

**File Code:** 1230; 5100**Date:** April 21, 2025**Route To:****Subject:** Delegation of Authority for Type 3, 4 and 5 Incidents**To:** Type 3, 4 and 5 Incident Commanders Assigned on the Shasta-Trinity National Forest

You are delegated authority to act as a Type 3, 4 or 5 Incident Commander on the Shasta-Trinity National Forest when properly assigned and qualified. You have full authority and responsibility to supervise initial and/or extended attack activities associated with wildland fire management and other incidents. This letter supersedes all previous delegations for Type 3, 4 and 5 incident commanders and expires when further superseded.

You are expected to implement the following direction which is critical to managing all incidents on the Shasta-Trinity National Forest. We will continue safe, effective initial attack to protect communities, critical infrastructure, and natural resources. Every fire will receive a risk-informed response.

Fire management activities require a collective response from many organizations, and it is up to all of us to work together towards common objectives. I expect that as Incident Commander, you will develop a specific plan of action in accordance with direction identified in the forest Land and Resource Management Plan and our agency's policies, in collaboration with our partner firefighting agencies. You will clearly communicate that plan to personnel under your command and coordinate with the Agency Administrator for additional incident-specific direction.

I also ask that you evaluate all options for suppression actions considering incident specific conditions and prioritize the safety of our firefighting forces. Tools that are available include Potential Operational Delineations which help you make informed decisions that balance resource objectives with safety and community protection. Additionally, the Incident Strategic Alignment Process can aid in prioritizing critical values and assess suppression strategies within a risk-based decision-making model. Every wildfire will continue to receive a strategic, risk-based response, using the full spectrum of actions that consider fire and fuels condition, weather, values at risk, and resource availability.

As incident commander, you are also directed to comply with the following requirements:

- 1. Ensure firefighter and public safety is the highest priority during all incident activities:**
 - a. Make safety of firefighters, other personnel, and the public the highest priority in wildland fire suppression activities. When a potentially life-threatening situation may exist, you have the authority to supersede natural and cultural resource considerations and constraints to provide for the safety of firefighters, other personnel, and the public.



- b. Apply risk management principles to weigh risk versus gain in all decisions. Continually monitor risk and mitigate hazards where found.
 - c. Minimize, to the extent feasible, smoke exposure to firefighters and communities.
- 2. Provide a work environment that is free from harassment:**
 - a. Establish a leadership tone that is welcoming. Set expectations that those who work for you will do the same. Encourage your firefighting resources to speak up and share their perspectives.
 - b. Stand up for all those assigned to the incident and for those affected by the incident to discourage actions that bully or harass personnel.
 - c. Report harassment and bullying as required by agency policy.
- 3. Ensure alignment with current agency statutes, policies, and doctrinal principles:**
 - a. Assign personnel to fire-line positions pursuant to direction in the Fire and Aviation Management Qualifications Handbook (FSH 5109.17/310- 1).
 - b. Assist our cooperators to the extent allowed by our authorities.
 - c. This delegation serves as approval to authorize incident orders (or delegate that role to somebody in your IMO) for items needed to meet the objectives of the incident. Approval of incident replacement items up to \$500/item may be authorized by Type 3 ICs. On Type 4 and 5 incidents, items must be authorized by the appropriate chief officer. For any replacement item over \$500, the request must be approved by the Incident Business Advisor (IBA) or Agency Administrator.
 - d. Land Use Agreements (LUA) will be in place when occupying private land for incident needs or support.
 - e. Type 3, 4 and 5 ICs do not have authority to sign supplemental or other types of agreements purporting to secure additional suppression resources.
- 4. Work in close partnership with your Agency Administrator throughout the incident:**
 - a. Establish an appropriate routine of engagement, briefing, and strategy discussions with your Agency Administrator based on your shared expectations and the context of the specific incident.
 - b. Support Agency Administrator development on incidents through engagement with trainees and those serving in shadow assignments.
- 5. Monitor the effectiveness of your planned strategy and tactics:**
 - a. Prioritize the use of local suppression resources.
 - b. Commit resources only when there is a reasonable expectation of success in delivering upon your planned strategy.
 - c. Immediately delay, modify, or withdraw firefighting action on any part of a wildland fire where strategies and tactics cannot be safely implemented.

