

B-D Preparedness Plan

Preparedness Planning Process –Forest Guidelines

The Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest is a geographically large and diverse administrative unit. Because of the sheer size of the Forest, it is possible to experience widely varying fire danger levels from one end of the forest to the other at any given time. In an attempt to “localize” the appropriate management response, and at the same time maintain an adequate level of fire readiness on the Forest as a whole, preparedness planning is based on the combination of three key components: 1) Determination of Forest Preparedness Level, 2) Recommended Preparedness Actions, 3) Drawn-Down Guidelines

While the preparedness Level is usually determined by local conditions, this level may be increased to assure that sufficient resources are available to respond to the Central Montana Zone, Northern Rockies Geographic Area, or National situation.

Purpose:

- To identify the overall level of wildland and prescribed fire activity, severity, and resource commitment on the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest.
- To identify actions to be taken by the Forest to assure an appropriate level of preparedness/readiness for the existing and potential situation.
- To guide and direct the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest fire management activities when essential to assure Forest, Northern Rockies Geographic Area, or National situation.

a) Determination of Forest Preparedness Levels

Using the following criteria, the Forest Fire Staff Officer, Forest FMO, or Forest Assistant FMO with assistance from the Dispatch Center Manager and Forest Fire Duty Officer, will determine appropriate changes in the Forest Preparedness Level. Changes in Forest Preparedness Level will be communicated to the Forest Fire Duty Officer and District/Zone Fire Duty Officers. The Forest Fire Duty Officer will ensure that Forest Line Officers are advised of changes.

The preparedness level is a five-tier (1-5) fire danger rating system that will be based on Energy Release Component and indicators of fire behavior. The fire behavior indicators used to calculate the preparedness level are large/multiple fire activity, Red Flag Warnings or Fire Weather Watches, Haines Index, and a measure of Ignition Risk. A flow chart guides personnel through the process. Several procedures and guidelines are to be followed once the preparedness level has been determined. The break points for the planning level are set using an historical analysis (Fire Family Plus) of fire behavior and its relationship to 1300 RAWs observations entered into the NIFMID database and processed by WIMS, which calculates the staffing index values (BI, ERC, etc).

Worksheet Instructions:

1. **Staffing Index Value:** Place a checkmark indicating the forecasted staffing index/component range in row one. These indices (forecasted by the Missoula Weather Office) are based on the 1300 RAWS observations which are input to the WIMS processor by DDC personnel.
2. **Fire Activity:** fire activity can be defined as any fire that requires the commitment of one or more Federal suppression resources within the Fire Danger Rating Area. Place a checkmark in the appropriate box in row two.
3. **Red Flag Warning or Fire Weather Watch:** Place a checkmark in row three based on the presence of these advisories issued by the National Weather Service.
4. **Haines Index:** Place a checkmark in row four indicating the forecasted Haines Index Range.
5. **Ignition Risk:** Place a checkmark in row five to indicate the relative risk of human and/or naturally caused ignitions. Human-caused risk is based upon activities such as holidays or special events occurring within the FDRA. During holiday weekends (July 4th, Labor Day and hunting season) or special events, the ignition risk is "High;" otherwise, it is "Low." Lightning Activity Level (LAL) would be the basis for relative risk for natural ignitions; a forecasted LAL of 1 is "Low" ignition risk; 2 through 6 is "High".

**Preparedness Level Worksheet
Dillon Interagency Fire Center**

		Low		Moderate		High		Very High		Extreme		
ERC (Zone 110) Fuel Model G		0 – 14		15 - 28		29 - 57		58 - 66		67 Plus		
ERC (Zone 111) Fuel Model G		0 – 17		18 – 32		33 – 59		60 -66		67 Plus		
1	✓ ⇒											
Fire Activity		No ↓	Yes ↓	No ↓	Yes ↓	No ↓	Yes ↓	No ↓	Yes ↓	No ↓	Yes ↓	
2	✓ ⇒											
Red Flag Warning Fire Wx Watch		No ↓	Yes ↓	No ↓	Yes ↓	No ↓	Yes ↓	No ↓	Yes ↓	No ↓	Yes ↓	
3	✓ ⇒											
Haines Index		2-6 ↓	2-4 ↓	5-6 ↓	2-4 ↓	5-6 ↓	2-4 ↓	5-6 ↓	2-4 ↓	5-6 ↓	2-4 ↓	5-6 ↓
4	✓ ⇒											
Ignition Risk		Low ↓	High ↓	Low ↓	High ↓	Low ↓	High ↓	Low ↓	High ↓	Low ↓	High ↓	
5	✓ ⇒											
Preparedness Level		I		II		III		IV		V		

