

AREA COMMAND TEAM (Dugger Hughes)



Subject: Delegation of Authority for management of Incidents
From: Dugger Hughes, Area Commander, National Area Command Team
To: Mike Dueitt, Incident Commander, Southern Area Red Incident Management Team

Effective 1800 hours on September 5, 2015 you are delegated authority to establish and implement strategy, objectives, and priorities for the management of multiple wildfire incidents. The fires you are being delegated are in the Selway/Elk City/Red River Complexes. This delegation carries with it the full responsibility for management of the resources, costs, and the rehabilitation of suppression effects directly associated with those fires. We expect the fires to be managed consistent with relevant and applicable laws, policies, and professional standards including those applying to the safety of the public and fire fighters. Consideration for the needs of local residents, landowners, tribes and communities is essential for successful management and we are committed to supporting you in this effort.

Your primary responsibility is to organize and direct the assigned and ordered resources for safe, efficient and effective suppression of the fires. Financial limitations will be communicated by the Agency Administrator Representative with responsibility for each fire.

While managing this incident, the lives and safety of the public and of incident responders will always be your first consideration. Continue to employ risk management as a means for meeting the incident objectives based on the identified Values at Risk (VARs).

Refer to the Wildland Fire Decision Support System (WFDSS) for objectives and decisions that should provide clear intent and direction for your immediate actions on priority fires as well as long term actions. Frequent reassessment of objectives, strategies and tactics is expected, and we also expect to meet often to discuss alternative strategies. The emergence of new fires and the growth of existing fires should prompt continual reassessment of both objectives and values at risk.

Frequent communication with district duty officers will be necessary for the coordination of team and local resources. This coordination will be crucial to the success of initial attack (IA) operations.

Per recent direction received from the Nez Perce–Clearwater National Forest, initial attack and extended attack operations will be conducted as follows on Forest Service jurisdiction lands within the Area Command theater of operations:

1. Assigned Incident Management Teams (IMT) and local Districts will share initial attack responsibility. The local Duty Officer and Agency Administrator representative will determine the priorities for initial attack resources and the IMT will support those needs, based on resources for structure protection, initial attack and extended attack. The coordination will insure that the right resources will be used for response.
2. The local unit and IMT will jointly determine when initial attack resources can be utilized to supplement the IMT's fire operations on large fires.
3. The Forest and local Duty Officer, Agency Administrator Representative, and Incident Commander will coordinate on initial and extended attack daily, on the 0730 Fire call, to insure that scarce resources are used to address the highest priority concerns.
4. Areas outside the ones under Area Command's theater of operations will remain the sole responsibility of the local unit. Additions will require an amendment from Area Command.
5. All initial and extended attack will be coordinated through Grangeville Dispatch, which includes the Forest Duty Officer(s).
6. In the event a fire within the Area Command theater of operations escapes initial and extended attack, Area Command will work with the Forest to assign the fire to the appropriate IMT.
7. Use of any Forest aviation assets will be coordinated through Grangeville Dispatch and will be deployed according to priorities within the dispatch area.

We will be actively engaged in strategic decisions affecting firefighter exposure. We expect you to consider the degree of firefighter exposure being incurred in relation to the benefits of the actions being taken. Do not commit incident responders where there is a low probability of meeting the objectives or when high values are not at risk. If risk cannot be sufficiently mitigated in specific areas, avoidance or alternative tactics should be considered. We expect that you will not transfer risk from ground resources to aviation resources or vice versa.

Incident Objectives

1. Keep fire sizes as small as practical using perimeter control strategies. Prioritize actions where the probability of success is high, allowing resources to quickly be moved to more complex fires.

2. Reduce impacts to communities and private residences as described in WFDSS and more specifically below.
3. Reduce impacts to private and government structures (e.g. lookouts, campgrounds) in the outlying areas. Refer to Strategic Objectives in WFDSS for individual features.
4. Fire suppression operations on private ownership must include placing high value on timber resources including standing timber as well as plantations. Expectations for firefighting on private land within Forest Service protection areas is as follows:
 - While planning and executing fire suppression actions, be mindful of the financial values associated with private timber.
 - Minimize acres burned by using full suppression tactics and keeping the fire size as small as practical.
 - Minimize impacts to private timber by using tactics that keep fire out of these areas.
 - Use tactics, practices, and behavior that respect the property and timber of owners.
5. Reduce the probability of fire disrupting infrastructure such as highway corridors and arterial travel routes, power lines (prioritize transmission over distribution) and communication sites.
6. Reduce impacts to fisheries resources along the Selway River, Red River, and other tributaries to the Clearwater.
7. In developing strategies and tactics, be mindful of the desire to reopen closed areas quickly and allow safe access for the public.

