

Pacific Northwest Interagency Preparedness Plan

2012 Revision

I. Executive Summary

The Interagency Preparedness Plan has been revised in 2012 in order to incorporate updated processes resulting from changing technology and as a refresh to a plan last updated a decade ago. Like its predecessors, the purpose of this plan is to ensure timely recognition of approaching critical fire situations, assess readiness and establish work priorities, and for implementing critical actions.

The objective of this plan is to support decision-making intended to set a level of preparedness to ensure that incident response has a reasonable probability of success. This Plan covers READINESS for potential or active wildfire incidents that may endanger life, property or natural resources under jurisdiction of Federal Wildland Fire Protection Agencies in the States of Oregon and Washington.

A process has been developed to compute a Preparedness Level (PL) on a scale of 1.0 to 5.0 to ordinate the level of readiness. At each Preparedness Level, a recommended set of actions is provided. This Plan documents actions to be considered by these Federal agencies in the states of Washington and Oregon; USDA Forest Service, USDI Bureau of Land Management, USDI Bureau of Indian Affairs, USDI Park Service, and the USDI Fish and Wildlife Service.

This Preparedness Plan addresses all wildland fire activities. It may be expanded in the future to cover other types of incidents such as floods, earthquakes, and volcanoes.

To provide for valid information to support this decision, it will be the responsibility of each participating agency to submit accurate daily situation reports, to communicate promptly to the NWCC Manager situations and concerns needing special consideration in the determination of the PL, and to support actions proposed or implemented under this plan.

II. DETERMINATION OF PREPAREDNESS LEVELS

The Preparedness Level for the Northwest Geographic Area (Oregon & Washington) is determined by the Northwest Interagency Coordination Center (NWCC) Manager and transmitted to all Agencies covered by this plan. The Preparedness Level is designated for the current day and forecasted for 3-Day, 10-Day, and 30-Day time periods. As primary input to this decision, an Initial Preparedness Level will be determined using the following:

1. An assessment of observed and anticipated workload. This measure is used to measure the real and potential need for fire suppression resources, and includes wildfire, prescribed fire, and other activities that might create a significant drawdown of resources.
 - a. Modeled outputs include numbers of ignitions, probability of large fires, numbers of large fires, and potential fire duration through the 10-day forecast period. Outputs are categorized by Predictive Service Area.
 - b. Model outputs are conditional upon fire season severity and specific fire weather events that exacerbate the potential for fire ignitions and subsequent burning conditions. Severity indicators include ERC-G and 100 hour time-lag fuel moisture.
 - c. Forecast outputs for 30-Day preparedness levels are based strictly on climatology, those conditions most likely to be observed 30 days from the present day. This reflects seasonal changes in the burning environment.
2. An assessment of firefighting capability to meet the workload demands. The assessment considers capability based on the availability of a full range of resource types—crews, equipment, aircraft, and aerially-delivered firefighters.

3. The determination of the final preparedness level is a management decision and the responsibility of the NWCC Manager, Emergency Operations Manager or designated acting and needs to consider the following subjective criteria as a minimum:
 - a. The 3, 10, and 30 day weather forecasts and projections.
 - b. Additional risk of wildfire occurrence or existing wildfire activity not measured by the Initial Preparedness Level. This could include wildfire activity both nationally and within the NW Geographic Area.
 - c. Social/political considerations.
 - d. Other Considerations including the commitment and availability of resources in other Geographic Areas.

These actions will be considered at each of the benchmark time intervals of 3 days, 10 days, and 30 days into the future for each preparedness level.

III. Preparedness Level Definitions

As noted above, Preparedness Levels are determined by assessing workload and capability in relation to each other. Initial Preparedness Levels, determined strictly by workload, are defined below:

<u>Preparedness Levels</u>	<u>Anticipated Number of Large Incidents</u>
1	0-1
2	2-4
3	5-9
4	10-14
5	15+

Capability is assessed by referencing resource availability in the Resource Order and Status System (ROSS) and by consulting NW Dispatch Centers, the National Interagency Coordination Center and other Geographic Area Coordination Centers. Using forecasted workload as a reference, future capability is assessed and the Final Adjusted Preparedness Level is set using the definitions below:

PL 1: All resources can be generally exporting as they are available OR there is no significant demand anywhere.

PL 2: GACC resources effectively manage observed/expected activity, while leaving a resource surplus available for export; OR low levels of activity observed/expected and heavy export of NW resources outside the GACC.

PL 3: Critical resources must be imported to ameliorate competition between incidents/forecasted incidents and to facilitate preparedness. Export of non-critical resources continues. Nationally, resources continue to be available.

