

The National Fire Plan

*Managing the
Impact of Wildfires
on Communities and
the Environment*

Miscellaneous
Publication
MP-1584

March 2002



A Season To Remember



The sights and sounds of the 2000 fire season will live in memory for decades to come. Exceptionally dry conditions from Florida to the Pacific Northwest set the stage for a long season. Fire activity was high from the spring through late fall in the Southern States. When lightning came to the northern Rocky Mountains in July and August, thousands of new fires ignited, at times threatening entire towns in Montana and Idaho. Firefighters said conditions and fire behavior were the most extreme they'd ever seen. In places, forests and rangelands burned almost like paper.

A Season To Remember

Congress responded to the grueling 2000 season by approving funds for Federal and State agencies and local communities to better plan and prepare for future wildfire seasons. The result of that planning and preparation is commonly known as the "National Fire Plan (NFP)."

The National Fire Plan -- Aiming High



The NFP goals are:

- ▲ Ensuring sufficient firefighting resources for the future;
- ▲ Rehabilitating and restoring fire-damaged ecosystems;
- ▲ Reducing fuels (combustible forest materials) in forests and rangelands at risk, especially near communities; and
- ▲ Working with local residents to reduce fire risk and improve fire protection.

The goals aim high. They represent a huge amount of work, and their ultimate success will depend on concerned individuals, agencies, and organizations joining forces. No agency or group working alone can achieve NFP's goals.

Aiming High

The National Fire Plan at Work

Better protection and preparedness. With the presence of additional firefighting resources, many communities have been spared the most devastating impacts of wildland fire. All wildland fires start small. That's the best time to contain them. The NFP currently helps firefighters accomplish that.

Community education. Through workshops, the FIREWISE program, and other efforts supported by the NFP, communities are learning how to reduce their wildland fire risk. Simple steps, such as clearing away brush, moving woodpiles, and replacing wood shingles with fire-resistant material, are making a difference.

Local fire department assistance. Local fire departments are a vital part of fighting wildland fire. Through the NFP, they are receiving increased training, equipment, prevention, and educational support; and other tools needed to decrease the threats to life and property.

Protecting water quality for towns and communities. Research scientists and land managers are working to ensure that erosion in burned areas has minimal impacts on watersheds, many of which provide drinking water to communities.

Ecosystem re-establishment. The work doesn't end when the last flame is doused. Federal land managers, State foresters, scientists, and volunteers are helping forests and rangelands recover from the debilitating effects of wildland fire.



The National Fire Plan

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Reducing excess fuels in and around communities. The NFP provides funding for restoring fire's natural role in ecosystems through prescribed fire, thinning, and other means of reducing dangerous fuels, thereby lessening the danger to people and communities. As prescribed fire use increases, scientists will assist managers in understanding how to minimize the impacts of smoke emissions on air quality. Healthy forests and rangelands are less likely to experience catastrophic wildland fires.

Economic development opportunities. The NFP supports restoring the land, reducing fuels, and creating products from thinned materials, all of which increase local employment opportunities.

Join With Us

Reducing the risks from wildland fires to communities, forests, and rangelands is a difficult task. We all need to contribute to making our communities safer and our public and private lands healthier. To learn more and find out how you can help, contact your State forester or any of the Federal fire management agencies: the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service, or the U.S. Department of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The NFP is working for you! With your help, it will continue to lessen the danger from wildland fires to humans, homes, communities, and natural resources.

Join With Us



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More information on the National Fire Plan can be found at:

www.fireplan.gov

- USDA Forest Service
- U.S. Department of the Interior
- National Association of State Foresters



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