, as designated by the Forest Service, where the soil has been exposed by ground-disturbing activity. Implement other measures, as designated by the Forest Service, to supplement the influence of re-vegetation in preventing the invasion or expansion of noxious weeds. Potential areas would include: construction and development sites, underground utility corridors, skid trails, landings, firebreaks, slides, slumps, temporary roads, cut and fill slopes, and travelways of specified roads.
    b. Earth-disturbing equipment used on National Forest System lands—such as cats, graders, and front-loaders—shall be cleaned to remove all visible plant parts, dirt, and material that may carry noxious weed seeds. Cleaning shall occur prior to entry onto the project area and again upon leaving the project area, if the project area has noxious weed infestations. This also applies to fire suppression earth-disturbing equipment contracted after a WFSA/WFIP has been completed.
2. Contractors, with the exception of fire suppression prior to completion of WFSA/WFIP, shall be required to clean earth-disturbing, construction, and road maintenance equipment, of all sizes, to remove all plant parts, dirt, and material that may carry noxious weed seeds, prior to entry onto the Forest, or movement from one Forest project area to another.
3. During WFSA/WFIP development, identify noxious weed control and mitigation measures. Ensure their implementation through direction in the Letter of Delegation and the Incident Overhead Team briefing.
4. Materials such as hay, straw, or mulch that are used for rehabilitation and reclamation activities shall be free of noxious weed seed, and shall comply with the 1995 weed-free forage special order against use of non-certified hay, straw, or mulch. Materials that are not covered under a weed seed free certification, and that have the potential to contain noxious weed seed, shall be inspected and determined to be free of weed seed before purchase and use.

Management Direction for Fire Management

1. Once a Wildland Fire Situation Analysis (WFSA) is approved, heavy equipment shall not be used to construct firelines within riparian areas unless:

a. The line officer or designee determines that imminent safety to human life or protection of structures is an issue; OR

b. The incident resource advisor determines and documents an escaped fire would cause more degradation to riparian areas than would result from the disturbance of heavy equipment.

In no case will the decision to use heavy equipment in riparian areas be delayed when the line officer or designee determines safety or loss of human life or protection of structures is at imminent risk.

2. Once a WFSA is approved, incident bases, camps, helibases, staging areas, helispots, and other centers for incident activities shall be located outside riparian areas unless the only suitable location for such activities is determined and documented by the line officer or designee to be within a riparian area. In no case will the decision to place these activities inside a riparian area be delayed when the line officer or designee determines safety or loss of human life or structures is at imminent risk.

3. Once a WFSA is approved, avoid delivery of chemical retardant, foam, or additives to all surface waters within riparian areas unless:

a. The line officer or designee determines that imminent safety to human life or protection of structures is an issue; OR

b. The incident resource advisor determines and documents an escaped fire would cause more degradation to a riparian area, than would be caused by addition of chemical, foam or additive delivery to surface waters in riparian areas.

In no case will the decision to avoid delivery of chemical retardant, foam or additives to surface waters within riparian areas be delayed when the line officer or designee determines safety or loss of human life or protection of structures is at imminent risk.

Management Direction for Scenic Environment

1. Allow for short-term reductions in Visual Quality Objectives (VQOs) to accommodate Burned Area Emergency Rehabilitation (BAER) projects, emergency needs for protection of investments, and public safety needs. When reducing VQOs, attempt to meet the next-highest objective at the closest viewer distance or most relevant distance given the probable sensitive viewer.

E. Management constraints related to wildland fire suppression and fuels treatment

1. Use prescribed fire and mechanical treatments within and adjacent to wildland/urban interface areas to manage fuel loadings and reduce wildfire hazards. Develop and prioritize vegetation treatment plans for wildland-urban interface in coordination with local and tribal governments, agencies, and landowners.

2. Assign a qualified archeologist as a resource advisor to any wildland fires potentially or actually burning in areas with a high probability of heritage resource sites.

3. During suppression actions, work with private landowners to obtain permission to cross private land, cut fences, or use privately owned facilities (ditches, water sources, etc.) before entering private land or affecting private facilities. Keep records and promptly inform the landowner(s) of actions taken on private lands or affecting private facilities.

4. Ensure that impacts to wildlife range are assessed during wildland fire operations.
5. Threatened and Endangered plants, wildlife and fish occur in this FMU. All fire management actions require consultation with the local resource specialist (Botanist, Wildlife Biologist and Fish Biologist).
6. Ensure that impacts to allotment management are assessed during wildland fire operations.

F. Management constraints specific to wildland fire use.

- Areas where wildland fire is desired and there are minimal constraints for its use. These areas offer the greatest opportunity to take advantage of the full range of options available for managing wildland fire under appropriate management. Wildland fire use will be utilized. Fire will be guided by the existing district fire plans. Wildland Fire Use will be used for control of invasion of woody and tree species into natural openings, grasslands, and meadows for wildlife improvements outside of wilderness. Within Wilderness Area, Wildland Fire Use will be used to reduce fuels and to allow fire to play its natural role.

G. Historical fire occurrence – 1970 to 2005
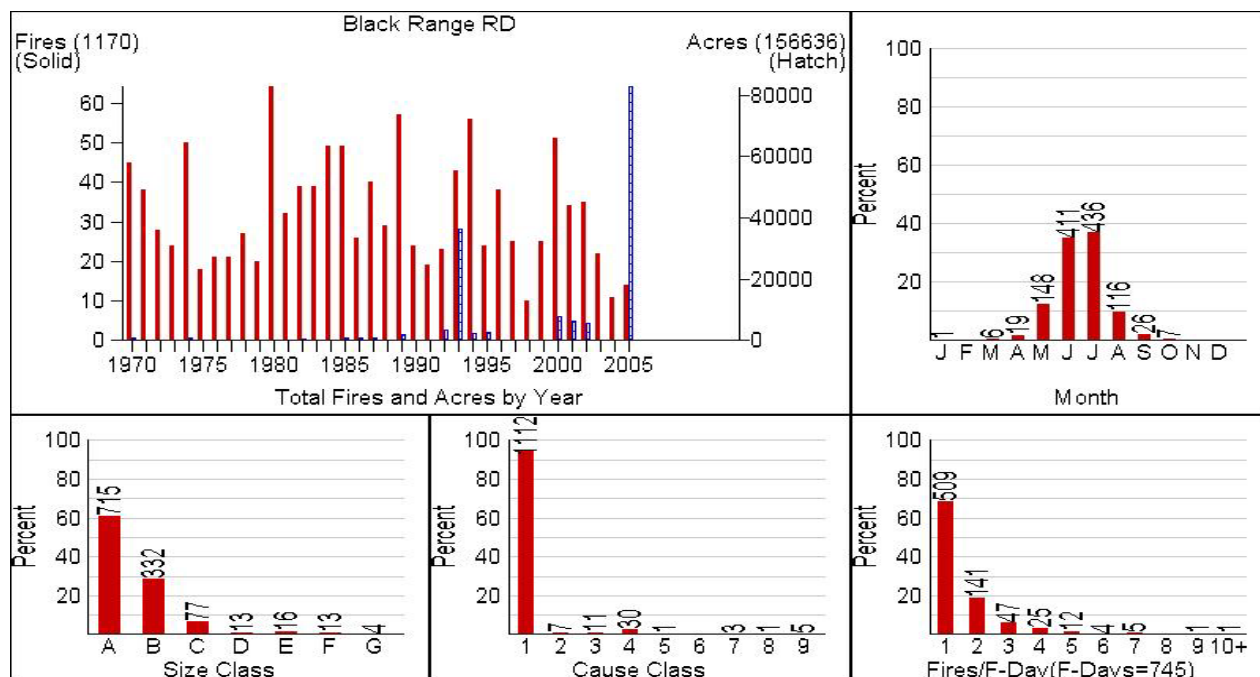
H. Fire Management situation.

1. Weather patterns influencing fire behavior and historical weather analysis.
- Elevation ranges from 6000 feet to 10011feet.
- Average precipitation is 12.98 inches. Most of this precipitation comes during the monsoon in mid July and early August and snow during the winter months.
- Average temperature is 68.8 degrees with temperatures in the mid 70's to low 90's during fire season.
- Prevailing winds are from the Southwest. Terrain and topography influence wind direction.
- Fire spread is from terrain and wind influence. Dominant fire patterns are from the Southwest to Northeast and upslope.
- Season ending events usually occur in mid July and Early August with the monsoon season.

2. Fire season determination.

Historical analysis has determined the wildland fires typically occur early May through September. Most fires occur in May through July from lightning associated with cold front passage and seasonal storms (monsoons).

3. Fuels conditions in the FMU likely to influence fire behavior.

In this area the last large wildfire was the Jenny fire (6,520) in 2003. Recently prescribed fire has been used to treat fuel conditions in the area.

Pinon-Juniper/Oak woodland group is dominating dry and upland areas due to fire exclusion and livestock grazing; these areas would otherwise be open. The Ponderosa Pine group is encroaching on open meadows because of fire exclusion, in addition to the encroachment of the Pinon-Juniper/Oak woodland type on meadows. The Ponderosa Pine group, which has historically been an open canopy with a grass understory, is now closed canopy with lots of competition between mid-story species and older more decadent Ponderosa Pine. The Ponderosa Pine/Douglas Fir group is functioning at risk due to fire exclusion that has allowed a higher than desired percentage of Douglas Fir. The Mixed Conifer group is functioning at risk because of fire exclusion that has resulted in older more decadent stands with more climax species and less early seral species, like aspen. Aspen is present in pure stands and mixed with Douglas Fir; however many stands are dying out or being replaced by conifers. Older aspen stands are not regenerating sufficiently to replace themselves. Fire hazard is increasing in conifer stands due to increasing mortality from mistletoe, bark beetles, and increasing fuel loads.

Riparian vegetation is functioning at risk in localized areas due primarily to grazing impacts and fire exclusion. In scattered or isolated areas, sedges are being replaced by less desirable grass species due to livestock grazing. Aspen and willow communities are becoming old and decadent, and are not regenerating adequately due to fire exclusion and livestock grazing. Snag levels are likely at historic levels in most areas due to limited access for fuelwood gathering.

4. Fire regime alteration.

Vegetation Type	Percent of Area	Historical Fire Regime	Current Condition Class	Desired Condition Class
Non-Forest/Grassland	8	1	1 and 2	1
Ponderosa Pine	38	2	2 and 3	1
Pinon-Juniper & Oak	45	3	2 and 3	1
Mixed Conifer	8	3	2 and 3	1
Riparian	1	1	2 and 3	1

5. Control problems and dominant topographic features.

Potential control problems:
1. Limited access from Turkey Run and Byers Run south into Aldo Leopold Wilderness.
2. Heavy fuel loads from south of Highway 59 to Sawyers Peak.
3. WUI Areas and private in - holdings.
4. Long travel times.
5. High visitation and recreation use.
6. Limited road access in roadless areas.

Dominant topographic features:

1. Upper East Fork Gila River
2. Continental Divide.
3. East Side Black Range.
4. Steep, rugged, mountainous terrain.

6. Firefighter and public safety considerations.
   1. Potential for fast moving fires in flashy fuels.
   2. Potential need for traffic control and possible evacuation coordination.
   3. Urban interface and associated hazards.
   4. Smoke management.
   5. Rugged, steep terrain.
   6. Several private inholdings with developments.
   7. Private homes located in Kingston, Poverty Creek, and scattered throughout the district.
   8. Open mine shafts.
   9. Military Aviation Training Routes.

7. Fire prevention and education opportunities
   1. Maintain fire prevention signing in accordance with district prevention plan
   2. Prevention Patrols, visitor contacts are essential.
   3. Active dissemination of fire restrictions, prevention / education materials, and fire information
   4. Focus on homeowner education and defensible space, utilizing the Firewise materials.
   5. Use of VFD Prevention Patrols, during times of severity.
   6. School and community events participation.

8. Values to be protected
   1. Summer homes.
   2. Private developments.
   3. Heritage resources.
   4. Organization camps.
   5. Range improvements and water supply systems.
   6. FS admin. and recreation facilities.
   7. TESPC plant, wildlife and fish species habitat.
   8. Rangeland within active allotments.
   9. Aesthetic values along scenic highways and trails.
   10. Research and Demo areas

9. Hazardous fuels treatment or prescribed burns for this year

Area 74 – 11,500 acres Non WUI Prescribed Fire

10. Other elements of the fire environment affecting management.

Smoke Management – Areas that have the potential to be Smoke Sensitive

Class I Airsheds	Residential Areas	Camp Grounds ETC.	Transportation Corridors
Gila Wilderness to the South and West	Wall Lake	Continental Divide National Scenic Trail	State Highway 59 State Highway 163
	Poverty Creek	Wolf Hollow CG	FS Road 150
Administration Sites			
Beaverhead GS	Hermosa	Monument Park	
Straight Gulch	Winston	Aldo Leopold Wilderness	State Highway 152
	Chloride		

11. Other Special Concern Areas.
1. This unit provides outstanding recreation opportunities, high-quality air and water, protected fish and wildlife habitats, spectacular scenery, and unique geologic features. The area is important in terms of providing clean water to downstream, imperiled fish species. It is also part of the Southwest Wolf Recovery Area.
2. During the fall hunting season, several outfitter guides operate in this unit and in the adjacent Gila and Aldo Leopold Wilderness. Effects of prolonged smoke and area closures could have dramatic adverse effects on these outfitters.
3. Suppression strategies from dozers to MIST (Minimum Impact Suppression Tactics), require careful consideration with each incident within the unit. Earth disturbing activities can have long term effects within a watershed on both water quality and visuals.
4. For additional Information, see the Gila National Forest Management Plan, 1986, specifically Chapter IV, Management Areas 2B -2F, 2H, and 5A.

SECTION IV – WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM COMPONENTS

I.   General Management Procedures

This Fire Management Plan is the operational guide to implement the Gila National Forest Land Management Plan.

All wildland fires will be subject to an initial response. This response will include size up of the current fire situation, determination of probable fire cause, and estimate of potential for fire spread.

All ignitions determined to be human caused will be suppressed using the appropriate management response.

The increasing size, intensity, and severity of wildland fires pose greater threats to human life and property. More people are recreating in National Forests and building homes in wildland areas, increasing their exposure to naturally ignited wildland fires and increasing the risk of human-caused wildland fire ignitions. Fire suppression costs have also increased.

While suppression of unwanted wildland fires will continue, land managers need additional options in addressing ways to help achieve the desired conditions described in each forest plan. Responsible and appropriate use of fire, both prescribed fire and wildland fire use for resource benefit, across a landscape-scale is needed to help reduce hazardous fuels and sustain wildland ecosystems into the future. Fire management direction has been modified or amended and new management direction been added to the forest plans to address these concerns.

The appropriate management response will be developed based on firefighter and public safety considerations, resource and cultural values at risk, and circumstances unique to the incident while providing for cost-effective management.

Implementation of wildland fire management components must be consistent with fire management capabilities and must consider the current and predicted conditions affecting fire behavior. Local knowledge based on historical fire behavior indices should be considered to assist in the Stage I decisions directing the appropriate management response.

Fire managers shall use these strategies to expedite decision-making processes to determine whether to respond to a fire as a suppression action or whether the wildland fire ignition can be used for resource benefits.

II.   Implementation Procedures

A Wildland Fire Implementation Plan (WFIP) will be initiated for all wildland fires. However, only the most complex fires being managed for resource benefit will require completion of all parts of a WFIP. For most wildland fires, information needed for the WFIP stage I decision analysis is located in this FMP. When wildland fires occur, pre-planned descriptions in this FMP in combination with the Fire Situation will guide the Stage I decision.

