

**Pacific Northwest Interagency  
National Fire Plan  
Communication Plan  
2001**

5/02/01 Final

Approved by the Interagency  
Strategy Group May1, 2001

**Purpose:** This Interagency Communication Plan is intended to provide overall direction and action items for interagency communication of the National Fire Plan (NFP) in the Pacific Northwest. Individual agency actions will tier to this plan.

**Interagency Vision:** Improve ecosystem health and community well being through the collaborative and coordinated efforts of implementing the National Fire Plan.

**Agencies Involved:** US Forest Service (USFS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), National Park Service (NPS), US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF), Washington Department of Natural Resources (WA DNR), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Washington and Oregon State Fire Marshal Offices, State of Oregon, Governor's office.

**Time Frame for implementation:** Detailed actions through 12/31/01. Update in the fall of 2001.

**National Fire Plan Emphasis areas:**

1. Provide adequate fire fighting resources.
2. Rehabilitation and restoration of burned areas and communities that were affected by the 2000 fires.
3. Invest in projects to reduce fire risk.
4. Work directly with communities.
5. Coordinating and monitoring the Plan's activities.

**Communication Objectives:**

**External**

1. All rural fire departments will be aware of the up coming grant opportunities.
2. All eligible communities will be aware of the upcoming grant opportunities.
3. Affected communities will have an understanding of the NFP and how it affects their community.
4. Interested parties will be aware that this is a strong interagency implementation effort.
5. The general public will have a basic understanding of the affects of the NFP on OR and WA.

6. Elected officials will have a good understanding of the aspects of the NFP that affect their constituents and visibly support the interagency efforts in the Pacific Northwest.
7. Media articles will be generally favorable highlighting interagency efforts.

### **Internal**

8. All local agency decision makers will regularly communicate the interagency emphasis of the NFP; understand the five emphasis areas of the NFP and how their particular agency is involved in implementation.
9. Employees will have a general understanding of the NFP and it's potential as a significant ecosystem management tool.

### **Target Audience(s):**

Internal: All employees working for the participating agencies.

Elected Officials: Pacific Northwest Congressional delegation, state, county and local officials.

Communities: Homeowner associations, rural fire departments, economic development groups, individual home owners, community based action groups, provincial advisory councils and resource advisory councils.

General Public: Tax Payer.

Media: Regional and local.

**Communication Strategy:** Through a three pronged approach we will provide regular, comprehensive, interagency information on all aspects of the National Fire Plan in OR and WA. The three prongs are; web based, community, and through existing interagency programs.

The web-based aspect of this strategy will consist of an interagency web site hosted by the BLM. The web site provides the "front door" to interagency information on all five of the NFP emphasis areas. This site will host interagency information and directly link to agency specific information. The idea is to collate information into an interagency web site and then link to agency specific info. The other two communication methods, community and existing programs will tier directly to the web. The objective is that the web provides materials that can be printed and used hard copy to meet two purposes. For instance, under a category titled, "Community Assistance" a one-page summary of grant opportunities exists. This summary was also designed to be a handout for the public. It can easily be printed out on a color printer and used at public meetings or as a mailer. All actions will refer readers to the web.

The Community approach will consist of working with agency decision makers and key community contacts to deliver information and messages. The primary communication channels are through agency public affairs staffs, rural community assistance

coordinators, media, and Congressionals. This effort will include public meetings, regular staff meetings, preparation of media kit, highlighting success stories, etc.

Implementation through existing programs will consist of connecting with other interagency programs that can assist with NFP efforts. These programs include Fire Wise, Conservation Education, Interpretation, Incident Information Officers and Research. Each of these will also link to the web.

### **Key Messages/Talking Points:**

1. The NFP in the Pacific Northwest is a comprehensive interagency effort to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires by integrating fire and resource management to restore watershed health and provide economic assistance to communities.
2. The NFP is a major tool for agencies to implement goals outlined in many of our planning efforts such as the Northwest Forest Plan, the Interior Columbia River Basin Scientific Assessment, Watershed Analyses, Area Management Plans etc.
3. Successful implementation of the NFP is long term. It will take many years to reduce the threat of wildfires to communities and restore balance to our ecosystems. Over the next one to ten years our actions will specifically help:
  - Reduce the number of small fires that become large.
  - Continue restoring ecosystems to minimize uncharacteristically intense fires.
  - Create new jobs in both the public and private sector.
  - Improve capabilities for federal, state and volunteer fire organizations.
  - Reduce the threat to life and property from catastrophic wildfire.
4. Collaboration with communities, interest groups, state and federal agencies and tribal governments is a key element of the Plan and a priority in the Northwest.

### **Communication Plan Implementation:**

**Approval Process:** Once this plan has been approved someone will be assigned to oversee implementation. This IA Communication Coordinator (CC) will work with the IA Communication Group to have specific messages and products approved. The IA Communication Group will have reps from: ODF, USFS, BLM, WA DNR, and Community/Economic Development. Each agency will have an opportunity to review all products and decide whether they would like to have their agency recognized on the product.

**Agency Recognition:** After approval, each agency will be identified by its logo/contact info. on any activity/product associated with this plan.

**Actions:** One of the key activities for this effort will be current and timely updates to the web. The goal is for each “Event” listed here to have current talking points and key messages posted on the IA web site so that all agencies can use the same information. The Communication Coordinator will work with the Web Master to post material.

