**ELDORADO NATIONAL FOREST LIGHTNING PLAN**

**INTRODUCTION**

This plan was developed to standardize the procedures used by the Eldorado National Forest and provide for coordination with cooperating agencies that may be affected by the activation of the Lightning Plan.

The Lightning Plan is used to manage multiple incidents as a result of lightning. It does not address large fire operations involving an Incident Management Team (IMT). A fire that exceeds the capability of local initial attack may be treated as a separate incident outside the scope of the lightning plan.

**LIGHTNING PLAN GOAL AND OBJECTIVES**

1. **GOAL:** This plan has been developed with the intent to provide a standardized procedure for managing multiple incidents.
2. **OBJECTIVES:**

* Prioritize fire suppression actions within the urban interface to provide for public safety and protection of communities.
* Prioritize fire suppression actions to provide for protection of natural and cultural resources based on objectives with in the Eldorado National Forest Fire Management Plan (FMP)
* Apply the appropriate management response (including managed fires) for new starts within each Zone’s area of responsibility.

**ACTIVATION OF LIGHTNING PLAN**

Activation of the Lightning Plan may occur when the following conditions exist; keeping in mind there may be outside influences or local conditions that may justify plan activation.

1. **GUIDELINES FOR ACTIVATION**

* Lightning is imminently forecasted or occurring
* Current tempo of new fire starts results in insufficient resources available to continue use of pre-planned response.
* Additional off-unit resources are required, and are being staged for initial attack.

1. **AUTHORITY FOR ACTIVATION**

The decision to activate the Lightning Plan will be made jointly between the affected Zone Duty Officer (ZDO) and Camino Emergency Command Center (CICC), with notification to the Forest Duty Officer (FDO). Once the decision has been made to activate the Lightning Plan, CICC will notify all field units by radio broadcast that the lightning plan has been activated for the affected zone.

**OPERATING PROCEDURES**

Every effort should be made to ensure that a smooth transition occurs during the shift from centralized dispatching to the Lightning Plan.

1. **LIGHTNING PLAN**

Under the Lightning Plan, command and control of the new fires will shift to one or more ICP’s located throughout the Forest. The primary purpose of this shift is to provide Zone Duty Officers with direct command and control of initial attack resources and incidents on their zones. At this point, CICC will revert to support and logistical functions, and will continue to conduct aviation management such as ordering of aircraft and flight following.

The Zone Duty Officer will establish one or more staging areas on the zone to pre-position resources for response, as well as establish a logistical support organization if needed. These staging areas and all tactical resources assigned to the lightning plan area will be under direct control of the Zone Duty Officer. Newly arriving resources will be required to check-in at either the established zone staging area or ICP.

CICC will continue to receive all new fire reports, plot the location, and assign and incident number. CICC will then inform the appropriate Zone ICP of the new fire. From that point onwards, the Zone Duty Officer will be responsible for setting priorities for the appropriate management response, establishing command and control for each of the incidents, managing tactical assignments, staffing new incidents, and providing logistical support for on-going incidents.

The ZDO will also be required to keep CICC updated on the status and progress of fires being managed within the Lightning Plan. This update should occur at least once a day, or more often as necessary.

1. **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Zone Duty Officer:**

* Consult with CICC on activation of the Lightning Plan and notify the Forest Duty Officer.
* Establish an ICP and organization to manage multiple fires. Appropriate command and general staff positions will be activated as deemed necessary.
* Establish command and control from the designated ICP with all on-going incidents and resources assigned to the Lightning Plan area.
* Set overall priorities of fires within the Lightning Plan area, and direct tactical deployment of resources from the designated Zone ICP.
* Ensure District Line Officers and Zone resources are informed of fire situation and activation of Lightning plan.
* Order additional resources thru CICC if local resource shortage is anticipated.
* Order Air Attack/Detection flights, Air Tankers, Helicopters, Lead Planes, and Smokejumpers thru CICC.
* Organize zone resources into appropriate initial attack or extended attack organizations at the designated ICP or established staging areas as needed.
* Set up a logistical organization to support on-going and anticipated fires, and resources staged on the zone.
* Maintain incident logs for all incidents within the Zone’s Lightning Plan.
* Ensure CICC receives daily updates on the status of fires within the Lightning Plan. **It is extremely important to ensure proper documentation on all incidents.**
* Evaluate all new starts as a possible Managed Fire candidate.
* Recommend when the Lightning Plan can be deactivated

**Incident Commanders:**

* Report fire size-up directly to ZDO/Zone ICP/Staging area, once on-scene.
* Request all tactical and logistical orders through ZDO/Zone ICP/Staging area.
* Provide real time report on conditions and fire situation updates through ZDO/ICP, including containment, control, and demobilization plans.
* Report any new fire starts to CICC.