The designated Fire Duty Officer, or Unit FMO, or other designee is responsible for completing the Stage I assessment. The Decision Criteria Checklist for the Stage I assessment must be signed by the Unit Line Officer or his/her designee.

Progressive development of the WFIP stages will occur for wildland fires managed for resource benefit or where initial attack is not the selected response. Objectives, fire location, cause, conditions of the fuel continuity, current fire activity, fire location, predicted weather and fire behavior conditions, and risk assessment results, as documented in the Periodic Fire Assessment, will indicate when the various WFIP Stages must be completed. Most wildland fires will require the completion of only Stage I during their management. As resource benefits become more important in strategic decision factors, additional planning and documentation requirements (additional WFIP stages) are involved. Please refer to the chart below.
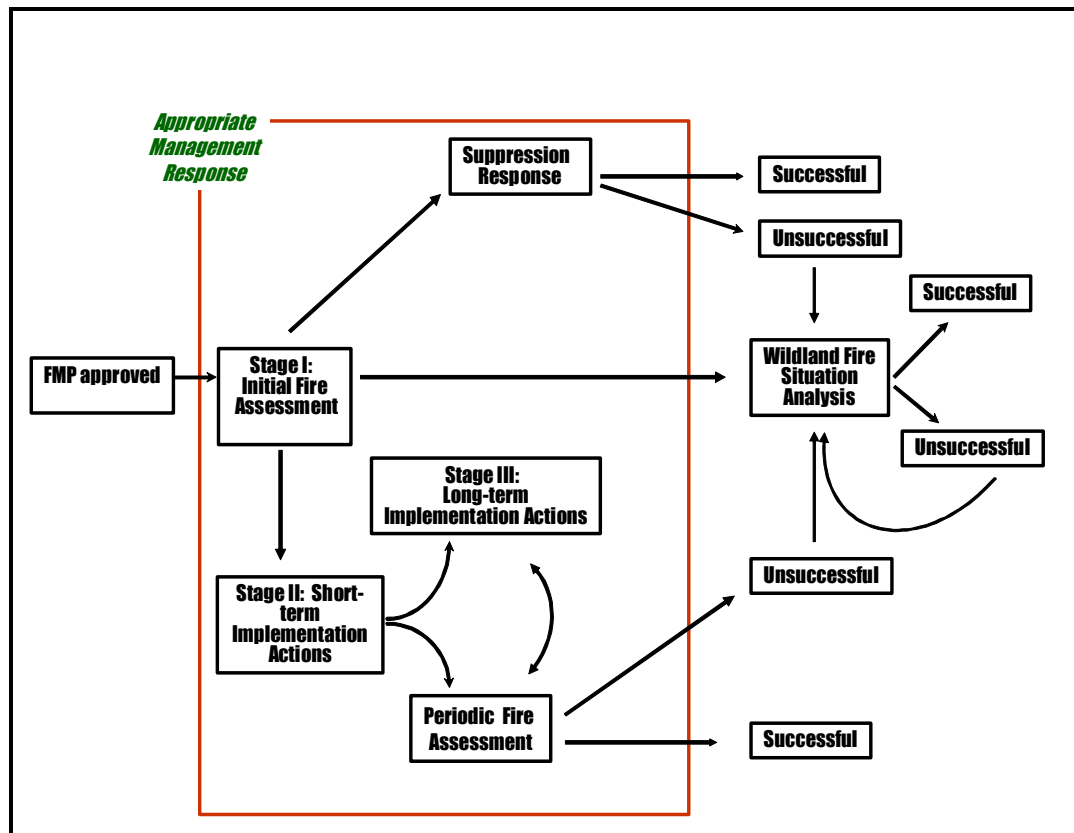
The FSH 5109.19 Chapter 50 provides direction that states: A WFIP (stage I) will be initiated for all wildland fires. Therefore, the Stage I Analysis is satisfied through this Fire Management Plan for fires that are approved for wildland fire use or appropriate management response.

The responsible line officer and fire manager will initiate a WFIP for every natural ignition that will be managed for Wildland Fire Use. In Stage I, following confirmation of a natural ignition, the objective is to determine if the ignition meets the criteria to be declared a wildland fire use event. If the fire is determined to be human caused or an unwanted wildland fire, the appropriate management response is suppression. This authority may be

delegated to the District Ranger if the District Ranger has the requisite fire management training, knowledge, experience and staff available when at Regional Preparedness Levels 1 and 2. The Forest Supervisor will approve all WFIP Stage III analyses. Regional Forester concurrence is required to approve new Stage I at Regional Preparedness Levels 4 and 5.

Please refer to the Wildland Fire Use, Implementation Procedures Reference Guide, May 2006 Minor Revisions March and April 2006, Minor Correction May 2007, or the most current revision.

III. Wildland Fire Suppression

Fires will be suppressed considering firefighter and public safety, benefits, and values to be protected, consistent with resource objectives, at minimum costs.

All strategies for managing wildland fire suppression are available on the Gila National Forest. They include: Confine, Contain, and Control; or a combination of these strategies.

The level of suppression response intensity will range from aggressive initial attack to a combination of strategies to achieve confinement. The Burning Index and the Energy Release Component are considered the appropriate fire danger indicators to determine initial attack suppression response.

Qualified District Rangers will be responsible for managing fires at the Type II level and below, up to a maximum suppression cost of $2,000,000. The Forest Supervisor will be responsible for all Type I fires, and those with a suppression cost greater than $2,000,000 and up to a maximum cost of $10,000,000. The Regional Forester must approve fires projected to cost between $10,000,000 and $50,000,000. The Chief must approve all fire projected to cost greater than $50,000,000 (As per the Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations, January 2007).

Suppression will be initiated in situations including, but not limited to, the following:

- The fire is human-caused.
- The fire is located in a low or moderate risk FMU, but the Decision Criteria Checklist indicates managing the fire for resource benefits is not within described limits or capabilities.

**The charts below (<u>*Chapter 4 of the Wildland and Prescribed Fire Management Policy Guide*</u>)
should be used to determine the suppression response intensity.**
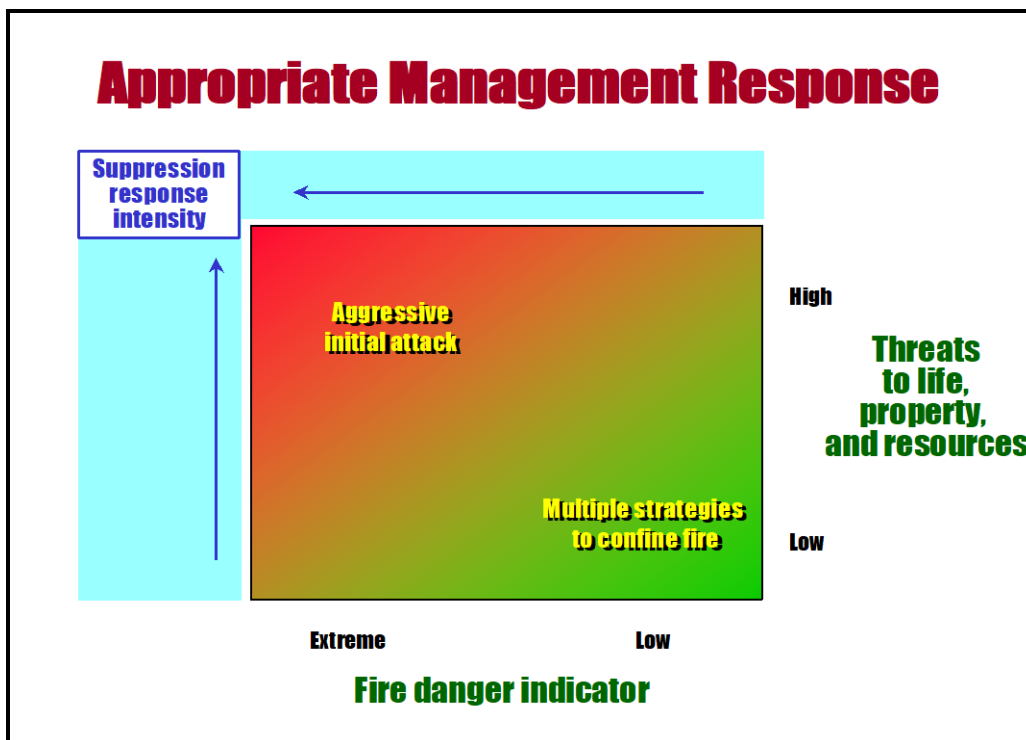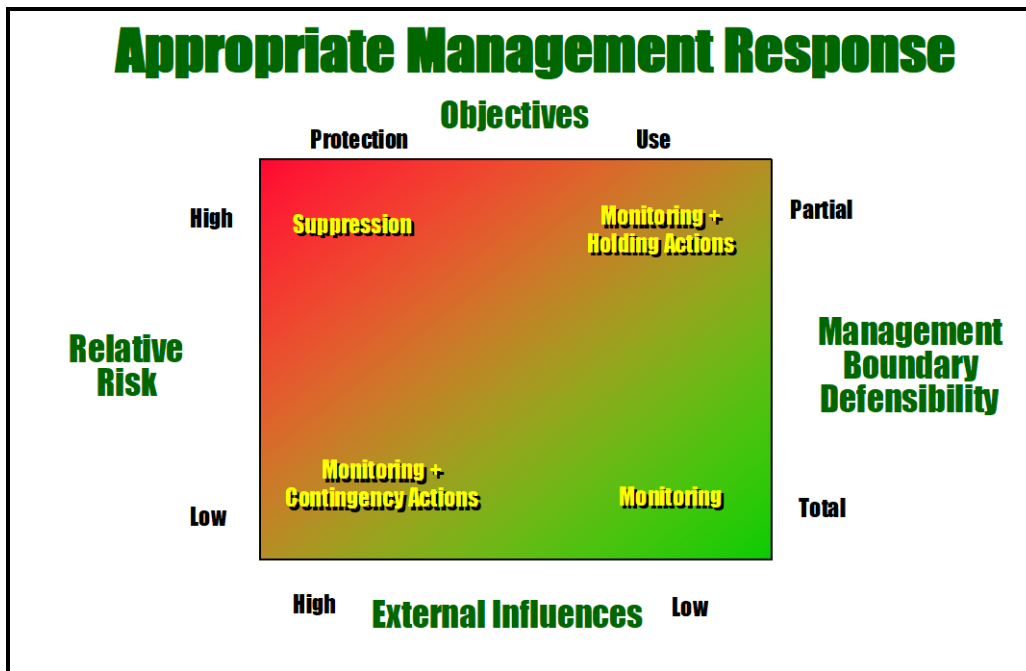
i.   Range of Potential Fire Behavior

Review of representative weather stations on the Gila NF shows that Energy Release Component (ERC) is a reliable fire danger indicator to estimate potential fire behavior since it is an estimate of potential available energy. Potential fire behavior is variable depending upon vegetation type and elevation.The following graph illustrates the Gila National Forest Fire Occurrence 1970 – 2006 utilizing the Beaverhead RAWS (292001).

Forest Fire History- 11,314 Fires – 1970 to 2006
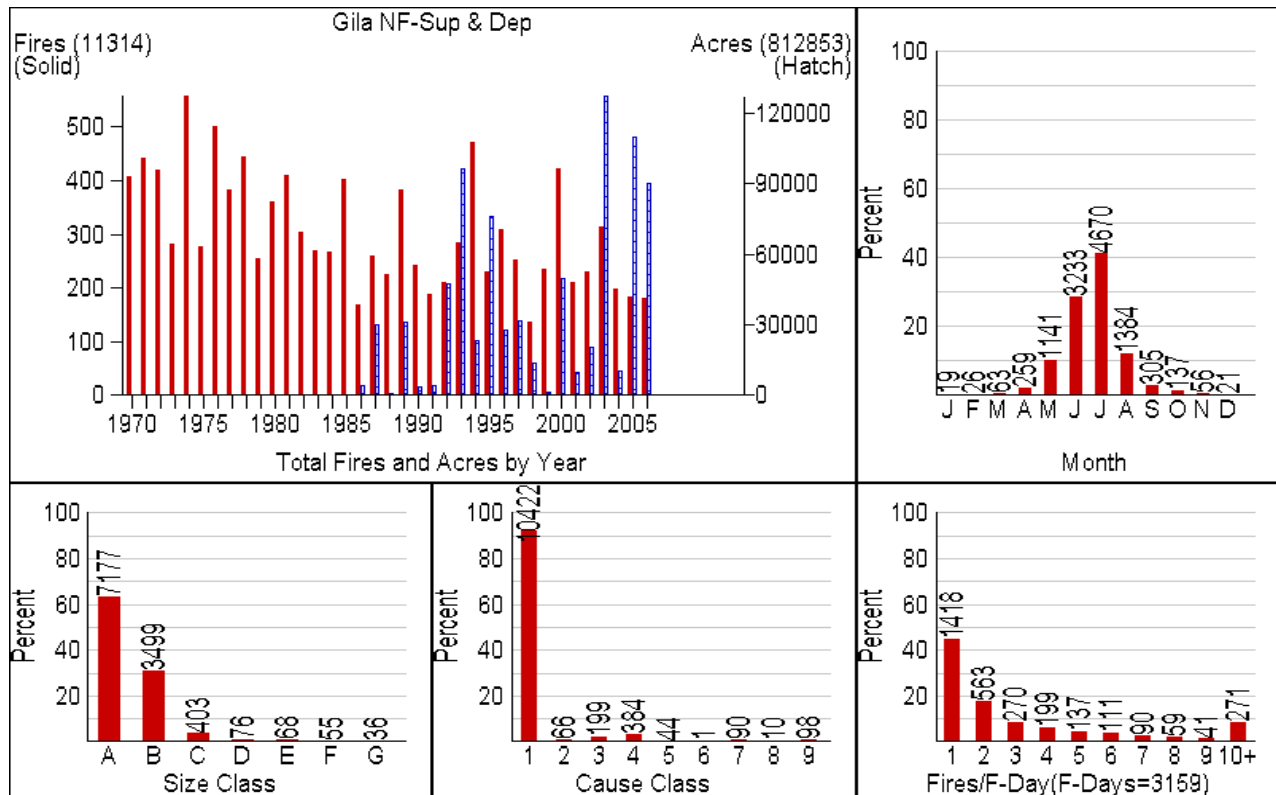
The Gila National Forest is located in southwestern New Mexico. The 3.3 million acre Forest is located in Grant, Hidalgo, Catron, and Sierra counties.   Resources and management of the Forest are described in the Gila National Forest Plan (1986). The Forest includes three Wilderness Areas: the Gila Wilderness Area (558,065 acres), Blue Range Wilderness Area (29,304 acres), and Aldo Leopold Wilderness Area (20,216 acres). The land features consist of a diversity of rugged mountains, deep canyons, meadows, and semi-desert country. Elevations range from 4,200 to 10,900 feet and cover four of the six life zones. Flora and fauna are diverse. Ocotillo and cactus are found in the lower elevations, and juniper, pine-aspen, and spruce-fir forests are plentiful in the high mountains. The Gila National Forest annually manages the largest number of acres of wildland fire use for resource benefit nationwide. From 1998 through 2007, 389,152 acres were managed with wildland fire use for resource benefits.

