



# United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
Washington, DC 20240

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## OWF POLICY MEMORANDUM 2013-003

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

Subject: Risk-Based DOI Fuels Management Program: Strategic Approach and Outcomes

**Purpose:** This memorandum provides the rationale, approach, and tasks required to revise the Department of the Interior (DOI) Fuels Management Program, with the objective of informing the FY 2015 Fuels Management Program budget allocations. This Policy Memorandum was developed in response to concerns and questions from the Administration and Congress about the scope, purpose, and effectiveness of the Program, as well as the need to better align all Wildland Fire Management Programs to support the intergovernmental goals of the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy (Cohesive Strategy).

**Scope:** This memorandum pertains to the DOI Fuels Management Program, as implemented through activities and projects in the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Bureau of Land Management, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service, and the Office of Wildland Fire.

**Time Frame:** This Policy Memorandum is effective immediately and remains in effect until rescinded or modified.

**Policy:** The Fuels Management program is revised to focus on a risk-based approach that supports the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy and focuses on three strategic issues:

- The nature and extent of the fuels problem in terms of risk of wildfire to key values
- Determination of treatment and funding priorities based on those risks
- Measurement of accomplishment and program success, in terms of reduction of those risks

Beginning in FY15, this program will be known as the Fuels Management Program. Under the Fuels Management Program, broad national program priorities will be set and will be implemented through projects on regional and local levels, in consideration of landscape-scale objectives, and with interagency and intergovernmental collaboration to the extent possible.

National priorities are expected to remain relatively constant over time in order to provide support for multi-year, long-term fuels management investments that will reduce wildfire risk. Regional and local project planning and investment decisions will allow bureaus within the Department to make appropriate investment choices within the strategic framework and priorities of the program and to encourage formation of coalitions and partnerships with Federal and non-federal partners to accomplish landscape scale, cross-boundary projects.

Attachment 1 details the purpose, goals, guiding principles, and methodology for pursuing a risk-based fuels management program, along with a high-level project plan to be completed in FY14.

In addition to the workplan outlined in Attachment 1, the Office of Wildland Fire will continue to work with the bureaus to address program management issues, including addressing “programmatic” and “project” funding, as well as opportunities to most effectively utilize and leverage Fuels Management Program resources in coordination with the Preparedness Program and bureau Resource Management Programs.

The DOI Fuels and Biomass Program Coordinator is designated as the project manager for the implementation activities. The effort will include the four fire management bureaus within Interior, science advice from the US Geological Survey, close coordination with the Forest Service, and formal and informal consultation with Tribes of First Americans. The Program Coordinator will regularly report project status and progress at Interior Fire Executive Council (IFEC) and other appropriate interagency meetings. Should the attention of IFEC be required outside of a regularly scheduled meeting, a special meeting will be held.

Task team leads will identify candidates and finalize team membership in coordination with Bureau Fire Directors and fuels program leads, the Forest Service, and other potential stakeholders. Each Task Team will be responsible for creating a more detailed work plan for their tasks, including specific milestones and due dates of deliverables.

Identification of task team leads and finalizing team membership is to be completed by November 1, 2013.

Upon completion of the project plan and acceptance of necessary policies and procedures for implementation and management of the revised Fuels Management Program additional guidance will be issued and existing policy rescinded.

**Contacts:** Any questions can be directed to Erik Christiansen, Fuels/Biomass Program Coordinator, Office of Wildland Fire, at (208) 334-1559, or Russell Johnson, Program Analyst, Office of Wildland Fire, at (208) 334-1564.

cc: Interior Fire Executives  
Interior Fire Directors

Attachment: *Department of the Interior Risk-based Fuels Management Program: Strategic Approach and Outcomes*, October 22, 2013