The actions listed as Interagency Action are not intended to replace specific agency actions but only to supplement and provide consistent interagency messages. Each

agency is expected to tier their individual communication plans to this document to achieve interagency communication objectives.

### Actions

| # | Date          | Event  | Interagency Action   |         | Primary Audience  | Delivery   |
|---|---------------|--|--|---------|-------------------|--|
|   |               |  | Who  | Contact |                   |  |
| 1 | April/<br>May | Grant Process Announced                                | IA News Release<br>(Include any grant workshops)   | CC      | Bkennedy<br>BVonS | Communities<br><br>Media,<br>community<br>networks       |
| 2 |               |  | Web App Resources  | CC      | “                 | Communities  |
| 3 |               |  | E-mail/fax to Rural VFD's explaining process etc.  | CC      | “                 | Communities<br><br>State Fire Marshall's office          |
| 4 |               | Pre-fire Season  | IA Memo to Decision Makers<br>(expectations, interagency, Community, etc.)   | CC      | Tom Schmidt       | Internal decision makers<br><br>e-mail                   |
| 4 |               |  | Message to IIO's on what to share about the NFP/resources etc.   | CC      |                   | Internal<br><br>e-mail                                   |
| 5 |               |  | Develop simple, cheap, one page handout for ALL employees in all agencies to carry with them/ handout to the public. | CC      | Tom Schmidt       | General Public Agency employees<br><br>Web and hard copy |
| 5 |               | Public Hearings on NFP                                 | News release. Include fire season severity predictions.  | CC      |                   | General Public, media<br><br>Media                       |
|   |               | Report to Congress on High Risk Communities due 5/1/01 | News Release   | CC      | Tom Schmidt       | General Public Media<br><br>Media                        |

|    |         |                                |   |             |             |                |           |
|----|---------|--------------------------------|---|-------------|-------------|----------------|-----------|
| 6  |         | Burning Season                 | News Release on collective burning activities.  | CC          | Tom Schmidt | General Public | Media     |
| 7  | June 1  | Summer                         | Series of stories on NFP (communities, land health, thinning/small wood, jobs, fire safe homes, air quality) June through Sept. | CC          | Tom Schmidt | General Public | Media     |
| 8  | July 1  | Fire Season                    | Tie in NFP messages with NWCG communiqués on the fire season  | CC          | Tom Schmidt |                | Media     |
| 10 | Sept. 1 | End of Summer                  | Stories about successful community and interagency projects (Focus on small wood utilization, community development)            | Each Agency | Tom Schmidt |                | Media     |
|    | Oct. 1  | Fall Burning                   |   |             |             |                |           |
| 11 | Nov. 1  |                                | IA Accomplishment report for web and print  | CC          | Tom Schmidt |                | Media/web |
|    |         |                                |   |             |             |                |           |
| 12 | Dec. 1  | Performance Report to Congress | News Release  | CC          | Tom Schmidt |                | Media/web |

**Products:** These products will be developed in addition to web-based resources.

| # | Product   | Audience/Purpose   | Key Points                                     | When  | Who |
|---|---|--|--|-------|-----|
| 1 | B-roll of successful projects   | Media (TV and radio). To be used as part of related news stories                               | Community<br>Small wood                        | Sept. | CC  |
| 2 | Handout explaining the NFP for the general public. Something simple and clear. This is what the NFP is and this is what it isn't. | General Public. To be handed out at front desks, visitor centers, inserted in forest mailings. | The NFP.<br>What is it?<br>Who? What?<br>When? | May   | CC  |

**Delivery through Existing Programs:** The Communication Coordinator will have the responsibility of working with these other programs to ensure that NFP messages are incorporated wherever possible.

**Existing Programs :**

|                                 |
|---------------------------------|
| Program                         |
| Prevention                      |
| Fire Wise                       |
| Conservation Education Programs |
| Interpretation                  |
| Research                        |
| Incident Info. Officers         |

## Measurement and Feedback:

| Communication Objective   | Measurement  | Who | When          | Result |
|---|--|-----|---------------|--------|
| 1. All rural fire departments will be aware of the up coming grant opportunities.   | Phone call sample  | CC  | Spg 01        |        |
| 2. All eligible communities will be aware of the upcoming grant opportunities   | Phone call sample  | CC  | Spg 01        |        |
| 3. Affected communities will have an understanding of the NFP and how it affects their community.   | Phone call sample  | CC  | Fall 01       |        |
| 4. Interested parties will be aware that this is a strong interagency implementation effort.  | Phone call sample  | CC  | Fall 01       |        |
| 5. The general public will have a basic understanding of the affects of the NFP on OR and WA.   | Media analysis   | CC  | Fall 01       |        |
| 6. Elected officials will have a good understanding of the aspects of the NFP that affects their constituents and visibly support the interagency efforts in the Pacific Northwest.                             | Media analysis, phone call sample                            | CC  | Fall 01       |        |
| 7. Media articles will be generally favorable highlighting interagency efforts.   | Media analysis   | CC  | Fall 01       |        |
| 8. All local agency decision makers will regularly communicate the interagency emphasis of the NFP, understand the five emphasis areas of the NFP and how their particular agency is involved in implementation | Field reviews 01, phone call sample, performance appraisals  | CC  | Spg - Fall 01 |        |
| 9. Employees will have a general understanding of the NFP and it's potential as a significant ecosystem management tool.  | Field reviews, 01, phone call sample, performance appraisals | CC  | Spg – Fall 01 |        |