Special weather patterns that influence fire behavior are:

- North end of Forest: Typically snowfalls occur from October to March with light snows remaining on the ground for 2-3 days before the area clears again.
- South end of Forest: Snowfalls are light and short-lived. Winds are considerably stronger on the south end, with exceptionally strong and frequent winds in excess of 30 mph in March and April.
- A corridor through the middle Forest area (Mogollon Baldy-Black Range) receives strong winds and frontal passages, which produce downdrafts which affects fire behavior, and may cause higher rates of spread.

Average annual precipitation for the Gila is ranges from 12 inches to 20 inches.
Local fuel conditions likely to affect fire behavior are:

- o Grouse Mountain areas have significant blow down adding to the fuel loading.
- o Emory Pass area frequently has tree breakage with normal winter snow loading.
- o There is disease and insect mortality scattered throughout forest timber types.

i. Preparedness Actions

a. Fire Prevention Program

The Gila Prevention Team consisting of the Forest Prevention Officer, District Prevention Technicians, and the Visitor Information Staff, accomplish fire prevention activities on the Forest. A typical range of program efforts is undertaken including signing, press releases and public service announcements, educational programs targeting school children and forest visitors, and coordination with local cooperators.

Approximately 1,000,000 visitors utilize the Gila National Forest each year. Visitor use accounts for the majority of human-caused fire starts on the Forest. Of these starts, most occur Friday through Monday between the hours of 0900 to 1800. The two prevalent specific causes are abandoned campfires and the careless use of smoking materials. Other causes include equipment use, debris burning, arson, and children playing with matches.

Recreational use and the resulting potential for human-caused fires begins typically in April and continues through the big game hunting seasons in October and November.

Annual Prevention Program

The Forest conducts an effective Smokey Bear Fire Prevention Campaign to ensure public awareness regarding the need to prevent unwanted person-caused wildland fires. Fire prevention materials are distributed to the public through agency offices, school educational programs and civic events. Smokey Bear appearances are frequent and the prevention icon participates in numerous festivals, parades and community-hosted events throughout the Forest.

Contacts with Forest visitors at the office locations across the Forest provide information regarding current fire danger and tips for camping and backcountry use. Recreation staff including wilderness rangers and personnel staffing developed recreation sites make frequent one on one contact with forest visitors.

Indirect and direct contacts are made through radio, television, newspapers, and signing. Press releases, informal contacts, and feature articles are also used to distribute key messages to the public.

The Forest Prevention Officer routinely coordinates fire prevention activities with Federal, State and local cooperators and communities.   The Gila National Forest and the BLM Las Cruces District Office coordinate fire prevention and education activities as directed by the Forest Service and BLM Fire Management Staff.

Emphasis is placed on the Wildland Urban Interface education and

information exchange. Technical assistance and support is also provided to local communities for development and revisions to Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP).

There are many opportunities available to reach the public and forest users, including:

- Contact homeowners associations and individuals.
- Open-house meetings dealing with the Wildland/Urban Interface.
- Media campaign dealing with Wildland/Urban Interface.
- Distribution of the "Living with Fire" publication.
- Display for hunters at County Fairs and other public places.
- Fliers for Sports Stores dealing with hunter-caused fires.
- Contacts with summer visitors and hunters.
- Patrols, utilizing members from Volunteer and Municipal Fire Departments as prevention patrol resources, whenever possible.
- News articles for local papers dealing with Wildland/Urban Interface.
- News articles for local papers dealing with abandoned campfires.
- Signing for the appropriate time of year (e.g., fireworks sign for July)
- Remove signs as appropriate.

Annually, all Districts (6) and the Supervisor's Office are allocated funds in their operating budgets to maintain a minimum supply of fire prevention materials that include Smokey Bear and other fire prevention and educational materials to be used throughout the year.

Modifications or adjustments will be made to the fire prevention plan as needed. If a changing trend becomes apparent, the fire prevention plan will be adjusted to meet the problem(s) in fire prevention.

RELATED PLANS AND CONTINGENCY PLANS

The following is a list of plans that can be found in Appendix E.

- Southwest Area Interagency Fire Restrictions and Closures
- Fire Management Zone Sign Plans
- Fire Prevention Materials and Supplies Required
- Fire Prevention Objectives

This plan can change year by year, depending on the needs of the Gila National Forest.

j. Public Information Stations:

The objectives of Public Information Stations are as follows:

A. Provide a person-to-person contact during critical periods to inform Forest visitors of the conditions, restrictions and procedures to follow to reduce fire ignition.
B. Reduce the amount of littering.
C. Reduce off-road soil damage.
D. Provide hunter information.
E. Provide general information about National Forests that is likely to be expected from such stations.

Except for instructors and key fire prevention personnel, personnel other than regular fire suppression personnel will be used at road checks to ensure adequate initial attack forces are maintained. Personnel will be trained and equipped to conduct their work safely and efficiently. High visibility safety clothing and other safety apparel must be used by those staffing roadside information stations. All road check stations will be signed in accordance with New Mexico State Highway guidelines for regulatory traffic see the Temporary Traffic Control Signing for Incident Management, FSM 7700 Appendix F.

k. Safety

The paramount consideration in the operation of the information station will be safety, both to the forest visitors and to the personnel staffing the stations. All equipment will be removed from the road when not in operation. At any time the stations appear to be unsafe, operations will cease and equipment moved. Night operations at the information station will not be standard procedure. Approval of Forest Supervisor is required for night operation.

District fire prevention information stations shall at all times be staffed by a minimum of two employees. All personnel staffing roadside stations will be outfitted with Forest Service uniforms or yellow fire shirts (FSM 6159.48S) and high visibility vests. This will ensure high visibility and ensure identification. All personnel will be thoroughly instructed in attitude and presentation, and will be well informed of any and all restrictions on the Gila National Forest. Personnel will inform visitors of the daily fire danger restrictions in effect, and will give each vehicle operator a handout sheet which outlines current problems or situations.

All check station personnel will be clean and neat at all times.

Special Orders and Closures

Authority – The Regional Forester and Forest Supervisor have authority to issue restrictions and closures of National Forest Lands. The District Rangers, who are responsible for implementation and enforcement of the restrictions, will be contacted to ensure that proposed restrictions are coordinated across the Unit as appropriate.

Industrial Operations and Fire Precautions

District Fire Management staff or their appointed representatives, inspect all Forest facilities periodically. Measures to reduce the risks and hazards from wildfire are to be taken immediately whenever problems are noted.

Rights-of-way in the form of roads and power lines must be periodically reviewed to minimize the potential for fire starts. This is an integral part of the special use inspection process.

Public roads are numerous, offer many attractions, and are the primary means of public access into and through the Forest. Fuel loading along major roads is treated in accord with Land and Resource Management Plan direction.

Power lines traverse the Forest at numerous locations. Inspections and follow through in removing vegetation that could fall across the line are start fires is required. (Power line Fire Prevention Handbook FSH 5109.21)

The Timber Sale Administrator is responsible for completing fire prevention inspection of the Timber Sale Contractor's equipment and sale area. The Forest Service Representative and/or Sale Administrator will enforce all requirements of the contract related to fire prevention precautionary measures.

Inspection of and requirements placed on Special Use operations will include fire prevention considerations.

All internal combustion engines that operate on the Forest must have properly working spark arresters. Agency personnel conduct spark arrester inspections. The inspection procedures are listed in the spark arrester guide. (Spark Arrester Guide – General Purpose and Locomotives, Volume 1, PMS 430-2 and Spark Arrester Guide – Multipurpose Small Engine, Volume 2, PMS 430-2)

Compliance inspections area completed in accordance with contract requirements or per manual direction in the case of special use permits. Inspections are for the protection of the Forest and the operators.

Reducing the human-caused fires can be achieved. Since the Gila National Forest has had an active fire prevention program, human-caused fire starts are down. From 1997 to 2007 human-caused fires stand at an average of 9%. With ongoing development of a formal fire prevention program managed by a designated Forest Prevention Coordinator and support from district prevention technicians or delegated personnel, the number of human-caused fires have trended downward.

YEAR	HUMAN-CAUSED FIRES	TOTAL NUMBER OF FIRES	% HUMAN-CAUSED FIRES
1997	43	245	18%
1998	32	136	23%
1999	34	235	14%
2000	24	423	6%
2001	18	210	9%
2002	13	231	6%
2003	14	326	4%
2004	10	204	4%
2005	20	214	10%
2006	15	182	8%

2007	5	177	2%

The fire prevention technicians and the District Information Officers should take every opportunity to help the homeowner understand their responsibility in creating defensible and survivable space around their property.

Maintaining interagency cooperation and support from local fire departments or during special events will enhance opportunities to disseminate information about defensible space and homeowners' responsibilities about living in the wildland/urban interface.

Every Forest Service office will maintain a stock of "Living with Fire" that may be distributed to "walk-in" visitors upon request.

b. **Annual and Weekly Fire Training Activities**

All agency personnel having wildland fire qualifications are required to attend an annual fire refresher. This refresher includes fire shelter deployment and recurrent safety topics such as Standards for Survival; Look Up, Look Down, Look Around; or similar safety oriented training (ref. FSM 5109.17). Attendance at refresher training along with successful completion of the appropriate level of work capacity testing is a pre-requisite for receipt of a red card prior to May 1st annually.
All employees with support roles in fire suppression in a camp setting, drivers, resource specialists and Line Officers are required to attend annual fire refresher training including Fire Shelter Use training.

In order to maintain an effective and skilled firefighting workforce, FMOs, will ensure that all fire fighting modules (engine, handcrew, helitack, prevention) conduct weekly drills to maintain proficiency.

The Six Minutes for Safety program is incorporated on a daily basis for all fire management staff members at the District level.
Basic Firefighter training (S-130, S-190) is offered annually to new employees and interested members of local cooperating agencies and fire departments.

District/Zone Fire Management Officers are the primary point of contact for agency employees from other resource disciplines or support functions to coordinate training needs.

ii.   Training Activities

Annual Fire Training Activities

FSM 5135.5 requires all personnel who may receive a wildland fireline assignment to attend an annual Fire Safety Refresher Training. Chapter 13 of the Interagency Standards for Fire and Aviation Operations 2007 (Interagency Standards for Fire and Aviation Operations) requires that the following core topics are included: Entrapments, Current Issues, Fire Shelter, Other Hazards and Safety Issues. Each individual will also receive training in the Forest Service Code of Conduct for Fire Suppression, Incident Complexity Analysis, and the current (2007) Incident Response Pocket Guide. Refer to the Annual Wildland Fire Safety Refresher Training site for materials to assist with putting on this training. For non-wildland fireline positions, individuals must meet the requirements set forth in Chapter 13 of the Interagency Standards for Fire and Aviation Operations 2007 (Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations).

Qualifications and Needs Assessment
All fire-related training courses will be documented in each employee's training file. A copy of the certificate will be keep in the employee EDF and in the official place of record in the Supervisors office. All Task Books will be issued in accordance with FSH 5109.17. A copy of the initiated and completed task book will be kept in the official place of record in the Supervisors Office.

The Forest's policy requires that all employees holding a Red Card will take the appropriate level of the Work Capacity Test and attend Wildland Fire Refresher Training between January 1 and May 30 of each year. The Incident Qualification Cards issued annually are valid for one calendar year. The Forest Fire Management Officer is delegated the authority and is responsible for certifying that the above requirements are met prior to the issuance of individual Incident Qualification Cards for their unit. The Forest Fire Management Officer is delegated the primary signing authority for the Incident Qualification Card. Also delegated as secondary signing authority are the Forest Fire Staff and the Dispatch Center Manager.

As employees complete training courses and task books, districts will forward them to the Forest Fire Qualification and Review Committee for review and Forest FMO certification.

For more specific guidance see the Gila Fire Qualification Review Committee (FQRC) Charter Appendix G.

Fire Season Readiness

Annual Preparedness Reviews

Fire prepardness reviews will be completed annually on each District by the Supervisor's Office Forest Fire Management Officer, in conjunction with the District Ranger and District/Zone Fire Management Officer. These reviews will be scheduled prior to the start of the fire season (April/May). Additional reviews will be scheduled in early June, when a majority of fire personnel will be on board.

Additional reviews will be scheduled by SO Staff to review specific District Fire Management activities to include: fuels management, prescribed fire, suppression activities, fiscal accountability, training and qualifications programs, etc.

Fire reviews will focus on current and expected fire conditions, teamwork, overall Forest objectives, and first and foremost: SAFETY.

Season Start and Stop Criteria

The fire season for the Gila National Forest, determined by historical analysis of fires, runs from April 15 through September 30 of each calendar year. During this time period, on average, approximately 97% of all fire starts occurred.

Agency Fire Caches

The Silver City Fire Cache is a National Interagency Support Cache and is managed by the Gila NF.   Ordering procedures can be found within the Southwest Area Mobilization Guide and the NWCG National Fire Equipment System Catalog.

Each District will maintain a small cache inventory at various sites on the Forest to meet initial attack needs and replacement. The Districts may restock their caches from the National Cache, if necessary, during fire incidents. The District caches are only for fire incidents and all other needs will be bought out of project funds.

iii.   Detection

Lookouts: The Forest detection system relies on a combination of fixed stations (lookouts) and aerial detection.

Aerial Patrols: Aerial patrol/detection flights will be set up after lightning storms on a case by case basis, as determined by the District and/or Forest Fire Duty Officers. The Silver City Interagency Dispatch Center will confirm the flight with the local air service contractor.

The aerial detection observer will immediately notify Silver City Dispatch upon discovery of a fire. When the fire is increasing in complexity, the Dispatch Office will notify the Forest Fire Duty Officer of the fire's potential, current staffing, and situation.

Upon discovery on any wildland fire or suspicious prescribed fire, the following information will be given to the Dispatch Office:

- Geographic location with Lat/Long coordinates
- Size of fire
- Type of fuel
- Road access
- Person reporting fire
- How to contact person reporting. (Phone # or radio)
- Potential for fire growth
- Improvements threatened
- Time of discovery

Fixed Detection:
Fixed detection is the primary means of detection on the Gila National Forest. Staffing is based on NFDRS. The following are the staffed Forest lookouts and the District on which they are located:

STATION	DISTRICT
Black Mountain Lookout	Black Range
Lookout Mountain Lookout	Black Range
Hillsboro Peak Lookout	Black Range
Saddle Mountain Lookout	Glenwood
Bearwallow Lookout	Glenwood
Mogollon Baldy Lookout	Wilderness
Eagle Peak Lookout	Reserve
Fox Mountain Lookout	Quemado
Mangas Mountain Lookout	Quemado
Signal Peak Lookout	Silver City

The District in accordance with direction from the Forest may staff fixed detection points or lookouts during April through September. Funded lookouts will be staffed by mid-May and remain staffed until fire season is essentially ended and within compliance with area wide mob guide. During periods of high lightning occurrence and extreme fire danger, detection flights will be scheduled as per the Forest Duty Officers recommendation or District request.

The lookout will be scheduled from 0900 to 1800 daily with days off. The District FMO or Forest Fire Management Officer may approve any overtime due to increased fire activity or extreme fire danger. Morning and afternoon check-ins will proceed as follows:

> 0900 - in service
> 1800 - out of service

Throughout the day, lookouts will report storm events and if lightning is observed. They will report the time storms start, location, storm path, and any associated precipitation or wind. Lookouts will also call dispatch when going out of service anytime during the day or when off for the evening, and will remind dispatch if they are going to be off the next day.

iv.   Fire Weather and Fire Danger

Fire Weather and Fire Danger

Fire Weather Watches and Red Flag Warnings are issued to advise land management agencies of the possible development of or actual occurrence of Red Flag conditions. A Red Flag event occurs when critical weather patterns develop that could lead to large and dangerous fires.
Conditions that warrant Fire Weather Watch or Red Flag Warning, either alone or in combination with are the expected or actual occurrence of:

- General dry thunderstorm activity (LAL-6), i.e. considerable lightning but little or no measurable precipitation.
- The combination of strong winds (usually 25 mph or more), low humidity (15% or lower), and high temperatures (usually 90 degrees and above).
- Fire danger in the "Very High" or "Extreme" category.
- In the judgment of the forecaster, weather conditions and fire danger combine to indicate a severe fire weather episode.

