



**UPPER COLORADO RIVER
INTERAGENCY FIRE MANAGEMENT**
NPS Colorado National Monument
BLM Grand Junction and Colorado River Valley
USFS White River, Grand Mesa and
Uncompahgre National Forests



SLOW Guide

Situational Local Operations Working Guide

1. Fire Environment and “Response to Wildland Fire”

Some known local considerations which cause hazardous conditions and could affect the fire management response are:

- a. the presence of oil and gas facilities and/or traffic associated with these operations,
- b. areas with cliff bands or rock faces,
- c. areas with toxic gases present,
- d. mountain pine beetle activity areas with lodge pole pine mortality,
- e. wildland urban interface areas,
- f. areas with unexploded military ordinance (UXO),
- g. extreme weather factors described as red flag conditions or similar forecasts,
- h. high temperature and/or extreme low humidity meriting the concern of heat effects,
- i. high elevation operations resulting in increased levels of fire fighter fatigue
- j. cooperator 800Mhz radio systems resulting in interoperability issues,
- k. traveling along and accessing fires in the I-70 corridor,
- l. accessing fires when it is necessary to cross the Colorado River in areas of high flows,
- m. helicopter operations which may not over fly I-70,
- n. gusting box canyon winds common across the Unit.

Initial attack Incident Commanders should coordinate with Zone Duty Officers as these hazardous conditions make affect response. Actions may include: 1) initial attack-full suppression, 2) indirect actions which may be combined with point protection, 3) fire monitoring and reporting observations.

2. Fire Activity In Areas of Oil and Gas Development

Unique and evolving hazards are present in areas with oil and gas development. Those engaged in managing fire in this environment need to be familiar with the Unit's list of protocols and have had orientation to hazards which may be encountered.

Off unit resources will normally be dispatched with a local resource when fire activity is taking place in an area with oil and gas development. Hazards associated with areas of oil and gas development are numerous and review of the following is important prior to responding: 1) Red Book, Chapter 7-pg. 15, 2) IRPG-pgs. 26-27, 3) UCR Protocols-Unit briefing package or orientation.

3. Fuels Conditions-Associated Fire Behavior Hazards

Of most concern are areas of dead lodge pole pine which are common in the East Zone of the Unit. Those responding should review the “USFS-R2 Fire Operations Guidance in Bark Beetle Stands.” Snag hazards and areas of extreme fuels loading are unique hazards which must be considered in the response to any fire.

Other unique hazardous fuels conditions found across the Unit are:

- 1) gambles oak where live fuel moisture is less than 125%,
- 2) gambles oak and mountain shrub types with green leaf frost effects,
- 3) cured cheat grass with heavy and continuous fuel loads,
- 4) areas with dead vegetation, i.e. heavy fuel concentrations or standing snags such as that found in stands of engleman spruce and subalpine fir where insect and disease outbreaks are causing extensive mortality.