



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240

SEP 18 2015

OWF POLICY MEMORANDUM 2015 – 009

To: Director, Bureau of Land Management
Director, National Park Service
Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs
Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation
Director, U.S. Geological Survey

From: Jim Douglas, Director – Office of Wildland Fire *Dennis Schmidt acting for*

Subject: Preliminary Guidance for Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 Funds Execution Wildland Fire Budget Allocations

Purpose: This memorandum provides the Preliminary DOI Wildland Fire Budget Allocations for FY 2016, for the period beginning October 1, 2015.

Scope: Fire management funded programs and activities in the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), the National Park Service (NPS), the Office of Wildland Fire (OWF), and the Department-wide fire activities. This memo includes allocation amounts; provides caution for the potential implications of a 2016 Continuing Resolution (CR); describes carryover policy; describes continued Fuels Management project work under a CR; includes Emergency Stabilization and Severity authority caps; and outlines limitations to some Department-wide activities.

Time Frame: This Policy Memorandum is effective immediately and remains in effect until rescinded or modified.

Policy: This allocation is based on the levels identified in proposed House of Representatives bill, H.R. 2822, as it represents the most conservative appropriation for FY 2016 at this point in time. Enactment of a Continuing Resolution (CR) is a distinct possibility, beginning October 1, 2015, which may include an across-the-board reduction. A CR would be expected to continue funding at FY 2015 levels. The percentage distribution by bureau shown in attachment 1 will be applied to the funds available under a CR.

Standard language include in most CR appropriations state:

“...SEC. 104. Except as otherwise provided in section 102, no appropriation of funds made available or authority granted pursuant to section 101 shall be used to initiate or resume any project or activity for which appropriations, funds or other authority were not available during fiscal year”

Thus, no new programs and activities should be initiated during the period of the CR.

National Cohesive Strategy (Cohesive Strategy) and Secretarial Order 3336, Rangeland Fire Prevention, Management, and Restoration Strategy (Strategy): The National Cohesive Strategy for Wildland Fire Management and the Integrated Rangeland Fire Management Strategy identify

the importance of coordination and integration of wildland fire management funding and programs with bureau land and resource management activities and with program and activities in other federal, non-federal, and non-governmental organizations. Bureaus will continue to incorporate the components of both the Cohesive Strategy and the Strategy in FY 2016. Sharing best management practices on implementation across the Wildland Fire Management program is encouraged.

In addition to funding levels provided in the attached table, the following guidance and direction applies:

Preparedness Program: In light of continued refinement of the proposed Risk Based Wildland Fire Management module, it was not used to inform this allocation.

Similar to FY 2015, exclusive use aviation contracts will only be funded with Preparedness funds.

Fuels Program: The Fuels Management program allocation remains at the FY 2015 percentage level for each bureau. This allocation assumes that within the Fuels Management budget \$10 million will be directed to support fuels management activities aimed at fulfilling trust responsibilities on reserved treaty rights lands. This portion of the allocation is directed to the BIA.

Under a CR, bureaus are reminded that Fuels Management activities undertaken within the Wildland Fire Management account are ongoing and are not prohibited by the SEC. 104 provision language. Bureaus should take full advantage of opportunities to implement fuels treatments during the period of the CR, but should exercise prudence to ensure adequate funding for staff and other program activities throughout the year. Internal management controls for hiring of personnel should be followed.

Resilient Landscapes Activities: Ten million (\$10 million) shown in the Department-wide activities allocation is assumed as the amount to be distributed for the Resilient Landscapes activities funded through the Fuels Management program, similar to the FY 2015 funding. The allocation of funds will occur once evaluations and decision on project funding is complete. The project proposal process will be issued under separate cover.

Burned Area Rehabilitation (BAR): The BAR allocation represents the decision by the Department Executives on September 11, 2015 for distribution of the program funding. A policy memorandum is being formalized and will be distributed under separate cover. Bureaus are to distribute to their highest priority BAR projects. Unallocated carryover funding from FY 2015 will be allocated on the same basis as the FY 2016 program funding. The funding table in Attachment 1 includes the unallocated carryover funding of \$1,242,000.

Suppression Operations: The Suppression Operations funding allocations represent approximately 40 percent of the estimated funding. The basis for allocation is the percent share each bureau has of the 10-year rolling average. Bureaus may identify and request additional allocations once execution reports are available.

Emergency Stabilization (ES) and Severity: Emergency Stabilization and Severity authority levels are capped at ten percent of the ten-year rolling suppression expenditure average for the Department of the Interior. Allocated Severity authority is capped at \$32 million with the residual amount shown as reserve authority.

The distribution of the Department of the Interior ES authority is based on the rolling ten-year average percentage of acres burned by bureau nationally, excluding Alaska.

The distribution of the Department of the Interior Severity authority is based on each bureau's base percentage split of the annual preparedness appropriation. The percentages are: BIA 23.02 percent; BLM 53.66 percent; FWS 10.32 percent; and NPS 13.00 percent.

FY 2016 Authority levels (\$000) are shown below:

Bureau	BIA	BLM	FWS	NPS	Reserve	Total
Emergency Stabilization	6,526	27,691	2,493	1,657	-	38,367
Severity	7,366	17,171	3,303	4,160	6,367	38,367

In the event one or more bureaus will exceed their ES or Severity authority, the Office of Wildland Fire, in collaboration with the Interior Fire Directors, will coordinate and approve the redistribution of ES and/or Severity authority between bureaus as warranted. Any recommended cap increases to the Departmental ES or Severity caps are subject to approval by the Director, Office of Wildland Fire in collaboration with the Interior Fire Directors.