Fire Weather Watch – will be issued whenever the potential for Red Flag conditions exists. A watch will normally be issued 12 to 36 hours in advance of the expected onset of Red Flag conditions. If dry lightning is the only condition expected in the 0 to 12 hour time frame, a Fire Weather Watch may be issued or continued in place of a Red Flag Warning.

Red Flag Warning – will be issued whenever Red Flag conditions are imminent or occurring. A warning will generally be issued within 12 hours of the expected onset of Red Flag conditions, or whenever the forecaster becomes aware of an ongoing Red Flag event.

Fire Weather Watches will most likely be issued with the morning or afternoon forecast while Red Flag Warnings may be issued at any time. The Watch or Warning will be headlined in the forecast with information on the affected area, the valid time of the watch or warning, and a description of the expected severe fire weather conditions included. Both Watches and Warnings will continue to be highlighted in the routine fire weather forecast until threatening conditions cease.

Fire Weather Watches and Red Flag Warnings will be entered into WIMS and the affected agencies notified by telephone usually before, but always after a Watch or Warning has been issued. A Watch or Warning will be cancelled by the forecaster when the conditions are no longer expected to occur. During the off-season, if very warm, dry and windy conditions are expected, the NWS will notify the Southwest Area Coordination Center by phone.

The National Weather Service Fire Weather Watch/Red Flag Warning program is used to warn land management agencies of the onset or occurrence of critical fire weather conditions. The NWS does not make any management decisions as a result of the Fire Weather Watch or Red Flag Warning. Specific actions are determined by user agencies. Preparedness levels will be adjusted commensurate with the Red Flag Warning and Weather Watches based on existing local conditions.

Spot weather forecasts - are required for prescribed burns and wildland fire suppression. The procedures for obtaining a spot forecast are as follows:

1. Fire (or prescribed fire) personnel take weather observations at site of fire.
2. Observation data is transmitted by fax or radio to The Silver City Interagency Dispatch Center (SDC). SDC forwards the information to the National Weather Service (NWS).
3. NWS formulates a forecast and either sends a FAX copy to SDC or posts the forecast on the NWS web site.
4. SDC forwards the spot weather forecast to the Incident Commander or Burn Boss via FAX or radio and confirms receipt of spot weather forecast.

5. Provide 100% feed back on all spot weather requests to the National Weather Service. Information feedback will improve accuracy of future spot weather forecast.

The fire season generally extends from April to September. There are two distinct fire seasons: the first one is pre-monsoon, from mid-April to July; the second one occurs after the monsoon, in August through October. This has been established by historical analysis (NFMAS-PCHA), which develops a season starting and ending event.

The Gila-Las Cruces Zone has 12 permanent RAWS, 2 portable and 2 manual fire weather stations located throughout the Zone. The 12 remote automated weather stations (RAWS) record hourly observations and transmit data via satellite. Two weather stations are operated manually and only 1300 hour observations are recorded.

The Beaverhead RAWS is a national station used to determine fire danger based on the National Fire Danger Rating System (NFDRS). K model Energy Release Component indices are the basis for fire danger and Forest Preparedness Level.

Station Name	Station ID	Fuel Model	Location Lat/Long	Remarks
Luna Manual	292004	K	33.48.0 108.54.0	FS
Reserve Manual	292005	C	33.24.0 108.30.0	FS
Beaverhead Auto	292001	C	33.25.6 108.06.9	FS
Gila Center Auto	292006	B	33.06.0 108.12.0	FS
Slaughter Mesa Auto	292008	C	34.04.0 108.26.0	FS
Bearwallow Auto	292010	K	33.27.3 108.39.9	FS
Bosque Auto	292103	A	33.51.6 106.51.6	FWS
San Andres Auto	292904	A	32.34.8 106.31.5	FWS
Pelona Auto	292009	C	33.41.0 108.03.8	BLM
Chupadera Auto	292102	L	33.46.12 106.06.0	BLM
Hatchett Auto	292702	L	31.43.12 108.19.5	BLM
Uvas Auto	292902	L	32.31.12 107.07.1	BLM
Dripping Spgs Auto	292903	L	32.19.4 106.35.0	BLM

v.   **Policy and Forest Service Manual and Handbook Direction**

All crews will be staffed in accordance with 5109.17-2004-2 and the Interagency Standards for Fire and Aviation Operations Guidelines.

Module Leader Supervisor – Engine, Helitack, and other crews used for fire suppression must be trained to standards and accompanied by properly qualified supervisors. On the regular supervisor's day off, a qualified employee will serve as the alternate supervisor. If no qualified supervisor is present, the module is not available for fire dispatch.

Module strength:

- An ENGB will be with every engine, Type III and VI engines will include a minimum of two crew members, total crew size of three individuals.

- District Suppression Modules will always operate with a qualified Single Resource Boss.

- Helitack module - Qualified supervisor, assistant supervisor, trained crew. The helitack crew will be at a minimum three-person effective, with a maximum of 3 individuals.

- Suppression Handcrews (Type 1) – Shall meet the standards in the National Interagency Hotshot Crew Operations Guide (NIHCOG).

vi.   **Aviation Management**

The aviation management program for the Gila NF consists of several key positions, including; Forest Aviation Officer, Tanker Base Manager, Assistant Tanker Base Manager and Tanker Base Manager Technician, one exclusive use Helitack crew, and a Smokejumper detail program. The forest has three qualified Air Tactical Group Supervisors and three Air Attack Platforms.

The Forest Aviation Officer manages the administrative duties of the aviation program. All aircraft are dispatched by the Zone Coordination Center.

The Gila NF uses fixed and rotor wing aircraft for a variety of tasks including suppression, personnel transport, recon/detection, project work, search and rescue, photographic work, and administrative use. The Forest Aviation Plan lists specific procedural guidelines, sources of information, and responsibilities of aircraft users. Personnel using aircraft for project work will consult with the Forest Aviation Officer for assistance and an Air Operations Plan will be prepared for all projects not covered in the Forest Aviation Plan.

Air operations that involve Law Enforcement or Search and Rescue will need to consult the Forest Aviation Management Plan and assure compliance prior to implementation.

The Gila National Forest Aviation Safety and Aviation Management Plan 2007 lists specific procedural guidelines, sources of information, and responsibilities of aircraft users. The Forest Aviation Plan is located in Appendix H.

vii.   Duty Officer Qualifications and Responsibilities

Duty Officer – The Duty Officer is a person who assures the daily initial attack responsibilities are met during the fire season. Duty Officers serve as on-call leadership and supervision for fire suppression response and have the responsibility to provide oversight and support to personnel engaged on emergency incidents.

District/Dispatch/Forest Duty officers will be designated daily and recorded on daily staffing sheets.

On Ranger districts, the Duty Officer will generally be either the District Fire Management Officer (DFMO) or the District Assistant Fire Management Officer (DAFMO). At the Supervisors Office, the Duty Officer will normally be the Forest Fire Management Officer (FFMO) or the Forest Fire and Vegetation Staff Officer. Other personnel (including non-fire) can be assigned as Duty Officer if they meet the minimum Incident Qualifications Certification System (IQCS) qualifications listed below, are familiar with appropriate fire management plans and their primary duties do not interfere with their ability to devote full attention to the DO responsibilities.

For all Duty Officers: They are not to have concurrent duties in the direct management of an incident. If a Duty Officer becomes directly involved in an incident, the Duty Officer must either be replaced on the incident or assign a substitute Duty Officer.

Forest Fire Management Officer and/or Forest Duty Officer (FDO) - Coordinates the overall Forest protection responsibility. Is responsible to direct and approve overall program activities in conformance with the Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP), Fire Management Plan (FMP), and other appropriate direction and policy. The FDO interprets outside influences, considerations, conditions and exercises good judgment in implementing the specific actions of the FMP in support of safe, efficient and effective fire operations. Is responsible for coordinating with neighboring Forests, cooperating agencies and the Regional Office Fire personnel.

District Fire Management Officer and/or District Duty Officer (DDO) - Coordinates the protection and staffing responsibility of the district. The DDO must have the necessary skills and fire experience to provide leadership and safe supervision during initial and extended attack incidents and other emergencies. The DDO position has two areas of responsibility, administrative and operational. The Silver City Dispatch Center (SCC) will contact the identified DDO for all resource and staffing needs day or night. The DDO will contact the SCC daily prior to going out of service as to the status of all assigned personnel and resources under their management. The SCC prior to going out of service will contact the DDO if there are any personnel or resources that did not check in prior to going out of service. It will be the DDO's responsibility to confirm the status of the personnel or resources not accounted for. If a fire occurs in the off season, the DDO with the higher qualifications will take over.

Silver City Dispatch Center Duty Officer (SCCDO) -The SCCDO is responsible for the summarization and documentation of all actions taken within the framework of the mobilization guide. They will advise the FDO of any discrepancies noted. The SCCDO will assign an Incident Number and P-Code to support activities authorized by the FMP and appendices. Will compute and announce the observed and forecasted indices and staffing levels daily. Minimum qualifications for the SCCDO is Support Dispatcher and must have the necessary skills and fire experience to provide leadership and safe supervision during initial and extended attack incidents and other emergencies.

Forest and District Duty Officer Minimum Qualifications

	ERC 5 Day Average (Beaverhead) Fire Season (plus shoulders) 3/15 to 10/15					Off Season (10/15 - 3/15)
	Low	Moderate	High	Very High	Extreme	ALL Levels
District DO		ICT4		ICT4 & STLD or TFLD		District Fire Program knowledge & experience
Forest DO		Forest Fire Program Knowledge & Experience		ICT3 & DIVS		Forest Fire Program knowledge & experience

Forest and District Duty Officers must be qualified at the level designated. Exceptions to this will be made on a case by case basis with concurrence by the Forest FMO and/or Fire Staff.

viii.   **Forest Fire Staff and Forest Fire Management Officer Delegation of Authority**

Certification authority for Interagency Incident Qualification Cards and Task Books is delegated to the Forest FMO as a primary. The Forest Fire Staff will act as a secondary and back up certifier. If neither of the occupants of these positions are available to certify a Incident Qualification Card or Task Book, the Coordination Center Manager (no acting's) is delegated this authority in urgent situations. Area Command and Type I Command and General Staff certification responsibility is held at the Regional Office.

ix.   **District Ranger Delegation of Authority**

Prescribed Fire
Burn plans will be prepared by personnel with appropriate qualifications. All burn projects with a "high" complexity rating will be prepared under the direction of a qualified Prescribed Fire Burn Boss Type 1 (RXB1) and submitted to Supervisor's Office for review by Fire Management personnel and final approval by the Forest Supervisor. All Type I Burn Plans need to be submitted a minimum of three weeks prior to implementation. District Rangers that meet the qualifications described in FSM 5140.7 are delegated the authority to approve Type II and Type III level burn plans. District Rangers will provide daily oversight of all active prescribed burn projects on their unit. A copy of all approved burn plans will be furnished to the Forest Fire Management Officer a minimum of one week prior to the implementation of any burn project. Active projects require the presence of the appropriately qualified level of Burn Boss prior to ignition.

Wildland Fire Use

The 2007 Fire Management Plan provides direction for wildland fire use on the Gila National Forest. Wildland fire use applies only to natural ignitions. The appropriate management response for human caused fires is a suppression strategy. District Rangers are delegated the responsibility for conducting periodic fire assessments, and executing Stage 1and/or Stage 2 of the Wildland Fire Implementation Plans (WFIP) for each incident.   A qualified ICT4 may manage a fire under a WFIP Stage 1. A Fire Use Manager (FUMA2) is required for a Stage 2 fire use incident. Wildland fire use projects entering into Stage 3 require Forest Supervisor concurrence, and the availability of a Fire Use Manager 1 or 2 and appropriate support (Fire Use Team).

If the District does not have the appropriately trained personnel to plan and implement a wildland fire use project, additional support will be requested and received within 24 hours or the fire placed under a suppression strategy. Specific direction for wildland fire use can be found in the 2005 Wildland Fire Use Implementation Procedures Reference Guide.

Wildfire-Suppression Response

All human-caused fires on the Gila require an appropriate suppression response. District Rangers are delegated the responsibility for completion of the initial fire assessment, including Incident Complexity Analysis, and WFSA (if required). District Rangers are certified at the following levels.

Working Level, Pat Morrison, Larry Cosper, John Pierson
Journey Level, Al Koss, Janice Stevenson, Russel Ward

1. For individuals that **do not meet at least the Working Level,** a coach will be assigned to support that line officer in managing Type III or higher wildfire incidents.

2. At the **Working Level,** the line officer could manage a low to moderate complexity[1] fire and Fire-Use fire. The line officer should meet the following:
   - **Training**: Fire Management Leadership or National Fire Management for Line Officers, and WFSA Certification (FSM 5130).
   - **Background and Experience**: Successful management of a minimum of one Type III or higher fire, or one successful higher complexity fire (Type II or higher) quality shadow assignment (consider complexity and size of the fires). Management oversight of a low-complexity fire program and/or experience as an agency administrator or representative. Applicable experience in all-risk or other incident oversight may be considered in lieu of this experience, as well as Fire-Use experience. Consider career fire experience.
   - **Demonstrated Ability**: Successful evaluation by a coach (including feedback from ICs or ACs) that the candidate has demonstrated understanding and application of the responsibilities of an agency administrator on smaller low-complexity fires with a basic understanding of the elements of the core competencies.

3. At the **Journey Level,** the line officer could manage a moderate to high complexity fire. The line officer needs to be certified at the Working Level and should meet the following:

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[1] The complexity of a fire is defined by the complexity analysis of that fire.

- **Training**: Fire Management Leadership or National Fire Management for Line Officers, and WFSA Certification (FSM 5130).
- **Background and Experience**: (1) Successful management of a minimum of one Type II or higher fire, or one successful higher complexity fire (Type I) quality shadow assignment, depending on fire experience (complexity and size of the fires should be considered). (2) Management oversight of a moderate-complexity fire program or experience as an agency administrator or representative on Type II or higher fires. (3) Applicable experience in all-risk or other incident oversight may also be considered in lieu of other guidelines, as well as Fire-Use experience.
- **Demonstrated Ability**: Successful evaluation by a coach (including feedback from ICs or ACs) that the candidate has demonstrated understanding and application of the responsibilities of an agency administrator on moderate to large complex fires in the core competencies, and other elements that may be relevant.

4. At the **Advanced Level,** the line officer could manage a high complexity fire. The line officer needs to be certified at the Journey Level and should meet the following:
- **Training**: Fire Management Leadership or National Fire Management for Line Officers, and WFSA Certification (FSM 5130).
- **Background and Experience**: (1) Successful management of a minimum of 5 Type I or II fires (at least one of which is a Type I fire), depending on fire experience (complexity and size of the fires should be considered). (2) Management oversight of a moderate to high-complexity fire program. (3) Applicable experience in all-risk or other incident oversight may also be considered in lieu of other guidelines, as well as Fire-Use experience.
- **Demonstrated Ability**: Successful evaluation by a coach (including feedback from ICs or ACs) that the candidate has demonstrated understanding and application of the responsibilities of an agency administrator on large complex fires in the core competencies, and other elements that may be relevant.