b) Recommended Preparedness Actions – Description and Step up plan

Preparedness Level 1

Description:

- No large fires in progress on the Forest.
- Most Districts at NFDRS Staffing Class 2 or lower.
- Little or no commitment of District resources.
- Potential for escape fires is low.

Step Up Plan:

- Fill resource orders and go below Minimum Draw-Down Levels to support other geographic area resource requests.
- Single unplanned ignition: Respond appropriately using initial response Run Cards.

Preparedness Level 2

Description:

- No large fires in progress on the Forest.
- One District at NFDRS Staffing Class 3.
- Wildland fire activity is occurring and a low to moderate potential exists for escapes to large (project) fires.
- Minimal mobilization of resources is occurring throughout the Northern Rockies Geographic Area.

Step Up Plan:

- Fill resource orders and go below Minimum Draw-Down Levels to support other geographic area resource requests.
- Single unplanned ignition: Respond appropriately using initial response Run Card.
- Consider: Transition from 5 to 7 day coverage. Need to resume maintenance of Minimum Draw-Down level.

Preparedness Level 3

Description:

- No large fires in progress on the Forest.
- Two Districts are at NFDRS Staffing Class 4, with no significant break in the weather predicted within 48 hours.
- Two or more Districts are experiencing wildland or prescribed fire activities requiring a significant commitment of the Forest's resources.
- Initial attack is generally successful, but the Forest is experiencing increasing numbers of B and/or C class fires.
- Resources are being ordered and mobilized throughout the Northern Rockies Geographic Area.
- Two or more Incident Management Teams are committed in the Northern Rockies Geographic Area.

Step Up Plan:

- Transition from 5 to 7 day coverage.
- Maintain Minimum Draw down Levels.
- Single unplanned ignition: Respond appropriately using initial response Run Cards.

- Anticipate multiple ignitions: Forest and District/Zone Fire Duty Officers and Dillon Interagency Dispatch will consult to set priorities. Shift Forest resources or order appropriate resources to meet the next day forecast staffing levels and operational needs.
- Extended attack: Implement a priority setting process, including scheduled conference calls or appropriate consultation between Fire Duty Officers and Dillon Interagency Dispatch Center. Complete fire complexity analyses, as needed, to assure appropriate levels of ICS qualifications and span-of-control are met.
- Anticipate transition to Preparedness Level 4 and sustained higher Staffing Levels. Ensure that the Forest can meet higher Staffing Levels and Minimum Draw-Down Levels by shifting Forest resources, adjusting schedules, and/or ordering additional resources as appropriate. Consider the need to initiate severity-funding request.
- Fire restrictions: If needed initiate fire restriction discussion within Central and/or Southwest Zones.
- Evaluate trends and consider severity resources to support on-going incidents, and resources needed to meet anticipated staffing levels and minimum draw-down levels.

Preparedness Level 4

Description:

- Large fire(s) in progress on the Forest.
- Three or more Districts indicating NFDRS Staffing Class 4 or higher.
- Multiple ignitions are occurring, and increasing numbers of fires progress to extended attack.
- One or more District with a Type III incident for 24 to 48 hours.
- Resources shortages are being experienced within the Northern Rockies Geographic Area. Orders are being returned as "unable to fill".
- More than two Incident Management Teams are committed in the Northern Rockies Geographic Area.

