

Wildfire Emergency Response Fund Annual Operating Procedures

2009

Program Description

The Wildfire Emergency Response Fund (WERF) was created (Reference: Colorado State Statute CRS 23-31-309) to provide funding or reimbursement for:

- The first aerial tanker flight or the first hour of a firefighting helicopter and/or
- ...the first two days wildfire hand crews to a wildfire at the request of any sheriff, municipal fire department, or fire protection district.

These Operating Procedures will be reviewed annually and updated as changes in the WERF program occur.

This fund will be utilized for assistance on state and private lands only, within the state of Colorado. The fund will be utilized for the costs of the first aerial drop on a wildfire and two days of wildfire hand crew use. In the case of helicopter use as the first response, the fund will be utilized for helicopter rotor time only, including the pilot. ***Utilization of this fund does not require an agreement between CSFS and the using county sheriff, municipal fire department, or fire protection district.***

Standards for Aircraft Use and Reimbursement

Aircraft used must be AMD /USFS carded for use on fires where federal resources are being used or where federal land is involved. The CSFS-County Cooperative Agreement and the Annual Operating Plan (AOP) must identify the aircraft dispatch procedures. These procedures must be followed for reimbursement eligibility under WERF.

Counties without a CSFS-County agreement and AOP must supply the following information at the time of dispatch of qualified aerial resources:

1. County
2. Incident Name & Incident Number (often local fires have the same name)
3. Incident Commander
4. Location
5. Section, TWN & Range
6. Jurisdiction
7. Latitude/Longitude
8. Ground contact individual
9. Air to Ground Radio Frequency
10. Other Aircraft In the area.

Fixed wing aircraft reimbursement does not include lead plane or aerial observer aircraft. Costs for helicopter will be first hour of actual helicopter time. This fund does not pay costs for additional personnel associated with the helicopter.

The fund will not pay for ferry time to bring aircraft from outside Colorado. When an order has been placed and the aircraft is coming from out-of-state, the ordering agency will be billed for flight time until the aircraft crosses the Colorado border.

Continued use of aircraft may be tactically necessary beyond initial use covered by this fund. Continued use is a command decision beyond terms of this fund. The user will be invoiced for resource use beyond fund reimbursement.

Standards for Hand Crew Use and Reimbursement

Hand crews used must meet NWCG standards. The CSFS-County Cooperative Agreement and the AOP must identify resource ordering dispatch procedures. These procedures must be followed for reimbursement eligibility under WERF.

Counties without a CSFS-County agreement and AOP must supply the following information at the time of dispatch of qualified hand crew resources:

1. County
2. Incident Name & Incident Number
3. Incident Commander
4. Location
5. Section, TWN & Range
6. Jurisdiction

General hand crew WERF guidelines are:

- a. Use of state inmate hand crews is preferred; however this fund is not limited to state inmate hand crews. When state inmate and other hand crews are both used on an incident, only the state inmate crews will be reimbursed according to these WERF guidelines.
- b. First two days are defined as the first two full operational periods. The WERF will reimburse for one (1) crew per day for two (2) days. A different crew may be used each day, but only one crew for the first day and another crew for the second day will be eligible for reimbursement under WERF. Reimbursement will not be approved for two (2) crews for one (1) day.
- c. Air resource and hand crew for the same incident are both eligible for reimbursement.
- d. Crew travel is not a reimbursable expense except in the case where the crew is only used for one full operational period. One day of travel may be reimbursed in addition to the on full operational period.
- e. **The fund will not pay for travel time to bring hand crews from outside Colorado.** Continued hand crew use may be tactically necessary beyond initial days covered by this fund. Continued use is a command decision beyond terms of this fund. The user will be invoiced for resource use beyond fund reimbursement.

Implementation Request

The requesting agency/department must order fire suppression resources including aircraft or hand crews as outlined in the county AOP. Cooperators in counties without an AOP must make the request through the appropriate county sheriff's dispatch center, CSFS district office or the CSFS state office.

Notification of Aircraft Use

After WERF is implemented, information is required to properly document cooperator requests and aircraft use for program and fiscal reasons. The information listed below must be collected by the local CSFS representative/district and emailed (Sergio Lopes or Janell Ray) to the CSFS Fire Division with a copy to the Area FMO. All hard copy documentation should be mailed directly to CSFS Fire Division. If district personnel are unable to obtain a copy of the OAS 23 or USFS#122, they should work with Sergio Lopes to obtain a copy.

Information needed	If aircraft is a CSFS contract SEAT	All other aircraft
Date of aircraft use	X	X
Aircraft type and identification	X	X
Copy of the Resource Order		X
Fire name	X	X
Fire number	X	X
Resource order #	X	X
County (or ordering agency/dept.)	X	X
Copy OAS23 or USFS#122		X
Individual & agency requesting WERF implementation	X	X

Notification of Hand Crew Use

After WERF is implemented, information is needed to properly document cooperator requests and hand crew use for program and fiscal reasons. The information listed below must be collected by the local CSFS representative/district and emailed (Sergio Lopes or Janell Ray) to the CSFS Fire Division with a copy to the Area FMO. All hard copy documentation should be mailed directly to the CSFS Fire Division.

Documentation of hand crew use is required and includes, at a minimum:

1. A copy of the Resource Order
2. Copies of the Crew Time Reports or OF-288s
3. Documentation of the requesting jurisdiction (individual & agency making the request)

Payment

By agreement with the federal agencies, invoices for such aircraft and hand crew use will be sent to CSFS Fire Division. Upon receipt of the federal invoice, the fund will pay for documented eligible costs. Invoice costs not covered by WERF will be forwarded to the jurisdiction that ordered the resource.

Fund Limits

Money not expended at the end of the fiscal year shall remain in the fund. CSFS will make every effort to keep the fund balance positive. If the fund balance reaches \$0, and other avenues of fund revenue have been exhausted, the State Forester will make a decision to continue or suspend WERF reimbursements. Timely submittals of reimbursement requests are required for efficient management of the WERF program. Area and District personnel should communicate this to our cooperators and strive for quick submissions.