Should the fire exceed the capability of a Type 3 Incident Commander, a Type 2 or Type 1 Incident Management Team will be requested by the District Ranger through the Forest Supervisor. District Rangers are delegated authority for Type 2 incidents where the incident is primarily on National Forest System lands and private land evacuation is not anticipated for more than a few isolated private parcels. Dollar value for District Ranger authority is limited to incidents which are not anticipated to exceed $2,000,000 in suppression cost. The Forest Supervisor will remain the responsible line officer for Type 1 incidents and for all incidents where multiple agency jurisdictional issues exist. The Forest Supervisor will also assume responsibility for all incidents between $2,000,000 and $10,000,000 in predicted suppression costs.
A written Delegation of Authority and Line Officer Briefing will be provided to every incoming incident management team. Preparation and presentation of this document will be the responsibility of the District Ranger with assistance from the Forest Fire Staff.

IV.   Initial Attack

Initial attack is an aggressive suppression action consistent with firefighter and public safety and with values to be protected.

Initial attack forces are made up of the first suppression personnel to arrive at a fire plus reinforcements arriving during the first operational period. The initial attack resource supervisor or other higher qualified individual on scene will take control of the incident and identify themselves to dispatch and firefighters as the Incident Commander (IC). A complexity analysis will be completed for every fire by the IC. The IC on every Type 3, 4, and 5 fire is responsible for documenting their actions, developing an initial attack size-up, incident management plan, etc, through the use of the Gila National Forest Incident Organizer . All IC's must also retain a copies of the "Red Book" officially know as the Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations, Appendix G.

Based upon the guidelines for incident organization complexity in the Incident Organizer, should the fire complexity be increasing to a level exceeding the qualifications and capability of the Initial Attack IC, that individual will advise Dispatch via the radio that a more qualified Incident Commander is required along with recommendations for additional resources and overhead positions.

All wildland fires will receive an appropriate management response. The appropriate management response is defined as the specific actions taken in response to a wildland fire to implement protection and/or wildland fire use objectives. It allows the manager the full range of suppression and wildland fire use responses.

i.   Information Used to Set Initial Attack Priorities

FSM 2671.45f (2)a Consultation in Emergencies "Human safety is the highest priority for every emergency response action (see FSM 5130.3 for related direction on the wildland fire suppression policy and the priority for the safety of firefighters, other personnel, and the public). Under no circumstances should an emergency response action be delayed in order to contact FWS or NMFS for initiating emergency consultation or during ongoing consultation."

Interagency initial attack resources staffed by the unit are typically able to handle multiple initial attack actions simultaneously between zones. In instances where multiple wildfire starts require prioritization, the Unit Duty office will consider the following criteria in assigning incident priorities:

- o Imminent threat to firefighter and public safety or private property and improvements
- o Availability of air tanker(s) and probability of success that air tanker(s) will retard the rate of spread until ground-based resources are available
- o Forest Plan direction for the designated management area
- o Resource values at risk
- o Projected commitment of initial attack resources
- o Ability of cooperator resources to successfully conduct initial attack actions
- o Road access or lack thereof
- o Single or multiple jurisdictions involved or likely to be involved
- o Current and predicted fire weather

o Fire behavior currently exhibited by ongoing incidents in similar fuel types
o Proximity to and probability of fire spread into critical fuel types (blowdown).

The appropriate management response will be based on the current and predicted weather and fire behavior.

Use the following information for determining initial attack priorities:

o Threats to human life or property
o Resource values at risk
o Location of Management Activities
o Proximity to T & E wildlife and plant species habitat areas
o Proximity to archaeological and heritage sites
o Safety hazards

ii. Criteria for the Appropriate Initial Attack Response

All suppression actions will be based on the Forest and District Direction Analysis and Action Plans for that Fire Management Unit. Suppression actions will be based on the Gila NF Preparedness Plan and direction defined in the FMU descriptions. The decision that determines an appropriate management response should also use the following criteria:

o Safety
o Threat to life or property
o Current and predicted fire behavior
o Current and predicted weather
o Suppression resource availability
o Suppression costs
o Resource damage or loss (from fire and suppression actions)
o Environmental impacts (of fire and suppression actions)
o Smoke management considerations
o Political considerations

While all initial management responses are appropriate, options other than control (i.e. confine, contain) require additional short-term strategy documentation. To "monitor" a wildland fire with no documented strategy is unacceptable.

All fires will remain staffed to the level deemed necessary by the IC working with the District Duty Officer.

The IC will maintain in radio contact with the SDC Zone Dispatcher while suppressing fires, and will check in at regular intervals. If the fire is in a location with poor or no radio communications (a 'dead spot'), a relay (human or electronic repeater) will be set up and maintained while firefighters are in that area.

Night travel and work will not be a standard practice, except where deemed safe based on weather, fire behavior, terrain, and adequate radio contact with Silver City Dispatch. Travel after 2200 is a violation of Forest Policy, unless for emergency response for the protection of life and property.

Night operations and travel will follow established guidelines in the Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations 2007.

Suppression of new fires will take priority over other work. However, it may be necessary at times for certain individuals or groups to be exempt from fire suppression activities in order to meet targets, critical deadlines, or accomplish other high priority jobs. For coordination purposes, it is requested that the work supervisor notify the District or Forest FMO of the specific individual and what time periods are involved.

iii. Confinement as an Initial Attack strategy

If the fire is human caused, the fire must be suppressed using the Appropriate Management Response. Confinement should be considered when conditions warrant and may be determined during Stage 1: Initial Fire Assessment. Confinement may also be selected as a strategy through the Wildland Fire Situation Analysis (WFSA) as fire or management considerations dictate when the fire is expected to exceed initial attack capability or planned management capability. This type of action cannot be used to meet resource objectives.

Possible criteria used in the decision to implement the confinement strategy may include:

- Firefighter safety
- Remote location, limited access, unsafe travel conditions
- Proximity to natural and manmade barriers
- Limited resources available

iv. Response Times

Recommended on duty response times:

Prep Levels I & II:	10 minutes
Prep Level III:	5 minutes
Prep Levels IV & V:	2 minutes

v.   Restrictions and Special Concerns

A. Aerial applied retardant, colored		
B. Aerial applied suppressant, clear		
C. Helicopter use		
D. Smokejumpers or cargo		
E. Use of portable pumps		
F. Use of chainsaws		
G. Snag felling		
H. Use of motorized vehicles		
I. Hand constructed fireline		
J. Helispot construction		
K. Burning out/backfiring		
L. Anything dropped from an aircraft		
M. Use of mechanized equipment		
N. Dozer constructed fireline		
Management Areas	**Fire Management Tactics Needing Approval**	**Approving Official**
Wilderness	A-I, K-M	Delegated District Rangers
Special Interest Areas/ Research Natural Area	J, N	Forest Supervisor
Wilderness	N	Regional Forester
All Others	A-N	Incident Commander

vi.   Social and Political Concerns

Concerns will be addressed by fire managers, line officers, and affected parties. These concerns will be identified by each district prior to the beginning of each fire season through the District's Fire Management Analysis Area Plans. These concerns will also be used during the development of the Wildland Fire Situation Analysis WFSA's and Wildland Fire Implementation Plans (WFIP's).

Refer to the individual FMU descriptions in the Appendix A for more information.

V. Extended Attack and Large Fire Suppression

i. Determining Extended Attack Needs

A wildland fire is considered to be in extended attack status when:

- Suppression efforts have not succeeded or are not expected to reach containment within 24 hours.
- The Initial Attack Incident Commander (ICT4 or ICT5) requests additional resources that result in raising the fire complexity to Type III status within or following the first 24 hours after the arrival of the first suppression resources.

Extended analysis needs will be determined by the FMU objectives and the following factors:

- Current and predicted fire behavior
- Current and predicted weather
- Suppression resource availability
- Results of the Wildland Fire Situation Analysis (WFSA), completed on all Type 3, 2, and 1 Incidents

A wildfire is considered to be in extended attack status when:
- o Suppression efforts have not succeeded or are not expected to reach containment within first operational period.
- o The complexity analysis indicates the need for expansion of command structure and the Initial Attack Incident Commander requests additional resources.

ii. Implementation Plan Requirements – WFSA Development

The District Fire Management Officer will prepare a Wildland Fire Situation Analysis for all wildfires that escape or are expected to escape initial attack. Preparation of the Wildland Fire Situation Analysis will be coordinated with the responsible Unit Line Officer or designee.

The Unit Line Officer (Forest Supervisor or District Ranger) is responsible for selecting the preferred management strategy for the incident. Selection of the preferred management strategy will not consider positive resource benefits resulting from wildfire as an objective.

Alternatives developed through the Wildland Fire Situation Analysis process must be consistent with the goals of the Gila National Forest Plan and must address the following:
- o Firefighter and public safety
- o The alternative can be implemented
- o Each alternative must be accompanied by a strategic plan of action
- o The probability of success and consequences of failure must be assessed and displayed

o Each alternative will display the estimated numbers of acres burned, times for containment and control, suppression costs and resource damage

iii. Complexity Decision Process for Incident Management Transition

A Type III Incident Commander will manage incidents that reach a Type III complexity level and associated command and general staff positions as appropriate for the incident.

An incident complexity analysis is used to document the rationale of the fire management staff, responsible Line Officer with input from the on scene Incident Commander in determining whether an extended attack incident is expected to, or has increased in complexity to, warrant ordering a Type II or Type I Incident Management Team. This Incident Complexity Analysis checklist is available on page F-1 of the "Red Book", located at http://www.fire.blm.gov/Standards/redbook.htm. All Line Officers will retain a copy of the Red Book.

The following elements will be completed prior to the arrival of a Type 2 or Type 1 Incident Management Team on the Unit:

- Wildland Fire Situation Analysis (WFSA) complete with applicable incident objectives and a selected alternative to guide tactical suppression actions. The Forest Supervisor (or acting) will select the preferred alternative and sign the Wildland Fire Situation Analysis.
- Agency Administrator Briefing guide completed.
- Delegation of Authority completed and signed by the Forest Supervisor.

The Unit/Forest FMO and Forest Supervisor will conduct a formal briefing covering the above items for the incoming incident management team.

The extended attack incident commander will conduct an operations briefing for incoming operations staff onsite at the incident.

iv. Delegation of Authority for the Incident Commander

These documents can be found under Agency Administrator Responsibilities, Chapter 11 of the Interagency Standards for Fire and Aviation 2007.

VI. Exceeding Existing Incident Management Strategy

A new Wildland Fire Situation Analysis (WFSA) is required when the objectives of the existing WFSA have been compromised (or are expected to be compromised). The revised WFSA will include a new set of objectives and a range of alternatives and associated fallback strategies and worst-case outcomes.

Given the inherent inaccuracies in developing estimated costs associated with each alternative, exceeding the cost estimate for the preferred alternative will not in and of itself generate a need to the revise the existing WFSA.

VII. Fire Management Activities in Wilderness

Objectives are to return fire to its natural role in the wilderness ecosystem to the maximum extent possible, consistent with safety of persons, property, and other resources. Reduce to an acceptable level, the risks and consequences of wildland fire within wilderness, or escaping form wilderness.

While fire is natural to wilderness areas, unnatural buildup of fuels in some areas may result in higher than natural fire intensities that could result in negative impacts. This must be considered when determining the appropriate management response.

A wilderness resource advisor (WRA) will be assigned to fires that have exceeded extended attack. Language specific to the use of a WRA will be included in the delegation of authority where a fire is turned over to a fire team.

Give preference to using methods and equipment that cause the least: (1) alteration of the wilderness landscape, (2) disturbance to the land surface (3) disturbance to visitor solitude, (4) reduction of visibility during periods of visitor use, and (5) adverse effect other air quality related values (FSM 2324.23)

Motorized equipment or mechanical transport in the wilderness must be:

    (1) the necessary and required action for administration of wilderness, and

    (2) the action that has the least adverse effects on wilderness as directed in the Wilderness Act, Section 4©

Authorization for use of motorized equipment or mechanical transport is the responsibility of the Forest Supervisor except where it has been delegated to the following District Rangers. Al Koss, Pat Morrison, Russ Ward, Rogers Steed and Janice Stevenson.

Authorized uses may include the following:

1. Helicopter landings at existing helispots.
2. Chainsaw use.
3. Small portable pump use.
4. Dropping from airplanes or helicopters:
   a. Personnel (smokejumpers and rapellers).
   b. Supplies and equipment, to include;
      i. Air tanker drops of water and retardant.
      ii. Helicopter sling loads, bucket drops and plastic spheres.
      iii. Paracargo.

Helispots are considered an improvement and therefore are non-conforming uses in the wilderness and must be authorized by the Forest Supervisor.

Tractors or bulldozers must be authorized by the Regional Forester.

Motorized use would be properly authorized on the Gila Wilderness Motorized Equipment Use Authorization Record and can be found in the appendix. All authorized uses must be retained on the Districts for documentation, monitoring and year end reporting.

BAER is only allowed in wilderness if (1) necessary to prevent an unnatural loss of the wilderness resource or (2) to protect life, property, and other resource values outside the wilderness.

Maps identifying areas of resource concerns and water sources will be developed on all districts to assist land managers in decision processes. Helispots and spike camps should be located outside of wilderness, whenever feasible.

VIII.   Minimum Impact Suppression Tactics (MIST) Requirements

Implementation of the appropriate management response for all wildland fires on the Gila National Forest will utilize appropriate suppression tactics to minimize ground-disturbing activities (Gila Forest Plan Guideline). The use of all or portions of the established Minimum Impact Management Tactics will be determined on a case by case basis by the Line Officer in coordination with the Resource Advisor and Incident Commander. Providing for firefighter and public safety will be prioritized over use of minimum impact suppression tactics in all cases. A MIST tactics guide can be found in the most current Incident Response Pocket Guide.

IX.   Other Fire Suppression Considerations

Type I or Type II Incident Management Teams

When a situation is beyond Forest capabilities, an ICS overhead team is brought in at the request of the Forest Supervisor to manage the incident. The type of team (Type I or II) ordered depends on the complexity and severity of the situation. Refer to the Incident Complexity Analysis checklist on page F-1 in the Appendix I of the "Red Book. Prior to the arrival of the incoming team, the Forest/District needs to complete the following:

- Determine the fire camp location or several possible sites.
- Order supplies and equipment (pre-order), as directed by the incoming team's Logistics Section Chief.
- Make an ample supply of topographic maps, base maps, etc.
- Determine transportation needs of incoming fire team (from ordering unit mobilization point to fire, and on the fire).
- Determine line officer briefing time and location.
- Obtain necessary information for the line officer briefing.
- Order communication equipment for the fire.

There should be TWO briefings of the incoming fire team. The first briefing should be by the line officer at a site away from the fire. The second briefing should be by the current Incident Commander and staff at the fire site.

The Line Officer briefing should occur as soon as possible after the arrival of the Incident Management Team. At a minimum, the Wildland Fire Situation Analysis and Line Officer Briefing Checklist and Delegation of Authority should be completed.

The local Incident Commander briefing shall take place when the incoming team arrives at the fire. The incoming team will not assume responsibility for the fire until they are thoroughly briefed and comfortable with the situation. Both Incident Commanders shall determine the exact time of command change. After the briefing, the team should start phasing in to their areas of responsibility, but shall not assume control until the predetermined time.