PL 4: Heavy commitment of NW resources. Significant import of available resources from outside the NW is necessary to meet incident demands and maintain preparedness. Competition between GACCs affects timing and magnitude of resource mobilization.

PL 5: Full commitment of NW resources imminent. Nationally, competition for resources significantly restricts resource imports. Other emergency measures are necessary to sustain incident management and GACC Preparedness.

IV. NW PREPAREDNESS LEVELS AND MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Preparedness levels are established by the NW MAC and remain in effect throughout the year. They rise and decline in response to observed and anticipated incident activity, in the NW and Nationally, relative to available incident management capability.

As preparedness levels rise, so do management complexities. The following management considerations are intended to provide guidance and clarify responsibilities relative to changing preparedness levels.

The NW Geographic Area tiers to National Preparedness Level Management Considerations for all NW Preparedness Levels. See the National Interagency Mobilization Guide, Chapter 20.

Preparedness Level 1:

Workload: 0-1 Active Large Fires

Available Capability: All resources can be generally exported as they are available or there is no significant demand anywhere.

Management Direction/Considerations	Who is Responsible
Follow standard operating guidelines as described in the NW Interagency Mobilization Guide and the NW MAC Operations Handbook.	
Communicate NMAC/NW MAC guidance and direction pertinent to the NW Geographic Area	NWCC Manager

Preparedness Level 2:

Workload: 2-4 active large fires and/or equivalent all risk incidents.

Available Capability: GA resource capability effectively meets the anticipated workload with a surplus available for export; or low levels of activity observed/expected and heavy export of NW resources outside the GACC.

Management Direction/Considerations	Who is Responsible
Follow all PL 1 Management Directions and Considerations.	
Conduct daily briefings using the NW MAC daily schedule as appropriate	NWCC Manager
Execute MAC functions under NW MAC Delegation of Authority utilizing existing NWCC staff. Consider staff augmentation to meet work load.	NWCC Manager
Staffing levels actively monitored. Surplus capability daily reported as available. Resource assignment extensions coordinated with the GACC.	Agency Administrators

Preparedness Level 3:

Workload: 5-9 active large fires and/or equivalent all-risk incidents.

Available Capability: Demand for resources, particularly crucial shared resources, exceeds GA capacity; shared resources available nationally must be imported to meet demand. Export of non-critical resources continues.

Management Direction/Considerations	Who is Responsible
Follow all PL 2 Management Directions and Considerations	
Brief NW MAC representatives as needed on resource availability and current and projected critical resource needs	NWCC Manager
Press releases on fire situation and prevention measures (coordinated with the PNWCG Fire Prevention Working Team)	NWCC Manager
Consider repositioning and extending staffing hours of “shared resources”	NWCC Manager
Consider convening the MAC Support Group	NWCC Manager
Assess “impending threat” situations and maintain initial attack capability based on risk	NWCC Manager/NW MAC
Consider acquiring out of GACC resources to meet critical resource and leadership needs in support of large fires.	NWCC Manager/NW MAC
Consider the draw on available resources when implementing Rx fire projects or incident strategies other than “full suppression”.	Agency Administrators

Preparedness Level 4:

Workload: 10-14 active large fires and/or equivalent all-risk incidents.

Available Capability: Heavy commitment of NW resources. Significant import of available resources from outside the NW is necessary to meet incident demands and maintain initial attack preparedness. Competition between GACCs affects timing and magnitude of resource mobilization.

Management Direction/Considerations	Who is Responsible
Follow all Level 3 Management Directions and Considerations	
Convene the NW MAC via conference call or in person	NWCC Manager
Consider adding key Liaison positions (e.g. Military, OEM)	NW MAC
Consider use of National Guard assets in coordination with State Partners.	NW MAC
Brief forest industry of situation and possible resource needs	NW MAC
Activate an Area/National fire prevention education team	NW MAC
Consider Emergency Firefighter training needs	NW MAC
Consider making all Agency resources available to support incident management.	Agency Administrators
Consult w/NW MAC prior to implementing Rx fire projects and incident strategies other than “full suppression”.	Agency Administrators

Preparedness Level 5:

Workload: >14 active large fires and/or equivalent all-risk incidents.

Available Capability: Full commitment of NW resources imminent. Resource competition Nationally significantly restricts resource imports. Other emergency measures are necessary to sustain incident management and GACC Preparedness.

Management Direction/Considerations	Who is Responsible
Follow all Level 4 Management Directions and Considerations	
Implement mitigation actions for significant high risk planned events	NW MAC
Consider temporary implementation of additional work/rest guidelines to address firefighter fatigue. Consider forming FAST teams to monitor and promote firefighter safety.	NW MAC
Incident strategies other than "full suppression" reviewed by the NW MAC prior to implementation.	NW MAC