

**Forest Service Handbook  
National Headquarters - Washington Office  
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**Forest Service Handbook 5109.18 – Wildfire Prevention Handbook  
Chapter 10 – Wildfire Prevention Planning**

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**Approved by:** Jaelith Hall-Rivera, Associate Deputy Chief, S&PF

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**Responsible Staff:**

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**Digest:** Following is an explanation of the changes throughout the directive by section.

**5109.18:** Revises entire handbooks to better align with the recently revised FSM 5100 Zero Code, and the Forest Service mission. Provides a description developing, two levels of wildfire prevention and mitigation activities. The first level is ongoing wildfire prevention and mitigation activities; the second level is special wildfire prevention and mitigation activities to target specific problems. Expands the direction on wildfire prevention responsibilities to include positions from the Director of Fire and Aviation Management to the District Rangers.

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Page 1 of 10 may not cite, use, or rely on any guidance that is not available through their guidance portal, except to establish historical facts.

**10:** Changes the chapter title from “Wildland Fire Prevention Planning” to “Wildfire Prevention Planning” and revises direction throughout the chapter on planning with emphasis on use of the wildfire and mitigation assessment and planning process.

**20:** Revises direction in this chapter on the Smokey Bear Program to reflect current Cooperative Forest Fire Prevention (CFFP) Program direction, and changes in the licensing and Smokey Bear Awards programs. Removes all Area references because the Area has been incorporated into Region 9.

**20.1:** Revises Smokey Bear Act, Public Law amendment number.

**22.1:** Changes caption from “Television and Radio” to “Broadcast & Vendor Fulfillment”. Adds direction for broadcasting and vendors to this section. Recodes caption and direction for “Television and Radio” to section 22.2.

**22.2:** Changes caption from “Newspapers and Magazines” to “Television and Radio, and recodes direction on Television and radio to this section. Recodes direction for “Newspapers and Magazines” to section 22.3

**22.3:** Changes caption from “Newspapers and Magazines” to “Print Media” and recodes and updates direction for “Print Media” to this section. Recodes caption and direction for “Outdoor Advertising” to section 22.4.

**22.4:** Changes caption from “Field Production of Public Service Advertisements” to “Outdoor Advertising” and recodes and updates direction for “Outdoor Advertising” to this section. Recodes caption and direction for “Field Production of Public Service Advertisements” to section 22.5.

**22.5:** Changes caption from “Smokey Bear Internet/World Wide Website” to “Field Production of Public Service Advertisements” and recodes and updates direction for “Field Production of Public Service Advertisements” to this section. Recodes and updates direction for “Smokey Bear Internet/World Wide Website” to section 22.6.

**22.6:** Establishes code and caption “Social Media Sites” and sets forth direction on Social Media sites to this section. Recodes to this section direction for “Smokey Bear Internet/World Wide Website” previously located in section 22.5.

**23.32:** Establishes code, caption, and adds direction for “The National Symbols Program Cache”.

**25.4:** Establishes code, caption, and direction for “Security and Disposal of Smokey Bear Costume”.

**30:** Changes the chapter title from “Wildland Fire Prevention and Wildland Fire Education” to “Wildfire Prevention and Wildfire Education” and expands direction in this chapter to describe how different communications programs are developed and conducted.

**40:** Changes the chapter title from “Wildland Fire Prevention Engineering” to “Wildfire Prevention Engineering” and revises direction to emphasize identification of prevention engineering needs and to list sources of assistance for technology development and applications.

**50:** Changes the chapter title from “Wildland Fire Prevention Enforcement and Fire Investigation” to “Wildfire Prevention Enforcement and Fire Investigation” and revises direction to include expanded descriptions of investigations, restrictions, and closure procedures.

**60:** Changes the chapter title from “Coordinated Wildland Fire Prevention” to “Coordinated Wildfire Prevention” and revises direction to expand upon the interagency relationship of the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG), partnerships, and wildland fire prevention cooperatives in delivering effective programs.

**70:** Changes the chapter title from “Wildland Fire Prevention and Fire Education Teams” to “Fire Prevention Education Teams” and revises chapter in its entirety to align with the recently revised FSM 5100 Zero Code and the Forest Service mission. Revises the chapter to introduce the concept of Fire Prevention Education Teams (FPETs). Adds new sections on team mobilization and organization. Describes the relationship between severity and the use of FPETs.