Step Up Plan:

- Anticipate multiple ignitions: Forest and District/Zone Fire Duty Officers and Dillon Interagency Dispatch will consult to set priorities. Shift Forest resources or order appropriate resources to meet the next day forecast staffing levels and operational needs. One or more District/Zones may need to go to district dispatch to support Dillon Interagency Dispatch.
- Extended attack: Implement priority setting process, including scheduled conference calls or appropriate consultation between Fire Duty Officers and Dillon Interagency Dispatch Center. Complete fire complexity analyses, as needed, to assure appropriate levels of ICS qualifications and span-of-control are met. Order additional resources to support on-going incidents, and those resources needed to meet anticipated staffing levels and Minimum Draw-Down Levels.
- Anticipate large fire(s): Prepare for the need to set up Expanded Dispatch and support organization.
- Anticipate transition to Forest Preparedness Level 5 and sustained higher Staffing Levels. Ensure that the Forest can meet anticipated Staffing Levels and Minimum Draw-Down Levels by shifting Forest resources, adjusting schedules, and/or ordering additional resources as appropriate. Initiate severity-funding request if needed.

- Anticipate: Assess the need for additional fire leadership support. Consider activation of Central Montana Zone MAC group to coordinate Zone resource movement and priorities. Initiate fire restrictions if needed.
- Evaluate trends and order severity resources to support on-going incidents, and resources needed to meet anticipated staffing levels and minimum draw-down levels.

Preparedness Level 5

Description:

- Large fire(s) in progress on the Forest.
- Two Districts are at NFDRS Staffing Class 5, with no significant break in the weather predicted within 48 hours.
- Significant competition for resources is occurring.
- Multiple fires in the Northern Rockies Geographic Area are requiring Type I Incident Management Teams.

Step Up Plan:

- Consider ordering additional Fire Leadership assistance to back up Forest fire organization.
- Central Montana Zone MAC Group is active, and assisting with resource/incident priorities.
- Consider pre-positioning resources in high-risk areas.
- Consider the need for fire closure.
- Evaluate trends and order severity resources to support on-going incidents, and resources needed to meet anticipated staffing levels and minimum draw-down levels.

c) Drawdown Guidelines

Beaverhead-Deerlodge Line Officers, Forest, Zone, and District Fire Management officers/Duty Officers, Forest Aviation Officer and Dillon Dispatch Center will consider utilizing the following suggested guidelines to determine appropriate staffing levels on the B-D during periods of high fire danger and activity. The draw down levels apply across the forest.

Beaverhead-Deerlodge N.F. Fire Management Plan 2008

Minimum Forest Draw-Down Levels

Forest Resources	Local Preparedness Level III	Local Preparedness Level IV	Local Preparedness Level V
Forest Supervisor	Forest Sup. or Acting on 8 hr. call	Forest Sup. or Acting on 2 hr. call	Forest Sup. or Acting on 2 hr. call
Forest Leadership	Forest Duty Officer or Acting Forest Sup. 2 hour call	Forest Duty Officer or Acting Forest Sup. 2 hour call	Forest Duty Officer or Acting Forest Sup.
District or Zone Leadership	Zone Duty Officer	Zone Duty Officer	Zone Duty Officer
Forest Aviation Officer	FFMO or Aviation Mgr.	FFMO or consider ordering Stand alone FAO	Order stand alone FAO
DDC	Center Manager and Min. one Assistant	Center Manager and Assts. At DDC	Center Manager and Assts. At DDC
Specialist Support to DDC as available	As Needed	Information Officer	FBAN, SOF2, Resource Unit Leader, Information Officer
District Rangers	DR, or acting on 2 hr call in zone or district	DR, or acting on 1 hr call in zone or district	DR, or acting at District
Duty Officers	Assigned Duty Officer available by phone/pager/radio 24 hours per day	Assigned Duty Officer available by phone/pager/radio 24 hours per day	Consider 2 Duty Officers providing 24 hour coverage night/Day shifts.
ICT3	3	3	4
IA Crews	3 IA modules, 4 engines	4 IA modules, 5 Engines	4 IA modules, 5 Engines(1)
Prevention	1	1	1