



NATIONAL WILDFIRE COORDINATING GROUP

National Interagency Fire Center
3833 S. Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

MEMORANDUM

Reference: NWCG#003-2009

To: NWCG Executive Board, NWCG Subgroup Chairs, and GACG Chairs

From: NWCG Chair *Brian McManis*

Date: February 5, 2009

Subject: Interagency Large Fire Cost Reviews - Process and Guidance

The high costs of wildland fire suppression, particularly large and complex incidents, are of considerable concern to Congress, the Office of Management and Budget, the Government Accountability Office, the public, and the agencies themselves. The Department of Interior agencies and the Forest Service have committed to take comprehensive actions to address the high cost of wildland fire suppression and improve program management by increasing oversight and accountability through a large fire cost containment review process.

The National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) has developed an interagency Large Fire Cost Review Guidebook for use by all Federal wildland fire management agencies to ensure consistency in the review process across Departments. This guidance is intended to be used for after-the-fact reviews at the local/state/regional level to identify lessons learned. This is a living document which will change as we work through the process over the next several years.

An Interagency Large Fire Cost Review will be conducted when an incident (single fire or complex) meets or exceeds Federal combined expenditures of \$10 million.

A review may also be conducted when an incident (single fire or fire complex) meets or is expected to meet one or more of the following criteria:

- The predicted time to achieve the fire management objective exceeds 21 days.
- There are significant political, social, natural resource, or policy concerns.

- There are significant and complicated cost-share or multi-jurisdictional issues.
- The affected agency requests a review.

It is the responsibility of the Agency Administrator to monitor large fire costs and advise the appropriate individual(s) within their agency of the need for a Large Fire Cost Review. The agency director will provide a delegation of authority to the Cost Review Team (Large Fire Guidebook, Chapter 2) authorizing the implementation of a review. When a multi-jurisdictional fire requires review, the local agency administrator will determine which agency will be designated as the lead in the review process.

A process for tracking recommendations from interagency reviews to improve internal accountability will be developed.

Please ensure this guidance is distributed to your agencies for implementation in the 2009 fire season.

Attachment A: Interagency Large Fire Cost Review Guidebook

Attachment B: Draft Delegation of Authority