**71.1:** Changes caption from “Mobilization” to “Fire Prevention Education Team (FPET) Training” and adds direction for FPET training. Removes direction on “Mobilization” and revises and recodes direction to section 72.2.

**72.2:** Removes obsolete direction on mobilization and adds to this section direction previously set out in section 71.1.

**80:** Changes the chapter title from “Wildland Fire Prevention and Communications Training” to “Wildfire Prevention, Mitigation, and Communications Training” and updates direction to list essential prevention courses and related skills needed in the delivery of wildfire prevention programs and projects. Removes all Area references because the Area has been incorporated into Region 9.

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## 10.2 - Objective

To develop effective and efficient plans of action for wildfire prevention and education activities.

## 10.3 - Policy

Ensure that every Region, Forest, and District, implement and update annually a wildfire prevention and mitigation plan consistent with fire and ecosystem management objectives of the unit's land management plan. Wildfire prevention planning should be coordinated with cooperators and stakeholders to align with other guiding documents, such as community wildfire protection plans (CWPPs) and the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy (Cohesive Strategy).

## 10.5 - Definitions

Following are definitions of terms as used specifically in assessments for wildfire prevention plans:

Hazard. Potential intensity and severity of a wildfire in an area based on fuels, topography, and weather.

Mitigation. Collectively and collaboratively assessing and addressing risks associated with wildfires in both the natural- and built-environments to minimize negative impacts and promote fire-adapted ecosystems.

Risk. The potential for wildfire ignitions within a given area. Fire prevention focuses on risk that results from human activities. In regards to mitigation, risk also refers to the probability of loss linked to the hazards found in the wildfire environment.

Value. Human improvements or natural resources that may be affected by a wildfire.

Wildfire Prevention. Education, engineering, and enforcement activities designed to reduce the occurrence of unwanted wildfire ignitions caused by human activities.

## 10.6 - References

The publications and training courses listed in sections 10.61 and 10.62 can assist in wildfire prevention assessments and planning.

### 10.61 - Publications and Other Materials

1. The National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC), National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG), 3905 Vista Avenue, Boise, ID 83705, operates the Publication

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Management Section (PMS) as a source of interagency materials in fire management, including wildfire prevention planning.

- a. Wildfire Cause Determination Handbook, NWCG Handbook 1, NFES 1874, PMS 412-1 (or current version); this Handbook has been incorporated in the Forest Service directive system as FSH 5109.31.
  - b. Website - [www.nwcg.gov](http://www.nwcg.gov).
2. Publications and wildfire prevention materials are available from the National Symbols Program Cache, 402 11th Street SE, Grand Rapids, MN 55744, [www.symbols.gov](http://www.symbols.gov).
  3. Internet resources are available on official websites, including [www.fs.fed.us/](http://www.fs.fed.us/), [www.smokeybear.com](http://www.smokeybear.com), [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov), [www.wildlandfirersg.org/](http://www.wildlandfirersg.org/), [www.fireadapted.org](http://www.fireadapted.org) and [www.Firewise.org](http://www.Firewise.org).

## 10.62 - Training

Fire Prevention Education 1 (P-101) and Fire Prevention Education 2 (P-301) courses are developed through the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG). Further direction on wildfire training is in NWCG PMS 310-1 and the Forest Service Fire and Aviation Qualifications Guide (FSFAQG) at <http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/publications/fsfagg/fsfagg.pdf>.

## 11 - Framework

Include the wildfire prevention and mitigation plan as a component of the unit's Fire Management Reference System (FMRS); see the Fire Management Planning Guide at <http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/fire/fmp/>.

The major focus of wildfire prevention and mitigation plans is to:

1. Demonstrate the need for actions aimed at the general public and/or specific target audiences to prevent unwanted human-caused wildfires.
2. Communicate with the public and specific stakeholders, such as landowners, homeowners, and users of public lands, about the role of fire and their fire protection responsibilities. Share wildfire prevention and mitigation tools and best practices to reduce wildfire risk.
3. Assess wildfire risks, hazards, and values in selected geographic areas. Design the wildfire prevention and mitigation program to target areas and activities identified by the assessment. Implement activities for a defined period of time. Prioritize the areas which present the greatest potential for loss of values. Incorporate mitigation best practices to help communities adapt to wildfire.

