



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240

JUL 11 2017

OWF POLICY MEMORANDUM 2017-004

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: Bryan Rice, Director – Office of Wildland Fire *Bryan Rice*

Subject: Wildland Fire Management Program Carryover Funding Balances

This policy memorandum provides guidance for the timely reporting and execution of carryover balances in the Department of the Interior's (DOI) Wildland Fire Management (WFM) program. The Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) is instituting additional financial controls over the use of existing and future carryover balances to improve the DOI's fiscal responsibility and maximize the WFM program's performance and accountability.

As of July 10, 2017, DOI's carryover balances, including prior-year recoveries, in the WFM program totaled \$28.3 million. Table 1 provides a breakout of this balance by bureau and by activity. This balance represents approximately 3% of the total fiscal year 2017 enacted level of funding for the entire WFM program.

Table 1: Wildland Fire Management Carryover Status as of July 10, 2017
(dollars in thousands)

	BIA	BLM	FWS	NPS	OWF	Parent	Total
Preparedness	\$1,319	\$4,764	\$161	\$290	\$118	\$3,003	\$9,655
Suppression Operations	\$7,083	\$3,176	\$100	-\$4	\$155	\$0	\$10,510
Fuels Management	\$459	\$1,998	\$148	\$293	\$170	\$98	\$3,166
Burned Area Rehabilitation	\$74	\$2,913	\$24	\$81	\$0	\$0	\$3,092
Facilities Maintenance & Construction	\$166	\$520	\$1	\$925	\$0	\$271	\$1,883
Joint Fire Science Program	\$0	\$3	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3
Total	\$9,201	\$13,374	\$434	\$1,585	\$443	\$3,374	\$28,320

In the past five years, DOI's carryover balances, not including Suppression, have been steadily rising. In 2017, the total carryover balance amounted to a 61% increase from the 2013 level.

Table 2: Wildland Fire Management Carryover Balance 2013-2017 , not including Suppression
(dollars in thousands)

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Preparedness	\$8,538	\$7,696	\$14,039	\$20,158	\$18,345
Fuels Management	\$2,801	\$3,691	\$5,118	\$10,579	\$9,039
Burned Area Rehabilitation	\$3,858	\$3,465	\$6,164	\$9,668	\$11,490
Facilities Maintenance & Construction	\$3,136	\$3,407	\$2,554	\$4,483	\$8,110
Joint Fire Science Program	\$222	\$181	\$235	\$1,316	\$741
Rural Fire Assistance	\$92	\$93	\$93	\$127	\$149
Total	\$18,647	\$18,533	\$28,203	\$46,331	\$47,874



While some carryover balance from year-to-year is expected, especially when operating under a Continuing Resolution, as was the case in FY 2017, the presence of large carryover balances may lead to perceived inadequacies in program management, planning, and oversight. It is therefore in DOI's interest to establish a process to evaluate and document the execution of carryover funds and reach a reduced rate of carryover before it is targeted for rescission.

As a matter of policy, bureaus should target a 2% carryover rate¹ for all WFM activities, with the exception of Suppression. A 2% carryover rate provides bureaus with sufficient flexibility for any unforeseen needs that may arise during the FY. For the remainder of FY 2017, it is important that all bureaus regularly review and document progress at reducing their cumulative carryover balances to 2% or lower for all WFM accounts; starting in FY 2018, Bureaus will be required to spend down to 2% or lower for all WFM accounts. All balances above 2% will be returned to the

¹ This rate is calculated using the beginning balance of available carryover funds at the start of the fiscal year.

parent account and re-allocated based on priority needs. Bureaus should spend their current year funds according to their current-year annual work plans using carryover balances to supplement their priority workloads.

In order to gauge progress in this effort, bureaus are asked to submit carryover spend plans for FY 2017 by July 29, 2017, using Attachment 1. In FY 2018, quarterly reviews are due within two weeks of the quarter-end: October 16, 2017; January 16, 2018; April 16, 2018; and July 16, 2018. Attachment 2 will be updated and sent in October for FY 2018 planning and quarterly reviews.

The FY 2018 President's Budget request proposes discontinuing the use of the FLAME Wildland Suppression Reserve Fund and requests full funding of the ten-year average for Suppression. As in past years, any Suppression carryover will remain at the bureau/office to be used as appropriate in the current fiscal year.

In addition, OWF will be working more closely with bureaus in reviewing undelivered orders (UDOs) to determine the level of funding that currently exists in outstanding contracts and other orders. It is important that DOI have an understanding of the status of unexpended obligated balances and be included in discussions regarding plans for the use of large prior year recoveries, as these may contribute to WFM's carryover balance. Further guidance is forthcoming.

If you have any questions regarding this policy, please contact Craig Leff at (202) 606-3053 or craig_leff@ios.doi.gov, or Thao Tran at (202) 606-0518 or thao_tran@ios.doi.gov.

Attachments (2)

DO NOT MODIFY THIS WORKSHEET

Wildland Fire Management Carryover Status

6/16/2017

(dollars in thousands)

	Beginning Balance	Prior Year Recoveries	Obligations to Date	Funds Available to Date	Projected Obligations by 9/30/2017	Ending Balance
PREPAREDNESS						
BIA	\$6,851	\$1,111				
BLM	\$5,736	\$5,213				
FWS	\$613	\$281				
NPS	\$589	\$185				
OWF	\$1,702	\$358				
Parent	\$2,854	\$0				
Total	\$18,345	\$7,147	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	Beginning Balance	Prior Year Recoveries	Obligations to Date	Funds Available to Date	Projected Obligations by 9/30/2017	Ending Balance
FUELS MANAGEMENT						
BIA	\$2,425	\$868				
BLM	\$3,934	\$1,919				
FWS	\$890	\$402				
NPS	\$929	\$169				
OWF	\$263	\$77				
Parent	\$598	\$0				
Total	\$9,040	\$3,435	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	Beginning Balance	Prior Year Recoveries	Obligations to Date	Funds Available to Date	Projected Obligations by 9/30/2017	Ending Balance
BURNED AREA REHABILITATION (BAR)						
BIA	\$52	\$0				
BLM	\$10,923	\$547				

FWS	\$199	\$0				
NPS	\$186	\$10				
OWF	\$0	\$0				
Parent	\$130	\$0				
Total	\$11,489	\$557	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

FACILITIES	Beginning Balance	Prior Year Recoveries	Obligations to Date	Funds Available to Date	Projected Obligations by 9/30/2017	Ending Balance
BIA	\$269	\$0				
BLM	\$3,632	\$7				
FWS	\$1	\$0				
NPS	\$4,208	\$0				
OWF	\$0	\$0				
Parent	\$0	\$0				
Total	\$8,110	\$7	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

JOINT FIRE SCIENCE PROGRAM	Beginning Balance	Prior Year Recoveries	Obligations to Date	Funds Available to Date	Projected Obligations by 9/30/2017	Ending Balance
BIA						
BLM	\$741	\$176				
FWS						
NPS						
OWF						
Parent						
Total	\$741	\$176	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

DO NOT MODIFY THIS WORKSHEET

Wildland Fire Management Carryover Status

7/10/2017

(dollars in thousands)

	Beginning Balance	Prior Year Recoveries	Obligations to Date	Funds Available to Date	Projected Obligations by 9/30/2017	Ending Balance
PREPAREDNESS						
BIA	\$6,851	\$1,111				
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