The local unit's suppression forces may continue to work on the fire in various functions but should be relieved as soon as possible so that they can be rested and ready for Initial Attack or as reinforcements on other parts of the Forest.

Every attempt should be made to utilize Forest personnel in trainee positions.

Dispatching Resources

Initial Attack remains an SDC responsibility. In most cases when an Incident Management Team has been ordered, the Dispatch Center Manager, in consultation with the Unit FMO, will initiate an expanded dispatch plan to support the incident management team.

Demobilization

Demobilization shall be carried out in an orderly manner to accomplish a cost effective program commensurate with efficient and effective organization practices. Planning for demobilization shall begin while the fire is being mobilized. Adequate records of personnel, transportation, and equipment used or being moved during mobilization are necessary. In many instances, demobilization occurs at the same time mobilization is occurring elsewhere.

All dispatchers and coordinators involved in the mobilization – demobilization efforts, have a responsibility to assist the fire team in maintaining accurate records for the demobilization planning.

Communications for demobilization shall be through established dispatch channels. All release orders shall be recorded on the appropriate Resource Order Form.

Release of Interagency Incident Team

A line officer or a designated representative must approve the date and time of team release. The transition must be as smooth as possible and Forest fire team members should be assigned to start working with interagency team members at a predetermined time. The local fire team should be rested and off fire duty 24 hours prior to takeover.

The Interagency team should begin phasing in the Forest team as soon as demobilization planning is complete and implementation is started. Fire management activity should be at a level and workload that Forest personnel can reasonably handle.

Some criteria to be considered before the release of an Interagency Team:

- Fire must be contained.
- Most line crews should be released that are not needed for patrol and/or mop up.
- Base fire camp shut down, reduced, or in the process.
- Plans Chief has prepared a narrative fire report and individual fire report as part of the final fire package.
- Finance Chief should have all known finance problems resolved. Contact made with Forest Budget and Finance personnel. (Finance and/or Logistics Chief may have to stay longer or return to resolve problems.)
- Fire rehabilitation work completed to Forest's satisfaction or plan written to satisfaction.
- Overhead ratings completed and submitted to Forest as final package.

Debriefing

The Forest Supervisor and/or Agency Administrator and Fire Staff Officer and/or Forest FMO should debrief the incident management team and prepare evaluation before release.

Forest Supervisor should give overall team performance evaluation in writing considering the following:

> Were incident objectives met?
> Was Firefighter and Public Safety the top priority?
> Were incident operations conducted in a cost effective manner?
> Was transfer of command re-delegated?

Identify outstanding or poor performance of individuals, crews, or others involved in the suppression, mobilization, and demobilization of the fire.

Were there any special problems or recommendations to be brought to the attention of the Team's Zone or Geographic Board or Regional Fire Coordinator?

X. Safety
SAFETY IS THE NUMBER ONE PRIORITY FOR ALL PERSONNEL ENGAGED IN OR SUPPORTING FIRE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES ON THE FOREST.

Fire management work is one of the most hazardous jobs encountered by Forest Service personnel. The Incident Commander and all supervisors will always put the safety of his/her personnel first. **There is no fire situation so serious that the life of anyone should be risked in order to get to the fire sooner, get the fire out quicker, or to keep the burned areas smaller.**

FSM 5130.3(4)c "Exception to Consideration of Suppression Cost or Resource Loss. When a potentially life-threatening event exists, action shall be taken to provide for the safety of firefighters, other personnel, and the public regardless of suppression cost or resource loss. For related direction concerning Endangered Species Act consultation, see FSM 2671.45f, Consultation in Emergencies."

All employees will abide by the **'Safety First'** policy. Each employee has a responsibility for his/her personal safety and that of fellow employees. It is also everyone's responsibility to call attention to any unsafe practice that is observed.

- All fire personnel will follow the "10 Standard Fire Fighting Orders" and the "18 Watch-Out Situations" and shall practice the principles of "Lookouts, Communications, Escape Routes, and Safety Zones (LCES)." These basics of fire fighting survival will be utilized as a checklist for supervisory personnel on the fire, and as a source for other fire line personnel to pose questions to supervisory personnel whenever they have concerns about their personal safety.
- On Type III incidents a safety officer order is recommended.
- All Type I and II incidents will be staffed with a qualified safety officer.
- Seat belts and headlights shall be used at all times while traveling in any vehicle.
- Required personal protective equipment (PPE) will be worn at all times. Job Hazard analyses will dictate appropriate PPE to be utilized for all fire management activities.
- Fire shelters and PPE will be worn by all firefighters at all times on all wildland and prescribed fires.
- Speed limits and other traffic laws will be obeyed at all times.
- Safety rules, standards and accepted procedures will be adhered to at all times.
- Personnel will be fully qualified and current for the position filled.
- The Work-Rest Guidelines will be strictly adhered to by all firefighting personnel.

XI.   Wildland Fire Use for Resource Benefits

Wildland Fire Use for Resource Benefits (WFU) refers to the management of naturally ignited wildland fires to accomplish specific resource management objectives as described in each Fire Management Unit.

i.   Objectives

The objectives of WFU on the Gila National Forest are to provide for the protection and safety of firefighters and public,

to use fire from naturally occurring ignitions in a safe, carefully planned and cost effective manner to benefit, protect, maintain and enhance Gila National Forest natural resources;

to reduce future fire suppression costs

and restore natural ecological processes to achieve management objectives in the Gila National Forest Plan.

ii.   Factors Affecting Decision Criteria for Wildland Fire Use

The Gila National Forest has a land management plan that allows for WFU.

The decision to manage a wildland fire for resource benefits on the Gila National Forest will follow the direction provided in the <u>Wildland Fire Use Implementation Procedures Reference Guide (May, 2005)</u> located in J Drive.Decision Criteria Checklist
The Decision Criteria Checklist consists of three sections: Decision Elements, Recommended Response Action, and Justification for Suppression Response. The Decision Elements consist of five questions the Agency Administrator must answer. This process

allows the Agency Administrator to gain better situational awareness and helps to evaluate if the current wildland fire should be managed under a WFU response. These questions assess threats from the fire, potential effects of the fire, risk from the fire, effects of other fire activity on management capability, and allow the Agency Administrator to consider external or other unanticipated issues.

Coordination with cooperating agencies such as New Mexico State Forestry or BLM is essential at the Stage I level if the fire is close to or expected to threaten private or non-agency property.
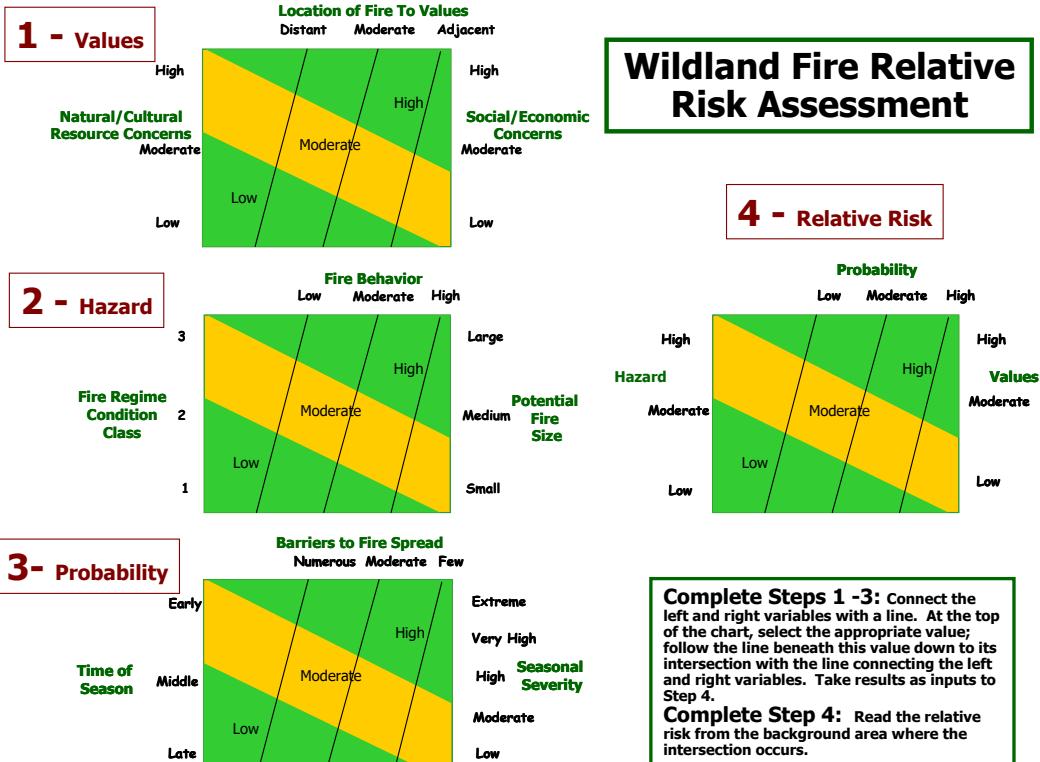
iii. Wildland Fire Relative Risk Assessment

The Federal Fire Policy requires that sound risk management be a foundation for all fire management activities.

Using fire to meet resource objectives contains an inherent level of risk given the number of unknowns and uncertainty in what the future will bring. The relative risk rating is intended to characterize the general magnitude of risks associated with implementing a wildland fire use incident at a snapshot in time.

The Wildland Fire Relative Risk Assessment provides the Agency Administrator with a quick but comprehensive assessment of the relative risk of the fire. The relative risk rating produced from this assessment is a decision support aid for the Agency Administrator in answering the Decision Criteria Checklist elements and during the Periodic Fire Assessment.

The relative risk assessment chart uses three risk components: values, hazard, and probability. Each of these components is assessed in an independent step. Then, the three outputs are evaluated in a final step that provides the relative risk for the fire.

Wildland Fire Relative Risk Assessment

Relative Risk Assessment Local Input Parameters:

Time of Season:

Early: The current date is in the early portion of the historic fire season, at least two-thirds of the established fire season remains and the peak of burning activity is still to come.

Middle: The current date is in the middle of the historic fire season, at least one third of that period has passed and no less than one-third remains. The peak burning activity period either has occurred, is occurring now, or will occur very soon.

Late: The current date is in the latter part of the historic fire season. At least two-thirds of the historic period has passed, the peak burning activity period has occurred, and the probability of a season-ending or fire ending event is increasing quickly.

Extrapolating from historical fire occurrence on the Gila NF from 1970-2006 and with the assumption that fires occurred at a constant and equal rate during a given month the data shows that fire occurrence approximations are as follows: 33% of fires occurred prior to June 15, from June 15 to July 15 another 33% of fires occurred. The last 33% of fires occurred after July 15.
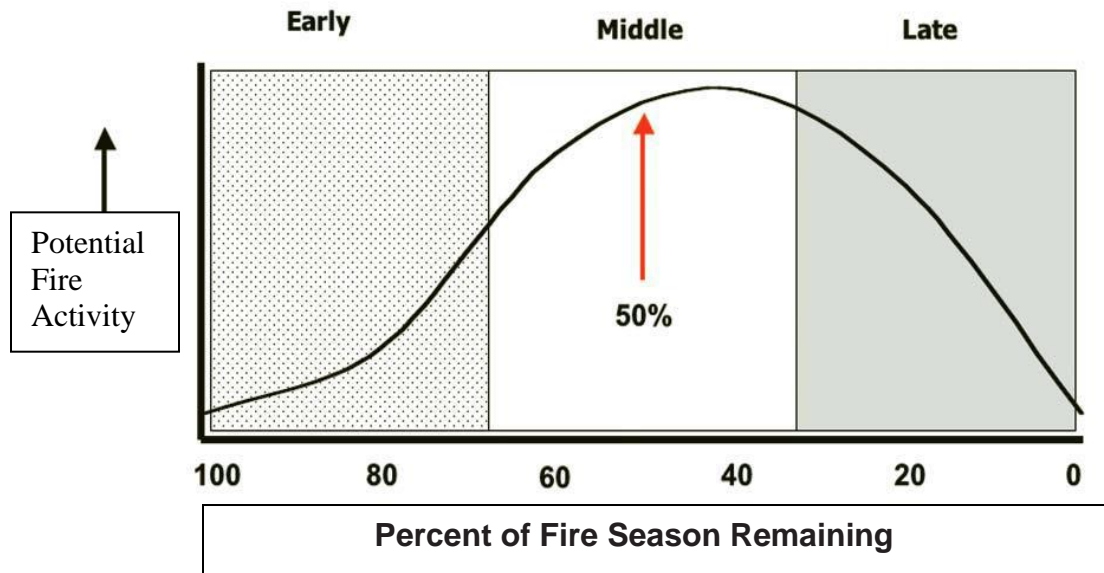
Early: **(prior to 6-15)**
Mid: 15 days prior and 15 days after median mid season date of 7/1 **(6-15 to 7-15)**
Late: **(7-16 to season ending event)**

Potential Fire Size:
Small: Fire Classes A-C (0-100ac)
Moderate: Fire Classes D&E (100-1000ac)
Large: Fire Classes F&G (>1000 ac)

Fire Danger:
Extreme   ERC=93 and up
Very high   ERC=83-92
High   ERC=42-82
Moderate   ERC=21-41
Low   ERC=0-20

Note: These values are based on the National Fire Danger Rating System.

Line officers are responsible for determining whether or not they will manage a natural ignition. If a "Go" decision is made, they will meet with the district ID Team to develop a

WFIP. The Forest Fire Management Staff must be informed of decisions to manage wildland fires.

iv.   Implementation Procedures

The FMO or designee will follow the procedures and requirements provided in the Wildland Fire Use Implementation Procedures Reference Guide (May, 2005) located in J:\fsfiles\ to assist in making decisions on the type of action to be taken on wildland fires. The recommendation for managing a WFU event will be taken to the appropriate Agency Administrator or designee for approval.

Approval Authority

WFIP Stage	Regional Preparedness Level	Approving Official
I	1 - 3	District Ranger *
I	4	Regional Forester
I	5	Regional Forester requests concurrence from USFS Representative to NMACG at NIFC
III	1 – 5	Forest Supervisor

*District Ranger must possess requisite fire management training,

knowledge, experience and staff available to serve as approving official.
When the Regional Preparedness Level is 4 or 5, forests must coordinate and receive approvals from the Regional Forester prior to proceeding with a WFU project by completing and submitting the Southwestern Region WFU Approval Form located in J: Drive. The WFIP will be initiated for all perspective WFU fires on the Gila National Forest. The Stage I: Initial Fire Assessment, which includes the Decision Criteria Checklist and Wildland Fire Relative Risk Assessment, will be completed by the appropriate line officer supported by the unit duty officer or FUMA.

i.   Wildland Fire Implementation Plan Preparation

Concurrent with the appropriate line officer's decision to manage a wildland fire for Resource Benefit, an analysis team will be activated to begin preparation of the Wildland Fire Implementation Plan. The site-specific WFIP will be prepared in accordance with criteria, direction and timeframes outlined in the Wildland Fire Use Implementation Procedures Reference Guide (May, 2005) located in J: Drive . The guide will determine the required stages of analysis to complete. It must be noted that agency administrators and staff have the prerogative to move up and complete the next or all WFIP Stage(s) for any and all wildland fires at any time.

The line officer supported by the FUMA and/or unit duty officer will prepare a WFIP to evaluate and document decisions for the appropriate response to candidate wildland fire use events. Resource specialists may be included as appropriate.

Specific completion timeframes have been established for each stage of the WFIP. The following table shows maximum completion timeframes for WFU planning tasks.