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## **12 - Development**

1. Use the fire assessment process and objectives in fire and land management plans to develop wildfire prevention and mitigation plans for specific geographic areas. Assessments should include an evaluation of the risks, hazards, and values for the geographic areas; these terms are defined in section 10.5.
2. Design the wildfire prevention and mitigation program at two levels of activity.
  - a. The first level of activity is usually long-term and on-going, with messages about individual responsibility in the prevention of unwanted human-caused wildfires and communities adapting to fire. This level should provide contacts, materials, and educational programs to individuals; schools; civic and youth organizations; and other established community groups. This level would often provide wildfire prevention and mitigation information at parades, fairs, and other public venues and events.
  - b. The second level of activity is usually short-term, with messages targeting specific wildfire causes, audiences, and geographic locations. Timing, content, and methods of delivering these messages should be carefully considered.

## **13 - Wildfire Prevention and Mitigation Plan Outline**

The following format is a guide for developing or updating unit wildfire prevention plans:

1. Cover page.
  - a. Unit identification.
  - b. Dates the plan covers.
  - c. Signature blocks for preparation, review, and approval.
2. Introduction.
  - a. Geographic area description.
  - b. Agencies and stakeholders involved in plan development.
  - c. Fire history and statistics.
3. Interagency Roles and Responsibilities.
  - a. Authorities, Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), Agreements.
  - b. Federal.

- c. Tribes.
  - d. State.
  - e. County and Local.
  - f. Community organizations.
4. Training.
- a. Opportunities to train unit employees and cooperators.
  - b. Opportunities to train stakeholders.
5. General Wildfire Prevention Actions.
- a. Actions or activities that serve to reinforce the wildfire prevention and mitigation messages to the general public; for example, parades, fairs, school programs, civic groups, cooperator inspections, and media releases of a general nature.
  - b. Prepare realistic, measurable wildfire prevention and mitigation program objectives.
6. Specific Wildfire Prevention Actions.
- a. Assessment of risks, hazards, and values of a geographic area, including statistical analysis of fire causes.
  - b. Identification of problem fire causes to be targeted.
  - c. Mitigation measures.
  - d. Identify who is responsible for implementing specific actions.
  - e. Identify timeline for implementing specific actions.
  - f. Identify trigger points for requesting additional wildfire prevention and mitigation resources, such as severity funding, a Fire Prevention Education Team (FPET), or additional patrollers.
7. Public Education.
- a. Identify audiences and targeted behaviors.
  - b. Identify appropriate messages and content.
  - c. Identify opportunities and mediums for delivery.

8. Patrol Operations.

- a. Use the assessment to identify areas of high risk that would benefit from agency patrols.
- b. Based on the assessment, establish patrol routes based on high, medium, and low risk areas.
- c. Identify safety concerns for agency personnel.
- d. The unit's sign plan may be referenced in this section, including dates and locations of posting appropriate messages.
- e. Identify key contacts, such as Special Use Permit holders and agency cooperators.
- f. Coordinate patrols with USDA's Forest Service Law Enforcement and Investigations (LEI) and local County Sheriff under agreement.

9. Wildfire Investigations.

- a. Note in the plan that all wildfire investigations will include coordination with USDA's Forest Service LEI.
- b. Identify agencies that cooperate with the unit on wildfire investigations.
- c. Reference guiding documents, such as Forest Service Handbook (FSH) sections, the Wildfire Cause and Determination Handbook, standard operating guides, and local agreements.

10. Inspections.

- a. Identify activities on the unit that have associated equipment or hazard inspection requirements. Examples include timber sales, firewood cutting, special use permits, Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) use, powerline right-of-ways, and recreation residences.
- b. Identify personnel or staff groups responsible for inspections.

11. References.

Where applicable, reference other plans and documents that are important to the wildfire prevention and mitigation program. Examples include:

- a. Geographic area fire restrictions and closure plan.
- b. Disaster or crisis communications plans.

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- c. Evacuation plans of urban interface areas.
- d. Hazard inspection plans.
- e. Fuel treatment, land management, and community wildfire protection plans.

12. Appendices.

If applicable, include supplemental unit wildfire prevention and mitigation plans as appendices. Examples include:

- a. Unit fire restriction and closure plan.
- b. Sign plan.
- c. Hazard inspection plan.