- d. Execute suppression actions when and where they are safe and effective. Minimize suppression related impacts to natural resources and improvements and implement minimum impact suppression tactics (MIST) when applicable, especially in wilderness areas.
 - e. Ensure that all firefighting actions meet the intent of the ten standard fire orders and that mitigation of the applicable eighteen watch-out situations is accomplished.
 - f. Maintain command, control, and accountability of all assigned resources.
- 6. Address fatigue in firefighters and other fire suppression personnel and ensure compliance with required work/rest guidelines and length of commitment guidelines:**
- a. Document actions to manage fatigue for all fires that exceed one operational period.
 - b. Document pre-approvals and justifications for excessively long work shifts and actions taken to ensure compliance with guidelines for work, rest, and length of commitment.
- 7. Monitor incident complexity and ensure proper incident management and oversight:**
- a. Request the next level of oversight if your risk and complexity assessment and/or intuition suggests such a request is appropriate.
 - b. Ensure that the arriving personnel on Type 3, 4 and 5 fires have positive and documented contact with appropriate incident management personnel to address the briefing checklist elements in the Incident Response Pocket Guide prior to commencing work (FSM 5108).
 - c. Determine the origin and cause of the fire. If unsure or unqualified to make this determination, request a fire investigator. Protect the area of origin from damage or contamination by suppression actions unless those actions are necessary for the immediate protection of life and/or property.
- 8. Manage fires in wilderness with consideration for both suppression objectives and wilderness management policy and ethics:**
- a. Immediately upon responding to a fire in wilderness areas, an AA will assign, and the IC is to incorporate, a wilderness specialist (READ/REAF) into the incident organization for the duration of the fire. The READ/REAF will provide recommendations and advice during strategic discussions regarding wilderness resource concerns to help inform strategies and tactics.
 - b. Motorized Equipment and Mechanical Transport--It is my expectation that you will carefully evaluate the need for motorized equipment and mechanical transport in wilderness areas and use them only where absolutely necessary to provide for firefighter safety and achieve suppression objectives. I expect you to use alternative suppression methods wherever possible.
 - c. Retardant Use--Retardant use is pre-authorized by this letter only when identified on approved initial response cards for particular areas within the wilderness. Retardant use in any other wilderness areas must be approved by an authorized Agency

Administrator. Early engagement with the assigned Air Tactical Group Supervisor (Air Attack) is also required.

- d. If containment is unsuccessful during the initial attack, further retardant use, motorized equipment use, or mechanical transport in a wilderness area must be approved by an authorized Agency Administrator.
- e. Use of bulldozers or other heavy equipment in a wilderness area must be approved by the Regional Forester.

9. To ensure all supporting documentation is obtained and follow-up reporting is completed:

- a. Complete required data entry into InFORM program.
- b. Turn in a completed fire report to the correct district duty officer.
- c. Notify district or headquarters recreation manager of all use of mechanical equipment in wilderness areas. This includes type of equipment and number of days used.
- d. Notify district or headquarters hydrologist of any known retardant misapplications. This includes date and approximate location of misapplication.

Natural resource management and protection is complex and challenging. This is a position that is held in trust by forest line officers, the public whose resources you are helping to protect, and most of all your fellow firefighters whose safety is largely dependent upon how you carry out this responsibility. We rely on your attention to detail and careful compliance with the directions outlined above. Please avoid complacency, use good judgment, and exhibit leadership in your actions.

We are deeply grateful for your service.

RACHEL BIRKEY
Forest Supervisor