

***Managing the Unexpected in Prescribed Fire and  
Fire Use Operations:***

**A Workshop on the High Reliability Organization**

**May 10-13, 2004**

**LaFonda Hotel  
Santa Fe, New Mexico**

**Applications Due: March 12, 2004**

**Sponsored by:**

**National Park Service  
U. S. Forest Service  
The Nature Conservancy  
NWCG Social Science Task Group  
Rocky Mountain Research Station  
Wildland Fire Lessons Learned Center  
U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
International Association of Wildland Fire**

## **Workshop Content:**

Using the key ideas developed in their book *Managing the Unexpected: Assuring High Performance in an Age of Complexity*, written by Karl E. Weick and Kathleen Sutcliffe, Professors of Organizational Behavior and Psychology at the University of Michigan Business School, attendees will be introduced to the concept of a “High Reliability Organization (HRO).” At the conclusion of the workshop, attendees will be able to apply the HRO framework to both prescribed fire and fire use operations.

The workshop will consist of four main parts:

1. A discussion of HRO’s led by Dr. Weick and Dr. Sutcliffe.
2. A Staff-Ride to the Cerro Grande prescribed burn at Los Alamos.
3. A facilitated day of discussion where attendees will develop action items to apply the concepts of HRO’s to prescribed fire and fire use operations at the local, Regional and National levels.
4. A one half-day commitment exercise facilitated by Robert Kegan and Lisa Lahey of the Graduate School of Education at Harvard University.

### ***The High Reliability Organization: The Cornerstone for Managing the Unexpected in Fire Use Operations***

HRO’s are defined as organizations having “less than their fair share of accidents” even though they perform, sometimes on a daily basis, high-risk operations. HRO’s are “Mindful” in that they are:

- Preoccupied with failure
- Reluctant to simplify interpretations
- Sensitive to operations
- Committed to resilience
- Defer to expertise

“We attribute the success of HROs in managing the unexpected to their determined efforts to act mindfully. By this we mean that they organize themselves in such a way that they are better able to notice the unexpected in the making and halt its development.” *Weick and Sutcliffe*

“...the ability to deal with a crisis situation is largely dependent on the structures that have been developed before chaos arrives. The event can in some ways be considered as an abrupt and brutal audit at a moment’s notice, everything that was left unprepared becomes a complex problem, and every weakness comes to the forefront.” *Lagadec, in Preventing Chaos in a Crisis.*

## **Target Audience:**

This Conference/Workshop is open to personnel from all agencies, Federal, State and non governmental entities at all levels of their organizations, who are involved in the planning, implementation and/or approval of prescribed fire and fire use operations.

## **Workshop Location:**

The Workshop will be held at the “LaFonda on the Plaza”, in downtown Santa Fe, New Mexico. A block of rooms at the LaFonda and adjacent hotels within easy walking distance of LaFonda have been committed at the GSA rate of \$99 per night (plus taxes). All room reservations **must** be made through the LaFonda Hotel.

## **Workshop Schedule:**

The Workshop will begin at 9:00 AM on Monday, May 10, 2004 and wrap-up on Thursday May 13, 2004 at 5:00 PM.

*“It’s not about identifying unproductive behavior...it’s not about coaxing or cajoling or even giving poor performance reviews. Its about understanding the complexities of people’s behavior, guiding them through a productive process...and helping them cope with the inner conflict that is preventing them from achieving their goals.” Robert Kegan and Lisa Laskow Lahey, “The Real Reason People Won’t Change,” Harvard Business Review.*

## **Registration and Fees:**

**Registration is open to all interested individuals; however, there will be a limit of 120 persons selected in order to allow for a diversity of individuals, agencies and backgrounds, and to make the breakout work groups workable. Please include information about your position, and prescribed fire and/or fire use qualifications.**

Applications are due by **March 12, 2004**. Please fill out the form found on the last page of this flyer, and send it via Snail Mail, Fax or E-mail to Dick Mangan, Conference Coordinator, at the addresses/fax number/E-mail shown. **All applicants must include their E-mail address.**

The workshop fee for each participant is **\$275.00**.

Workshop fee includes: pre-work material, Workshop attendance, transportation to the Staff Ride area, bag Lunch the day of the Staff Ride, and Banquet on Wednesday night.

Selected individuals will be notified by **March 22, 2004**.

*“Weick and Sutcliffe challenge us as managers to maintain an ‘awareness of discriminatory detail’ and focus on our ability to discover and correct errors that could escalate into a crisis.”  
Jerry Williams, Director, Fire & Aviation Management, U. S. Forest Service, Washington, D. C.*

# **Application Form**

Must be **RECEIVED** no later than Friday, March 12, 2004

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and Fire Use Operations***

***May 10-13, 2004***

***LaFonda Hotel  
Santa Fe, New Mexico***

***Name:*** \_\_\_\_\_

***Organization/Agency:*** \_\_\_\_\_

***Address:*** \_\_\_\_\_

***City/State/ZIP:*** \_\_\_\_\_

***Phone #:*** \_\_\_\_\_

***Fax #:*** \_\_\_\_\_

***E-Mail:*** \_\_\_\_\_

***Prescribed Fire/Fire Use Quals:*** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Send to:** ***Dick Mangan  
11400 Kona Ranch Road  
Missoula, MT 59804***

***Fax: 406-728-2097***

***E-mail: [blackbull@bigsky.net](mailto:blackbull@bigsky.net)***