

Version 5/18/05

**Memorandum of Understanding**

for the formation of the

**Santa Fe Zone Fire Management Board**

Between

**USDA--Forest Service, Santa Fe National Forest**

and the

**USDI--Bureau of Land Management, Rio Puerco Field Office, Taos Field Office,  
and New Mexico State Office**

and the

**USDI--National Park Service, Bandelier National Monument, Fort Union  
National Monument and Pecos National Historical Park**

and the

**USDI--Fish and Wildlife Service, Las Vegas National Wildlife Refuge**

and the

**USDI--Bureau of Indian Affairs, Northern Pueblos Agency,  
and Southern Pueblos Agency**

and the

**State of New Mexico, Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department  
Forestry Division – State Forester**

and the

**Los Alamos National Laboratory**

## **I. Introduction**

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) creates the Santa Fe Zone Fire Management Board, herein referred to as “the Zone Board.” It describes the Zone Board membership, assigns duties, and provides necessary delegations of authority to the Zone Board.

## **II. Authority**

Joint Powers Agreement between the State of New Mexico and the Federal Agencies of the Departments of Agriculture and Interior with Fire Responsibilities, 2003.

Memorandum of Understanding for formation of the Southwest Coordinating Group, 2003.

Southwest Coordinating Group Handbook, 2003.

## **III. Purpose**

The Santa Fe Zone Board is an interagency group with overall responsibility for coordination of the fire and incident management activities of those agencies represented in the Zone.

In the Southwest Geographic Area, Zone Boards are established under the direction of the Southwest Coordinating Group to direct fire management activities within the zones, and to provide increased efficiencies among the agencies within the zones. Zone Boards will also implement the Joint Powers Interagency Agreements for the Zone, and oversee the Zone Annual Operating Plan.

## **IV. Definitions**

A Zone is identified as a geographic section of land based on logical sources of resources and transportation. Exhibit A is a map depicting the Santa Fe Zone boundaries.

## **V. Board Composition**

The Zone Board is comprised of representatives from cooperating Federal, Tribal, State and local Agencies that are physically located within the Zone and have wildland fire management responsibility. Board members shall be assigned by and act as representatives for their Agency Administrators.

Zone Board membership consists of one designated voting member from each of the following participating agencies:

**Bureau of Indian Affairs**--representing the Northern Pueblos Agency, Southern Pueblos Agency, and the tribes associated with the Santa Fe Zone.

**Bureau of Land Management**--representing the Taos Field Office, the Rio Puerco Field Office and the New Mexico State Office.

**New Mexico Forestry Division**--representing the Bernalillo District, the Las Vegas District, Chama District, State Office, county fire departments, and unincorporated communities.

**National Park Service**--representing Bandelier National Monument, Pecos National Historical Park, and Fort Union National Monument.

**U.S. Forest Service**--representing the Santa Fe National Forest.

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**--representing the Las Vegas National Wildlife Refuge.

**Los Alamos National Laboratories**—representing the U.S. Department of Energy.

The Santa Fe Zone Dispatch Center Manager will serve as a permanent, non-voting member of the Zone Board.

## **VII. Board Duties**

The Zone Board serves as a forum for collaboration on all aspects of wildland fire management within the Santa Fe Zone. To accomplish this, the Zone Board has two primary functions:

--Sharing information, and coordination of fire management activities among local, state and federal wildland fire management agencies, and with the public.

--Acting as a local interagency decision-making group, under the direction of the Southwest Coordinating Group.

Specific duties of the Zone Board include:

### PRE-SUPPRESSION

--Coordinate an interagency fire prevention program within the zone.

--Coordinate fire restrictions, closures and recessions on an interagency basis and communicate decisions within Geographic Area guidelines.

--Coordinate and release public information regarding Zone activities on an interagency basis.

--Coordinate requests for fire severity funding.

--Coordinate zone-sponsored training.

### INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAMS

--Identify and nominate personnel to the Southwest Area Type I Incident Management Teams, through the Southwest Coordinating Group.

--Provide management to the New Mexico Type II Incident Management Team, by:

1. Nominating team members from within the Zone.
2. Participate in team member selection and team evaluation.
3. Providing a representative to the New Mexico Type II Incident Management Team Board. This duty will normally be assigned to the Zone Center Manager.

--Establish and manage a Type III Incident Management organization.

### ZONE OPERATIONS

--Establish and manage a zone Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (MAC group) that will identify and prioritize incidents within the Zone and relay these priorities to the SWCC Center Director or to a Geographic Area MAC group.

