

Teton Interagency Program Efficiencies

Bridger Teton National Forest and Grand Teton National Park

The Forest and Park formed an interagency relationship over 30 years ago that has provided efficiencies reducing overall cost to government and has generated partnering with external organizations in the management of our public lands. This relationship maximizes outputs with our funding and eliminates redundancies within these organizations. Our interagency effort is aligned with consistent direction coming from the highest levels of the Executive Branch asking us to seek efficiencies within government and prevent internal hurdles from becoming barriers to that cooperation.

Interagency Positions and Blending of Modules

- Interagency Aviation Officer – reduces 2 federal units agency expense by half for the position and fills a critical void in safety and oversight for a high complexity program that would otherwise not be filled.
- Interagency Fire Planner (FS funded) and Interagency Fire Ecologist (NPS funded). Each of these positions support the program of work for both units. Without this creative solution neither unit would be able to host both functions in support of their program. These positions provide consistency in planning across agency boundaries and interdisciplinary team support.
- Fire Effects monitoring from NPS module – provides fire and fuels monitoring data on mechanical treatments, prescribed fire and wild fires to document how well projects and incidents meet their identified objectives. This monitoring capacity generates significant support from other partners and NGO's. The monitoring also supports NEPA on Fuels projects. This work is widely recognized as being one of the longest and most thorough monitoring effort for vegetation effects from both Rx and wildland fire.
- Wildfire and Search and Rescue Module blending enable increased capacity and diversity of operator experience - SAR, EMS, wildlife and vegetation management, wildfire and prescribed fire.

High Reliability Performance

- Alignment of leadership values promotes deference to expertise and enables sensitivity to operations. The strength of our relationships during day to day business enhances our ability to come together during times of crisis promoting organizational and operator resilience. Town and county governments don't have to negotiate the differences between NPS and USFS policies, procedures and other nuances.
- Working together creates opportunities for high level organizational learning. Ability to assist county and adjacent counties in SAR operations through NPS Chief Ranger authority. We have assisted other regional NPS and Forest units in SAR operations aligning our capability with National Response Framework and the Emergency Support Functions of the federal agencies.

Shared Facilities

- Teton Interagency Dispatch Center – provides 24 hour emergency medical dispatching capability, other all hazard, and wildfire staffing year round which enhances safety for field crews.
- Teton Helibase facility construction was funded by FS and built on NPS land which also encumbers the Jackson Hole Airport where an additional partnership exists.
- Cooperative housing solutions - Reduced workforce through sharing of staff has huge implications in the local area where many job offers go unfilled or declined due to prospective employees inability find housing solutions that match with federal wage scales.

Value of Common Services

- Sharing two helicopters to satisfy common and diverse objectives for FS and NPS which reduces cost to government by limiting the need for either agency to fund a third helicopter.
- Shared medical direction – provides consistent medical oversight for our interagency responders. This relationship leads to more cross training- FS employees engage in NPS EMS refresher, receive guidance from NPS EMS experts, NPS rescuers backfill at Teton Helibase and go on off unit assignments.
- Hosting an NPS and FS short-haul module as the two agencies make strides toward a national short-haul operations guide permits progress in a way not found elsewhere. The close local working relationship between these two programs ensures constant interagency communication as changes and advancements continue.
- This partnership is aligned with the intent of the Cohesive Strategy regarding safe and effective response to wildland fire.