Specific Direction for:

Baldy Fire

1. The Pilot Knob and Pilot Rock areas are sacred to the Nez Perce Tribe. Work with the District and the Nez Perce Tribe to develop a suppression strategy that is amenable to the Tribe. Adjust the suppression strategies and be sensitive to the tribal concerns.
2. Please utilize the Nez Perce Tribal Fire Crew where appropriate on this incident.
3. Assess and execute community protection opportunities for Newsome and strive to reduce impacts to private and commercial structures in these areas.
4. Reduce fire impacts to highway corridors and arterial routes, especially Highway 14.
5. Develop tactics that reduce impacts to the historic features of the Elk City Wagon Road, Southern Nez Perce Trail, and other cultural sites.
6. If tribal concerns, weather conditions and fire behavior allows, consider constructing hand line from FSR 1834 around the southwest side of the fire to connect to FSR 234.
7. Prevent the fire from moving north into the Clear Creek Collaborative Landscape Restoration Project Area.

Wash Fire

1. Assess and execute community protection opportunities for Elk City and strive to reduce impacts to private and commercial structures in these areas.
2. Reduce fire impacts to highway corridors and arterial routes, especially Highway 14, Montana Road, and Red River Road.
3. Consider impacts to the Anderson Butte National Recreational Trail when developing strategies.
4. Strive to reduce the fire activity and burn severity within the proposed Horse Creek Collaborative Landscape Restoration Area.

Noble, Crown and Little Green Fires

1. Consider using the following operational recommendations for managing these fires to reduce impacts to commercial timber areas and allow options for future suppression actions:
 - Crown – consider using a clipper line on FSR 9553 tie into the open ridge going into the Montana Road 468; FSR 9550/9560 can be considered as contingency lines
 - Little Green – please keep FSR 285 and 468 for open travel

Incident Requirements

1. Provide for firefighter and public safety as the highest priority; exercise sound risk management in determining all actions.
2. Document the quantity and placement of longterm retardant. Air operations personnel should work with local resource advisor(s) to insure the required documentation is current and complete.
3. Coordinate with Agency Representative and resource advisors to address and mitigate resource concerns specifically related to anadromous fisheries, watershed impacts, other sensitive species and cultural sites (request maps and lists of cultural sites).
4. Coordinate with the Agency Administrator and Area Command Team to work together to prioritize resource allocation amongst the teams assigned to Area Command.
5. Coordinate with the Forest Supervisor and Deputy, District Rangers and Fire Management Officers. Work as a team to prioritize opportunities to engage additional fires within the complex.

Coordination and Communication

You or a member of your command staff are expected to participate in a daily interagency status meeting by teleconference at 0730 daily (888-844-9904, passcode 4003997#). Please follow the established agenda for this Incident Commander call.

In order to effectively manage your assigned incidents, you will need to coordinate with cooperating agencies, including the Bureau of Indian Affairs/Nez Perce Tribe, Idaho Department of Lands, Clearwater and Idaho County Sheriffs, and the Idaho Department of Transportation.

The Public Information Officer(s) on your team should coordinate continuously with all affected agencies. You are encouraged to develop and communicate messages about the incident to the public, news media, and other external audiences using the 2015 Fire Season Communication Themes developed by the National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (NMAC) and the Forest Service 2015 fire season key messages. We expect you to hold public meetings in affected communities as needed throughout the life of the incident.

Closures and Restrictions

Area Closures may be developed within the fire area to provide for public safety. Copies of Closure Orders and maps will be provided. Management and coordination of this and any future public safety actions are the responsibility of the IMT. Enforcement of closures will be coordinated with Martin Badertscher, Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest Law Enforcement Patrol Captain (208-478-8233).

Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFRs) are in effect associated with the incidents. Modification of TFRs or addition of new TFRs will be coordinated through Grangeville Interagency Dispatch center.

Incident Business

Consider costs and benefits when developing strategies and ordering resources. Work closely with the Agency Representatives, Fire Managers and Incident Business Advisor before initiating large orders for resources or implementing costly tactical aviation actions. Efficiency and cost effectiveness should be a central part of your decision-making process and clearly documented. Use the Northern Rockies Incident Business Plan to assist you with business management decisions. All financial documentations should be filed at ftp://ftp.nifc.gov/incident_specific_data/N_ROCKIES

Work through Grangeville Expanded Dispatch for all resource requests and Grangeville Interagency Dispatch Center for all aviation-related requests. We encourage you to work with local businesses in procuring equipment and supplies.

Key Resource Protection Measures

Protect waterways and riparian areas from incident management impacts, following direction in the 2012 Fire Retardant Avoidance Guidebook. Take appropriate measures during aerial water bucket

dipping and snorkeling to reduce risk of whirling disease and aquatic nuisance transmission to fish or fish habitat. When possible, buckets should be washed with water and dried before engaging in fire operations and again before leaving the fire.

Take appropriate measures to reduce chances of increased noxious weed spread. This includes washing down assigned vehicles before entering the incident area and upon demobilization from incidents.

Procure weed washing services through coordination with Grangeville Interagency Dispatch Logistics.

Provide for rehabilitation of areas impacted by incident operations (firelines, camps, helispots, helibases, etc.) as conditions warrant. Consult with resource advisors prior to undertaking rehabilitation actions. Line officer approval is required before using bulldozers on federal lands within federal jurisdiction.

I accept this delegation of authority:

Dugger Hughes
Area Commander



Mike Dueitt
Incident Commander