**--Establish a Fuels Committee to ensure that the interagency use of prescribed fire and mechanical treatment in fuels management projects are done safely, cost effectively, efficiently, and with maximum benefit to cooperators, the public, and the environment.**

--Provide oversight for management of the Santa Fe Zone Interagency Coordination Center.

--Provide guidance to the Santa Fe Zone Interagency Coordination Center to resolve interagency issues where established guidance is otherwise lacking.

--A January meeting will be held to review the Santa Fe Zone Interagency Coordination Center Annual Report compiled by the Zone Center Manager.

--Review and modify as necessary the Zone Annual Operating Plan and submit a signed copy to the Southwest Coordinating Group no later than March 15th annually.

### FUELS MANAGEMENT

--Collaborate on prescribed fire and fuels management projects to find opportunities for increasing efficiencies and target accomplishments through the **Santa Fe Zone Fuels Committee**.

--Facilitate sharing of manpower and resources on fuels projects.

--Wherever possible, plan interagency projects that cross jurisdictional boundaries.

--Provide for peer review of high-risk prescribed fire projects.

### PLANNING/FIRE PROGRAM ANALYSIS

--Coordinate the Fire Program Analysis for the Santa Fe Zone.

--Establish working groups to address Zone issues and initiatives, as needed.

--Serve as a forum to coordinate planning initiatives related to fire management, such as land use plans, long-range fuels treatment plans, and fire risk assessment plans.

### OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES

--Conduct after action reviews as needed. This will include an annual review of all zone fire management activities.

--Update the Zone MOU every 5 years.

## **VIII. Officers of the Zone Board**

The Zone Board will appoint a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson. These officers will serve a term of one calendar year. At the end of one year, the Vice Chairperson will automatically assume the Chairperson position. This transition will take place in January of each year.

The Chair position will rotate among the signatory agencies so that each agency assumes their share of this responsibility and workload. The sequence of this rotation is planned as follows:

2005	BLM
2006	USFS
2007	BIA
2008	City of Santa Fe
2009	USFWS
2010	State Forestry
2011	NPS
2012	LANL

## **IX. Responsibilities of the officers**

The responsibilities of the Chairperson are:

- A. Designate the time and location for all Zone Board meetings, prepare an agenda for each meeting, and preside over meetings.
- B. Ensure that notes are taken for each meeting, and are distributed to member agencies in a timely manner.
- C. Serve as primary contact between the Santa Fe Zone Board and the Southwest Coordinating Group. Participate in Southwest Coordinating Group meetings and Geographic Area MAC group meetings, as requested.
- D. Ensure that a permanent file is maintained for Zone Board information. This includes minutes of board meetings and copies of all zone documents, including a current copy of this MOU. This responsibility will be delegated to one individual in the Santa Fe Zone dispatch office.

The responsibilities of the Vice-Chairperson are:

- A. Perform the duties of the Chairperson if that individual is absent or unable to perform for any reason. The Vice-Chairperson shall also perform such duties as may be assigned to him or her by the Zone Board or the Chairperson.

**X. Meetings**

Meetings will be held at least once each quarter, and as often as determined to be necessary by the Chairperson.

Meetings will generally be open to participation by interested persons involved in zone programs.

Most Zone Board decisions will be by consensus. However, only Zone Board members designated by the agencies, or their proxy, will be allowed to vote in situations where a formal vote is required.

**XI. Quorum**

A majority of voting members will constitute a quorum for the purposes of transacting Board business. Each Agency will have one vote.

**XII. Modification or Cancellation**

A request to modify or cancel the Zone MOU must be made in writing to all signatories. Within 30 days of receipt of such a request, the Zone Board shall convene to act upon the request and either (1) make modifications to the Agreement, (2) offer the requesting agency the opportunity to remain a part of the group without changes, or (3) accept the withdrawal of the petitioning agency/entity.

**XIII. Financing**

Each agency's contribution will be dependant on the voluntary support of that agency. No funds or services may be obligated by this MOU. Separate agreements may be established between the Santa Fe National Forest and other zone agencies to provide funds to support of the Santa Fe Zone Interagency Dispatch Center.

#### **XIV. Terms of Agreement**

This MOU will become effective upon a signature by all parties and will remain in effect for five years from the last date of signature, or until terminated by mutual agreement of all parties. Renewal will be by review and signature of all parties. Any party may withdraw by providing 30 days written notice. This MOU may be modified at any time by written consent of all parties.

#### **XV. Approvals**

The terms of this MOU including delegation of authority to the appropriate Board Representative are accepted by authorized signature. The finalized original MOU will be maintained by the Board Chairperson. Copies will be provided to all participating board members.

Attachment:

Zone Map