WFIP Completion Timeframes

WFIP Stage	Maximum Completion Timeframe
I	8 hours after confirmed fire detection and Strategic Fire Size-Up
II	48 hours after need indicated by Planning Needs Assessment
III	7 days after need indicated by Planning Needs Assessment
Periodic Fire Assessment	As part of all stages and on assigned frequency thereafter by the signature line officer

For each WFU action, the Agency Administrator (or delegated individual) is required to initially affirm and periodically reaffirm the capability to manage the fire as a WFU event. This process is intended to document and ensure management accountability throughout the duration of the WFU event.

There is no assigned timeframe for a periodic assessment to be completed. The managing unit will make a decision on the frequency to which it will be completed. Recommended time frames for the periodic assessments are as follows: grass fuel types reassessed daily, shrub and timber types reassessed every 1 to 5 days (WPFMPIG 98). It is recommended that if a WFU fire is expected to increase in size by 10% or 20 acres (which ever is less) that a periodic assessment be completed. If a unit should determine that its needs fall outside the above parameters that decision needs to be documented with a rationale. A step-up method should be considered for determining the monitoring and assessment timing. As the fire increases in size, activity, and complexity monitoring and assessment should increase in frequency as well. A step down method can also be used as the fire decreases in activity and complexity. The managing unit(s) must define and justify the standards for determining timing of both step-up and step-down methods.

An update to the Regional Office should be submitted whenever there is a significant change in the management of the fire, fire behavior, a change is made in the WFIP from stage II to stage III, a change is made from WFU to escaped wildfire status, or any other major event.

v. Impacts of Plan Implementation

Fire use will be designed to provide protection for life, property, public safety and natural resource management. All programs will be planned with these concerns, along with cost effectiveness, as primary factors.

vi. Required Personnel

The number of personnel required for an incident will vary. Management could range from an Incident Commander Type IV (ICT4) to a Fire Use Manager Type I or II (FUM1 &

FUM2) to a full FUMT. Staffing levels will be re-evaluated on a daily basis and adjusted based on potential management action points, numbers of ignitions and size of fires, predicted weather, etc.

At a minimum, an ICT4 will be assigned to every wildland fire used to achieve resource benefit (FSM 5145.2). Every wildland fire used to achieve resource objectives requires that the line officer designate an ICT4 or FUMA who is directly responsible for all aspects of the WFIP. The FUMA may individually manage multiple fires that do not require significant staffing, external communication, or holding resources for plan implementation, or the FUMA may be the leader of a specialized team needed to manage one or more complex fires. An individual FUMA must be assigned for each WFU event requiring Stage III analysis.

The determination of the appropriate level of implementation qualifications is made through the Wildland Fire Use Management Assessment, Part 2: Fire Use Manager Decision Chart (See Wildland Fire Management Assessment, WFIP Stage I, Periodic Fire Assessment).

Qualified FUMAs and priority FUM1 trainees on the Gila NF:

Qualification	Name	Position	Office Phone	Cell
FUM1	Charlie Elliott	Fire Use Coordinator	(505) 388-8450	(505) 388-8348
FUM2 FUM1(t)	Toby Richards	Reserve RD ADFMO	(575) 533-6231	
FUM2	Robbie Gallardo	Wilderness RD DFMO	(575) 536-2250	(575) 313-3230
FUM2 FUM1(t)	Dennis Fahl	Black Range DFMO	(575) 894-6677	(575- 7401549

Implementation and management of a WFU event will generally consist of the following positions:

Low complexity events – (WFIP Stages I and II):

+ ICT4, FUM2 or FUM1
+ Information officer
+ Long-term Fire Analyst
High complexity events (WFIP Stage III):

+ FUM2 or FUM1
+ Fire Information Officer
+ Long-term Fire Analyst
+ Operations Section Chief Type 2
+ Logistics Section Chief Type 2

- Planning Section Chief Type 2
- Long-term Fire Analyst (Formerly Prescribed Fire Behavior Analyst)
- FUMTs can have three trainee positions
- Safety Officer
- Fire Effects Monitor
- Resource Advisor

Staff positions responsible for initiating and implementing steps in the decision process necessary to support the appropriate management response include, but are not limited to:

- District Fire Duty Officer
- District Ranger
- Forest Resource Specialist

- Wilderness Resource Advisor (only when in Wilderness)
- Forest Fire Duty Officer

vii.   Public Information

General news queries on WFU events will be directed to the Gila National Forest Public Information Officer, Loretta Benavidez 388-8245 (c: 575-538-1426). Inquiries involving congressional or local politicians should be directed to the Forest Public Affairs Officer, Andrea Martinez 388-8211. Prompt reply to such queries is essential and should include interpretation of the WFU program. The FUMA or District Duty Officer will provide periodic fire information updates to the Forest FIO.

Current information should be transmitted to the PIO in a timely manner, preferably in the morning to satisfy most morning newspaper and broadcast deadlines throughout the day. Special situations and live taped reports for radio may require additional reports.

Requests for media visits will be directed to the Forest FIO and coordinated with the FUMA. Requests for aerial photographic coverage by news media should be approved by the FUMA and coordinated with the Forest Dispatcher, the Forest FIO and the Forest Aviation Officer.

viii.   Records

A permanent project record will be kept on district for each WFU event. Forest files located in the J drive should be updated and kept current during WFU events.

The minimum documentation will include:

- The approved planning documents including all amendments and revisions (WFIP, WFSA, Risk Analysis, etc.)
- Monitoring reports and summaries of findings, along with a summary of all monitoring activities.
- Revalidation and certification documents.
- Funding codes and cost accounting.
- Project maps for all fires will be recorded in the Forest fire history GIS layer annually.
- Fire behavior information.
- 209's
- Other information as appropriate for the situation, such as photo points and photos.

ix.   Cost Tracking

WFU events will be assigned individual "G" codes to track expenditures. If an event is declared an escaped wildland fire, a "P" code will be assigned. Duty officers in cooperation with the Forest Fire Business Management Specialist are responsible for short term cost reporting.

A hard copy of expenditures should be retained for district records and an electronic copy should be stored in the WFU database.

Forest Policy
x.   **All re-supply for any individual wildland fire must be completed within 45 days.**

XII.   Prescribed Fire

The Fire Management Units will allow site specific management ignited fire in accordance with NEPA guidelines and the following Interagency Prescribed Fire, Planning and Implementation Procedures Reference Guide, September 2006, Appendix J.

The Gila National Forest prescribed fire program treats natural and activity fuel accumulations to meet resource management objectives as outlined in the Gila National Forest Plan. Treatments have traditionally included wildlife habitat enhancement, range habitat improvement and hazardous fuels reduction.

Project-level analysis through NEPA documents the purpose and need for treatment and identifies the goals and objectives of prescribed fire. Direction for management areas identified in the Gila National Forest Plan permits the use of management ignited fire as summarized in this Fire Management Plan.

i.   Planning and Documentation

a.   Annual activities that are necessary to implement the prescribed fire program

- FQRC reviews prescribed fire qualifications
- Inventory and identify fuel treatment units
- Update 10-year planning fuels treatment plan
- Collaboration efforts through the 20 Community meetings in Catron, Grant, and Sierra counties. Participants include US Forest Service, BLM, New Mexico State Forestry, local government agencies, local city and county fire departments and private home and property owners
  - Participate in interdisciplinary teams (IDT's)
  - Complete required NEPA documentation
  - Prepare project plans and layout
  - Prioritize proposed projects based on current year budget allocation.
  - Prepare, update and approve burn plans annually
  - Register prescribed burn projects through Air Quality Bureau (AQB)
  - Implement projects

- Award contracts
- Complete monitoring requirements
- Report accomplishments

b.   Personnel qualifications

The prescribed fire program is managed at the district level by the District Fire Management Officer with oversight provided by the Forest Fire Staff Officer. A district specialist is responsible for project level planning and acts as the interdisciplinary team leader or subject matter expert on assigned projects.

The line officer will ensure that all personnel involved in planning and execution of burns are qualified to perform their specific job(s)

The prescribed fire training course key can be found in Chapter 20 of the 5109.17. Employee qualifications are maintained in Incident Qualifications Certification System (IQCS). The forest policy on issuing task books is found in 5109.17. All task book certifications will follow the bylaws of the FQRC.

c.   Personnel necessary

Assign a Prescribed Fire Burn Boss (RxB1 or RxB2) to every prescribed fire (FSM 5145.1). The forest and districts will maintain a pool of qualified personnel to fill all subordinate positions.

d.   Prescribed fire burn plan format

Prepare a site-specific Prescribed Fire Burn Plan (RxBP) for each prescribed fire in advance of the ignition. This plan addresses the required elements described in the Interagency Prescribed, Planning and Implementation Procedures Reference Guide (2006). If a given element is not applicable, it should be so indicated in the RxBP.

When identifying and documenting the level of complexity (FSM 5142.1) use the NWCG Prescribed Fire Complexity Rating System Guide (NFES 2474) (FSM 5108). Keep details commensurate with project complexity. Each RxBP must meet minimum Regional requirements.

A Prescribed Fire Manager (RXM1) or a Prescribed Fire Burn Boss Type I (RxB1) develops the RxBP for a high complexity burn (FSM 5142.2). A Prescribed Fire Burn Boss Type 2 (RxB2) could develop the RxBP for a less complex burn. Each RxBP must be reviewed and recommended for line officer approval by a fire manager qualified (currency required) to plan and implement the proposed prescribed burn. Technical review by a qualified burn boss off the host unit is highly recommended to encourage peer review, mentoring and burn boss development. All burn plans must available to the SO for review by fuels and fire specialist at least two weeks prior to implementation. Type I burns require Forest Supervisor signature and must be submitted to the SO for signature at least two weeks prior to implementation. Copies of approved burns plans will be kept in the j drive in the 5140 file. Notify Forest Duty Officer and Silver City Dispatch when files have been updated to ensure the proper review process can take place in a timely fashion.

When the knowledge base, experience and staff are available at the district level to plan, develop, and execute prescribed fire in the complexity ratings of Low or Moderate, then approval authority may be delegated to the line officer. Approval authority for prescribed fires with a high complexity rating will remain at the Forest Supervisor level. If the knowledge base, experience, and staff are not available on a district, then the approval authority for all complexities shall be retained at the Forest Supervisor's Office. (FSM 5140 R3 Supplement 2/22/2000).

When the Regional Preparedness Level is 4 or 5, forests must coordinate and receive approvals from the Regional Forester prior to implementing a prescribed fire project by completing and submitting the Southwestern Region Prescribed Fire Approval Form.

e.   Weather, fire behavior, fire effects monitoring

Vegetation prescription, weather, fire behavior and prescribed fire effects monitoring are described in the project specific Burn Plan.

f.   Historic fuel treatment map

Historical fire occurrence and fuel treatment maps of post-burn activities are currently being prepared by the GIS shop and will be available upon completion.

g.   Prescribed fire project critiques

Informal reviews and after action reviews:

Burn plan documentation requires a post-burn evaluation including, assessment of objective achievement, an informal unit log and after action review.

Informal Prescribed Fire reviews:

Informal prescribed fire reviews will be conducted when a prescribed fire has a major escape or a serious injury occurs that requires medical treatment and is a chargeable accident. These reviews are completed by the Forest Fire Management Officer and associated team and chartered by the local line officer. Elements of these reviews may consist of the following:

Effectiveness	Safety
Organization	Qualifications
Policy implementation	Smoke monitoring
Job hazard analysis effectiveness	Information dissemination

Documentation requirements:

- Daily report to the SDC Zone with project description and acres accomplished.
- Go/No-Go decision signed.
- Daily operational briefing.
- Daily Revalidation
- Perimeters will be mapped.
- Report through the appropriate accounting system (i.e. FACTS).

- Initial report of an escape prescribed fire to appropriate dispatch center and the responsible line officer.
- The WFSA is the format for documenting any prescribed fire escape.
- Ensure project has been registered with the New Mexico State Air Quality Bureau.

ii.   Exceeding Existing Prescribed Fire Burn Plan

The burn plan identifies resources needed to safely and successfully ignite, execute, and hold prescribed fire throughout the range of prescriptive parameters identified. The contingency resources identified within the prescribed fire plan are identified for those rare events that occur creating or leading to a situation where the burn may become unsuccessful, considering capabilities of existing on-site resources.

Declare a prescribed fire a wildfire when the assigned Prescribed Fire Burn Boss (RxB1, RxB2 or RxB3) or Prescribed Fire Manager (RXM1 or RXM2), referenced in FSH 5109.17, determines that one or more of the following conditions or events has occurred, or is likely to occur, and cannot be mitigated within the next burning period, by implementing the mitigation/holding actions identified in the prescribed fire plan. Those conditions/events are:

a. The prescribed fire leaves the approved burn project or unit boundary.

b. The fire behavior exceeds limits described in the prescribed fire plan.

c. The fire effects are unacceptable.

d. The air quality regulatory permit conditions are exceeded and/or an air quality regulatory Notice of Violation has been issued or has been threatened to be issued.

After wildfire declaration, a project cannot be returned to prescribed fire status. Use a WFSA (FSM 5130.3, para.4) to determine the appropriate future management action.

ii.   Air Quality and Smoke Management

A. Air quality issues
Location of Class I Air sheds - Class I air sheds exist in the Gila Wilderness.

B. Description of pre-identified smoke-sensitive areas: The communities and recreation areas within and adjacent to the Gila National Forest are the pre-identified smoke-sensitive areas at the District Levels.
C. Local and regional restrictions and procedures. Defined by NM Environment Smoke Management Plan guidelines located at http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/aqb/index.html.

XIII.   Non-Fire Fuel Application:

Non-fire treatment may include thinning, lop and scatter, hand or machine piling, chipping, tree harvest, and fuelwood removal by the public. A primary objective of non-fire fuel treatment is

prescribed fire unit preparation, such as establishing control lines, clearing around values at risk, or treatment of selective areas to reduce fire intensity which may threaten control lines or result in undesirable fire intensity or severity within the treatment unit.

The emphasis for the hazardous fuels reduction program on the Gila National Forest is the treatment of heavy fuel load areas in the wildland urban interface, high resource value areas, and ecosystems currently at risk from catastrophic fire. Development of partnerships with

State agencies, local rural fire departments, private landowners, and special use permittees is a priority established by the Regional Forester.

i.   Mechanical Treatment and Other Applications

(Please refer to the individual FMU descriptions for specific project level details of the following elements.)

The Forest utilizes a variety of non-fire fuel treatment applications. Some of the methods used are: thinning, followed by lop and scatter; hand piling; whole tree yarding, chipping, or a combination of these. These treatments are especially useful in areas where prescribed fire is not feasible or in smoke-sensitive areas.

> Mechanical or hand treatments are a viable treatment alternative in interface settings where the risk of an escaped prescribed fire is unacceptable or the impacts to views in airsheds are unacceptable to the public. They are often the preferred method of treating slash generated from thinning treatments before the introduction of prescribed fire.

Non-fire applications are allowed within the Mexican Spotted Owl habitat protected and restricted areas, with mitigations.