Fire Facilities: The Fire Facilities project level descriptions can be found in the FY 2016 Budget Justification. Bureaus should use caution on initiating projects or activities during a CR.

In accordance with Departmental direction, \$184,000 is designated for disposal and consolidation activities that result in cost savings through reduced operations and maintenance or reduction in leased space costs. These funds are held in the parent account pending allocation for use in relocation of the Office of Wildland Fire and other offices from leased space to the National Interagency Fire Center.

Department-wide Activities: All Information Technology (IT) projects shown in the Department-wide activities list were reviewed by the Fire Management Board and will be funded as represented on the Department-wide activities list included in the DOI Spreadsheet v22.

Carryover: The following policies will apply to carryover funds in FY 2016:

- Department-wide Activities: All prior year carryover from Department-wide activities will be identified by bureau/offices and will be used to offset the FY 2016 Department-wide activity funding requirements. This analysis will be conducted early in the fiscal year and adjustments will be made as appropriate.
- Preparedness: All operational carryover will remain at the bureau/office to be used for appropriate activities in FY 2016.
- Fuels: All carryover will remain at the bureau/office to be used for appropriate use in FY 2016, including Resilient Landscapes projects.
- Suppression Operations: All operational carryover will remain at the bureau/office to be used for appropriate use in FY 2016.
- Burned Area Rehabilitation (BAR): Carryover will remain at the bureau/office to be used for appropriate projects in FY 2016. BAR carryover limitations are described in the policy memo to be issued under separate cover.
- Joint Fire Science: All carryover will remain with the BLM for use by the Joint Fire Science Program Office for appropriate use in the new fiscal year.
- Fire Facilities: Carryover funding is specific to the individual project and is managed by the bureau project by project.
- If there is a need to transfer funds for Suppression funding shortages, OWF will discuss changes to these policies with bureaus and changes will be documented and implemented.

2016 Sequestration or across-the-board-reductions: It is not known at this point if any across-the-board reductions or sequestrations of funds will occur. Any such amount will be applied to the allocations in the attached table.

Contacts: Any questions can be directed to Denise Schmitz, Budget Officer, Office of Wildland Fire at (202) 606-0518.

cc: Interior Fire Executives
Interior Fire Directors

Attachment: DOI FY 2016 Preliminary Allocations

Attachment 1 (Funding shown in thousands (\$000))

DOI FY 2016 Preliminary Allocations

			Fire Risk Management [Resilient Landscapes] Fuels Management within Fuels		Other Operations				
	Preparedness	Suppression	Management	Mgmt	BAR /1	Facilities	JFSP	Total	% Share
Department-Wide Activities	\$ 42,431	\$ -	\$ 14,870	\$ 10,000	\$ 1,064	\$ -	\$ 5,990	\$ 74,355	9.2%
BIA	\$ 62,916	\$ 26,379	\$ 28,895	\$ -	\$ 3,442	\$ 538	\$ -	\$ 122,170	15.2%
BLM	\$ 146,680	\$ 68,893	\$ 66,193	\$ -	\$ 12,348	\$ 2,010	\$ -	\$ 296,124	36.7%
FWS	\$ 28,211	\$ 6,440	\$ 20,675	\$ -	\$ 1,403	\$ 269	\$ -	\$ 56,998	7.1%
NPS	\$ 35,531	\$ 14,957	\$ 22,987	\$ -	\$ 1,020	\$ 3,126	\$ -	\$ 77,621	9.6%
OWF	\$ 3,201	\$ -	\$ 380	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 184	\$ -	\$ 3,765	0.5%
Parent	\$ -	\$ 175,004	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 175,004	21.7%
Total Estimated Funding	\$ 318,970	\$ 291,673	\$ 154,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 19,277	\$ 6,127	\$ 5,990	\$ 806,037	100%
% Share of Total	39.6%	36.2%	19.1%	1.2%	2.4%	0.8%	0.7%	100%	

Bureau shares shown above are before the Service-level agreements are distributed.

DOI FY 2016 Preliminary Allocations after Service Level Agreements & Distribution of Dept.-wide Activities to Sponsoring Bureau

			Fire Risk Management [Resilient Landscapes] Fuels Management within Fuels		Other Operations				
	Preparedness	Suppression	Management	Mgmt	BAR /1	Facilities	JFSP	Total	% Share
BIA	\$ 64,170	\$ 26,379	\$ 38,895	\$ -	\$ 3,640	\$ 538	\$ -	\$ 133,622	16.6%
BLM	\$ 178,221	\$ 68,893	\$ 66,821	\$ -	\$ 12,565	\$ 2,010	\$ 5,990	\$ 334,500	41.5%
FWS	\$ 27,778	\$ 6,440	\$ 20,661	\$ -	\$ 1,584	\$ 269	\$ -	\$ 56,732	7.0%
NPS	\$ 38,142	\$ 14,957	\$ 23,298	\$ -	\$ 1,283	\$ 3,126	\$ -	\$ 80,806	10.0%
OWF	\$ 7,204	\$ -	\$ 3,795	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,999	1.4%
Parent	\$ 3,455	\$ 175,004	\$ 530	\$ 10,000	\$ 205	\$ 184	\$ -	\$ 189,378	23.5%
Total Estimated Funding	\$ 318,970	\$ 291,673	\$ 154,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 19,277	\$ 6,127	\$ 5,990	\$ 806,037	100%
% Share of Total	39.6%	36.2%	19.1%	1.2%	2.4%	0.8%	0.7%	100%	

/1 - Includes FY 2015 Unallocated funding