The Forest standard and guidelines for the Northern goshawk apply to the forest and woodland communities that are outside of the Mexican spotted owl protected and restricted areas. Non-fire applications can be used for landscapes outside Goshawk post-fledgling family areas and landscapes within nesting areas, with mitigations. (See site specific NEPA)

>   a.   Annual activities to prepare for and implement the mechanical treatment program:
>
>   • Inventory and identify fuel treatment units
>   • Complete required NEPA documentation
>   • Prepare project plans and layout
>   • Prioritize proposed projects based on current year budget allocation
>   • Implement projects
>   • Award contracts
>   • Complete monitoring requirements
>   • Report accomplishments
>
>   b.   Equipment and seasonal use restrictions as it relates to each FMU

Equipment used to treat fuels may be restricted by a variety of factors. Sensitive species and erosive soils are examples of mechanical treatment restrictions. These restrictions are described in project specific NEPA analysis and decisions.

c.   Documentation requirements for monitoring:

All projects that include non-fire treatment will include specific prescriptions to meet the desired resource objectives. Monitoring plans will follow Forest Service Manual direction and will be included in the project plans. Short-term monitoring, documenting the immediate results, and long-term effectiveness monitoring objectives, and any issues or concerns identified in the related NEPA documents are strongly recommended. Permanent photo points, transects, or plots that are revisited in years following a treatment will provide information on successional trends as a result of the project. Longer term monitoring may be necessary to determine if objectives were met. The monitoring plan contained in each project will describe the protocols (Regional Monitoring Guidelines and FSM 5140) and criteria needed to determine if objectives have been met. The fuels project manager will monitor the measurable objectives identified in the FMUs and will maintain a project folder that will contain the following documentation:

1. Approved NEPA documentation
    (decision)
2. Maps

3. Cost accounting
4. Completed accomplishment form
5. Monitoring Plan

d.   Cost Accounting

Cost accounting is accomplished through tracking Project Work Plans (with associated job codes) for individual projects.

e.   Reporting and documentation for accomplishments

All accomplishments are reported through the National Fire Plan Operations and Reporting System (NFPORS) on a monthly basis. SO fire staff will use this data base to run reports as needed. All fuel treatment acres accomplished by fund type are summarized FACTS).

f.   Annual 2007 planned project list:

Refer to Gila National Forest 10 Year Comprehensive Strategy Plan for Vegetative Management Treatment Areas**.**

XIV.   Emergency Rehabilitation and Restoration

Reference FSM 2530 and FSH 2509.13 for agency policy and direction for BAER teams.

SECTION V – Organizational and Budgetary Parameters

I.   **Fire Preparedness – WFPR**

Program Direction:

The initial FY2008 budget for the Forest is $6,178,000.00. This initial budget is the same as the FY2007 final allocation.

Program Area	FY07 Goal	Contact	Comments (Optional)
Black Range	Meet fire fighter production rate of 35.85	Dennis Fahl	$465,000
Quemado	Meet fire fighter production rate of 48.26	John Pierson	$508,000
Glenwood	Meet fire fighter production rate of 35.81	James S	$375,000
Wilderness	Meet fire fighter production rate of 54.02	Robbie Gallardo	$444,000
Reserve	Meet fire fighter production rate of 17.15	Paul Womack	$294,000
Silver City	Meet fire fighter production rate of 42.79	Leroy Holguin	$404,000
SO		Shelly Crook	$1,270,000
Gila Helicopters (2) and Crews	Meet fire fighter production rate of 40.22	John Burfiend	$795,000
Gila Hotshots	Funding for national resources	Dewey Rebbe	$400,000
Silver City Hotshots	Funding for national resources	Cathleen Lowe	$400,000
Silver City National Cache	Funding for national resources	Dottie Clark/ Alex Tovar	$490,000
Silver City Airtanker Base	Funding for national resources	Robert Gomez	$170,000
Silver City Smoke Jumpers	Funding for national resources	Sarah Doehring	$155,000

II. Forest Fire Resources

Black Range
- Staff engine 621 and 622
- Staff Black, Hillsboro, and Lookout Mountain
- Staff FMO, AFMO, Station Manager, and Prevention Leader
- Staff temporary positions to meet staffing level for 7 day coverage

Quemado
- Staff engines 631, 632, and 633
- Staff Fox and Mangus Lookouts
- Staff FMO, AFMO, and Station Manager
- Staff temporary positions to meet staffing level for 7 day coverage

Glenwood
- Staff engine 641
- Staff on suppression crew
- Staff Bearwallo and Saddle Lookouts
- Staff AFMO and FMO
- Staff temporary positions to meet staffing level for 7 day coverage

Wilderness
- Staff engine 651
- Staff two suppression crews
- Staff Mogollon Baldy Lookout
- Staff FMO and AFMO
- Staff temporary positions to meet staffing level for 7 day coverage

Reserve
- Staff engine 661
- Staff Eagle Peak Lookout
- Staff FMO, AFMO, and Prevention Leader
- Staff temporary positions to meet staffing level for 7 day coverage

Silver City
- Staff engines 671 and 672
- Staff Signal Peak Lookout
- Staff FMO, AFMO, and Prevention Leader
- Staff temporary positions to meet staffing level for 7 day coverage

SO
- Staff Forest Fire Staff, FFMO Operations, Forest Fire Prevention Officer, Aviation Manager, Fire Management Trainee, and Coordination Center
- Cover SO GIS for fire support

- Cover SO Resource shop for fire support
- Cover Forest wide support for horse resources
- Cover Forest wide fire Unemployment Costs and OWPC
- Cover for Forest wide fire TOS
- Cover Forest wide fire Cell Phones, Uniforms and Utilities

National Shared Resources
- Hotshot crews are to be available for 100 day following their start date. This start date will be established by the Forest Fire Management Officer in late winter or early spring based upon seasonal severity.

III.   All Forest Resources
- **Fire Preparedness Funded Fuel Treatment (WFPR)** - Preparedness funded resources and in some circumstances suppression funded resources perform a significant amount of fuel treatment while on standby for fire suppression or other emergencies. This work is evidence of an efficiently managed fire program and contributes to overall fuel treatment accomplishments. These acres should be reported as WFHF project target accomplishment if these activities were planned using WFHF funds. WFHF planned fuel treatment acres accomplished using WFPR or WFSU are to be reported through FACTS as Hazardous Fuels Reduction. If these projects were planned and prepared with funding other than WFHF then they should be reported in FACTS using the appropriate fund type.
- **Funding Base Salary** - Upon assignment to an incident, all employees, including preparedness funded resources, will charge base salary to Wildland Fire Suppression (WFSU - P or G codes) funds. All units are to adhere to the people report for number of days funded and the appropriate fund codes associated with days funded.
- All units are to monitor expenditures carefully and ensure that all spending is approved. Every effort should be made to contain costs and save dollars.
- All units will need to contain travel and training to that which is necessary for employee performance and development. Supply purchases should be kept to a minimum. Purchase only that which is necessary for the safe and efficient operation of fire resources.
- The job code for all fire resources on the Gila is WFPR06

IV.   Organizational Chart for Fiscal Year 2008
See Appendix K for the Fiscal Year 2008 funded organization charts.

Local cooperators primarily in an interface setting for initial and extended attack incidents supplement the existing interagency staff and associated preparedness resources. Local resources will be used for these purposes as well as to suppress escaped fires. Local and National resources from the Southwest Area as well as other geographic areas will be used as appropriate.

Supplemental resources will be ordered to provide increased firefighting capability during periods of high fire danger as well as during periods where ongoing and anticipated levels of initial attack would result in a draw down of local resources. Administratively determined (AD) hiring authority is used on a discretionary basis to supplement agency resources with

those staffed by local cooperators outside the parameters of county cooperative fire agreements for initial attack.

V.   Cooperative agreements and interagency contacts

The Forest operates through a Joint Powers Operating Plan between the USDI; Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), the USDA - Forest Service (USFS), and the State of New Mexico. The purpose of this operating plan is to establish an agreement for wildland fire initial attack procedures for the Gila-Las Cruces Zone, State of New Mexico.

The Forest also operates under the Gila and Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests Fire Management and Mutual Dependency Agreement. The area of 2 miles on each side of the primary boundary is designated as a mutual dependency zone. For fires that may cross the boundary, appropriate management response and management of the incident will be jointly agreed upon by the affected line officers.

New Mexico State Highway Department. The Gila has occasion to initiate road and highway check and prevention stations. These check stations will only be initiated upon request from the Forest Supervisor's Office. The Forest Supervisor's Office will notify the New Mexico State Highway Department of the intentions and locations of these check stations. Notification will initially be by telephone and follow up with letter.

The telephone call and letter should be to:

District #1 Highway Engineer
New Mexico State Highway Department
Deming, NM 88030
(505)-544-6530

District #6 Highway Engineer
New Mexico State Highway Department
P. O. Box 2159
Milan, NM 87021
(505)-285-3200

New Mexico State Police. On occasion, the Gila National Forest is asked to participate in search and rescue operations. The following inserts from the Forest Service manual provide the authority, responsibility, and operation, direction for search and rescue.

Search and Rescue Operations. Search and Rescue Operations and Guidelines can be referenced in the Interagency Agreements (Budget & Finance Office).

New Mexico State Forestry. The New Mexico State Forester has jurisdiction over all State and private lands within the boundaries of the State of New Mexico.

There are proper channels which must be followed when contacting the State Forester. The Forest Dispatcher will call the Southwest Interagency Coordination Center who will in turn contact the State Forester. These channels will be followed when reporting smoke on State

and private land or when ordering suppression assistance on wildfires inside the National Forest boundaries.

The New Mexico State Forester is also the responsible representative for the <u>Multi-Agency Cooperative Fire Prevention Program</u>. Any type of fire or smoking restrictions must be handled through the proper channels with all agencies involved.

<u>New Mexico Department of Game and Fish</u>. At times, the Gila National Forest is asked to cooperate with the State Game and Fish Department during the various hunting and fishing seasons. This cooperation is mainly for law enforcement and hunter protection and safety matters.

VI.   Equipment Rental Agreements

These agreements are located in the Gila National Forest Supervisor's Office under the supply plan which includes:

- Agency-Provided Medical Care
- Regional Equipment Rates
- Emergency Equipment Rental Agreements
- Blanket Purchase Agreements
- Order Forms

VII.   Contract Suppression and Prescribed Fire Resources

Contract resources are available and information may be obtained from the Forest Contracting Officer, Billy Lawerence.

SECTION VI – Monitoring and Evaluation

I.   **Annual Monitoring Requirements**

Monitoring is accomplished on all hazardous fuels projects as well as all treatments completed in support of resource management activities on the Forest (wildlife habitat improvement, site preparation, etc.). Monitoring plans for each project are developed during the project planning phase and are included in each prescribed fire burn plan or project folder. Monitoring requirements are outlined in the Gila National Forest Plan.

II.   **Reporting Requirements**

Individual Fire Reports (FSM 5182.1, 5100-29) are electronically transmitted to the Dispatch Center by the end of December 31. The Dispatch Center audits/corrects reports and enters them in the regional system within ten (10) days after the fire is declared out. Additional documentation is required for any Wildland Fire Use incident as well as fire suppression tactics which call for less than full control of the fire (confine or contain). The Wildland Fire Implementation Plan (WFIP) will be utilized to document all actions and decisions related to these types of fires.

Additionally, an ICS-209 Incident Status Summary is required daily for all fires larger than 100 acres. The ICS-209 will be submitted to the Dispatch Center by 1800 each day.

Management Attainment Reports (MAR) and Fire Fighting Production Capability (FFPC) are reported during Forest budget meetings.

Prescribed Fire Reports are completed. FACTS will be used to maintain accurate records of historical prescribed fire and fuels accomplishments. This database needs to be updated on a regular basis (monthly is recommended).

A copy of these reports can be obtained in FIRE STAT.

III.   **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monitoring and evaluation are separate, sequential activities that provide information to determine whether programs and projects are meeting forest plan direction. Monitoring involves the collection of information, on a sample basis, from sources specified in the Forest Plan. Evaluation of monitoring results is used to determine the effectiveness of the Forest Plan and the need to either change the plan through amendment or revision, or to continue with the plan. Overall direction is found in FSM 1922.7; FSH 1909.12 (Ch. 6); and 36 CFR 219.12(k) of the rule adopted in 1982.

Conduct monitoring and evaluation of the fire program to determine whether the program and associated projects are meeting Forest plan direction. Specific goals are to:

Preparedness reviews, technical reviews, thirty mile abatement, staff rides and the peer review will be used to validate the effectiveness of the fire program as a whole. This will ensure that Forest plan goals and objectives are being achieved and management prescriptions are being implemented as directed.

Determine if the costs of implementing the fire program and the management effects are occurring as predicted.

Carry out monitoring at intensity commensurate with the risks, costs, and values involved in meeting fire program and Forest plan objectives through resource management. Use the formal management review system in FSM 1400 as an approach to evaluate the overall effectiveness of fire program monitoring. Involve the public and other agencies, as appropriate, in the monitoring process.

IV. Monitoring Levels

There are three distinct levels of monitoring:

1. Implementation monitoring,

2. Effectiveness monitoring, and

3. Validation monitoring.

These levels are defined in FSM 1922.7.

V. Implementation Monitoring

Conduct implementation monitoring as part of routine assignments and document the results in project files as part of fire management responsibilities. Use implementation monitoring to determine if prescriptions, projects, and activities within the fire program

are implemented as designed and are in compliance with fire program and Forest plan objectives, standards, and guidelines.

VI. Effectiveness Monitoring

Effectiveness monitoring determines if plans, prescriptions, projects, and activities are effective in meeting management objectives, standards, and guidelines. Resource and/or technical specialists should conduct this level of monitoring on a limited basis as determined by resource values and risk, and by public issues. Begin effectiveness monitoring only after determining that the fire program prescription, project, or activity to be monitored has been implemented according to Forest plan direction.

VII. Validation Monitoring

Validation monitoring determines whether the initial data and assumptions used in development of the fire program are correct or if there is a better way to meet fire program regulations, policies, goals, and objectives. Conduct validation monitoring when effectiveness monitoring results indicate that basic assumptions are questionable. In general, conduct validation monitoring studies in close coordination with research personnel. Limit the scope of validation monitoring to those standards that are not reasonably substantiated by existing research.

VIII. Monitoring and Evaluation Recommendations and Requirements

Monitoring and evaluation recommendations and requirements are found in the Forest plan. Monitoring and evaluation of the fire program can include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. The changes in fire activity (fire occurrence and acres burned by size and intensity) and comparison with the predictions derived for that area where fuel conditions have been altered by management practices.

2. A comparison of the prevention program projections for human-caused fires, with trends evidenced by the fire occurrence statistics.

3. An evaluation of the adequacy of the fire management organization to meet the expected fire frequency and size distribution at the expected cost and net value change levels as projected for the selected fire program.

4. A determination of the adequacy of the values change analysis by comparing the reported annual value change from the individual fire reports with the projected analysis.

5. Assessment of implementation of national, Regional, and local safety direction.

IX. Evaluation of Monitoring Results

Monitoring and evaluation are separate, sequential tasks. Monitoring is designed to observe and record the results of both natural processes and actions permitted by the Forest plan. Evaluation examines those results, determines how well those results meet Forest plan direction, and identifies measures to keep the plan viable.

X. Evaluation Techniques

Use a full spectrum of techniques and methods to evaluate the results obtained from monitoring. Evaluation techniques include, but are not limited to:

1. Site-specific observations by on-site resource specialists.

2. Field assistance trips by other technical specialists.

3. General field observations by unit officials.

4. On-going accomplishment reporting processes.

5. Formal management reviews on a scheduled basis.

6. Discussions with other agencies and the public users.

7. Management team review of monitoring results.

8. Interdisciplinary team reviews of monitoring results.

9. Involvement with existing research activities.

10. Review and analysis of records documenting monitoring results.