**CICC:**

* Provide a dispatcher, if requested, to the Zone ICP/Staging area for documentation for tracking purposes.
* Continue to receive initial fire reports and assign incident names and numbers.
* Continue to be the central ordering point of additional resources not currently assigned to the affected Zone.
* Ensure that ZDO/Zone ICP is informed of new fire starts, and relay pertinent information.
* Coordinate all aircraft requests for Air Attack/Detection flights, Air Tankers, Helicopters, Lead Planes, and Smokejumpers/
* Provide flight following for all aircraft within the Lightning Plan area.
* Coordinate with ZDO on activation or deactivation of Lightning Plan.
* Coordinate daily with cooperators and keep GACC informed of incident progression.

**Forest Duty Officer:**

* Keep abreast of the complete situation and monitor organizational expansion. Serve as “Area Commander” by coordinating with the ZDO to set priorities for use of critical resources, nationally shared resources, off-unit resource ordering, and setting priorities between zones if they cannot be resolved.
* Oversee operations and be available for consultation from ZDO.
* Ensure Forest Supervisor is informed of fire situation and activation of Lightning Plan.
* Coordinated with cooperators as needed.
* Monitor Managed Fire protocol and provide support as necessary. Keep Forest Fire Staff and Forest Supervisor informed.

1. **DETECTION**

**FIXED DETECTION –** Lookouts will continue to report all new fires to CICC during activation of Lightning Plan.

* All fire reports will be reported by azimuth, and approximate distance. Legal location and geographical landmark can be given if known. Size-up should also be included. CICC will be responsible for determining if the reported smoke is within the Zone’s Lightning Plan area and if this is a known fire or new start.
* If the fire report is not within an activated Lightning Plan, normal or augmented centralized dispatching protocol by CICC will apply for that new incident.
* If a lookout observes a new fire start outside CICC’s dispatch area, CICC will relay the fire report to the responsible agency.

**AERIAL DETECTION –** Aerial reconnaissance will be requested by the Zone or Forest Duty Officer.

* New fires detected by aerial reconnaissance will be reported to CICC even during Lightning Plan activation. During the initial reconnaissance, an aircraft should coordinate with the ZDO on the location they would like to concentrate their efforts on. The aircraft should also correspond with CICC to obtain information on known fires.

**CAMINO EMERGENCY COMMAND CENTER (CICC) –**

* Upon detection, all new fires will be plotted and assigned and incident name and number and will then be forwarded to the appropriate ZDO when Lightning Plan is activated.

1. **COMMUNICATIONS –** After a lightning event has occurred in which numerous starts are detected, communications can become very challenging. There are a few procedures that may help mitigate the main Forest frequency from becoming too congested:

* CICC will assign command frequencies to the North and South Zones. This will be alerted and broadcast on both frequencies for which command has been assigned to which zone. Command Frequencies to be used are Forest and Admin Net.
* Tactical Frequencies as predefined by district will be utilized; if additional tactical frequencies are needed they can be requested through CICC.
* Alternate Air to Ground Frequencies can be designated if the primary frequency is not serving the needs. Tactical frequencies can be used or another Air to Ground can be requested though CICC.
* If needed, routine aircraft flight following can be done on the National Flight Following Frequency.
* Routine in and out of service policy will continue, the preferred method of contacting CICC is over the phone, when possible.

**ESCAPED FIRE**

If one or more fires within the Zone Lightning Plan expands beyond local extended attack capabilities (i.e. exceeds complexity and/or span of control), the ZDO may have that incident removed from the Lightning Plan with concurrence of the Forest Duty Officer and CICC. A separate fire organization under one of the local area’s Type 3 Teams, or a Type 2 or 1 IMT will be mobilized depending on the outcome of the complexity analysis under normal procedures outlined in the Interagency Standards for Fire and Aviation Operations (Redbook).

**LIGHTNING PLAN DEACTIVATION**

In deactivating the Lightning Plan, command and control of initial attack will revert back to CICC, and dispatch response plans will resume as normal.

Prior to deactivation of the Lightning Plan the following guidelines should be met:

1. All fires under the Lightning Plan will have had the appropriate management response taken (i.e. contain, control, patrol, out, managed).
2. Sufficient IA resources will be in place and available for a return to centralized dispatching using pre-planned response.
3. The decision to deactivate the Lightning Plan will be made jointly between the Zone Duty Officer, Forest Duty Officer, and CICC.
4. Any out of area resources should be considered for release.
5. CICC will announce over the radio that the Zone has gone out of the Lightning Plan, and resume centralized dispatching.

**PRE-LIGHTNING PLAN ACTIVATION**

If the Lightning Plan has yet to be declared, the following are considerations for CICC:

* Crews will split into squads/modules. Crews will notify CICC of how many squads are available for dispatch.
* Dispatch Level will be augmented to Low. All reported fires will be dispatched as a smoke check (FCS), and will remain that way until units arrive on-scene to confirm the fire. Once confirmed the incident will be changed to FWL (Wildland Fire) or FWLT (Wildland Fire, Lightning), based on fire cause.
* All initial dispatches will consist of 1 engine or 1 squad. Additional resources can be requested based on initial report or size up from IC once on-scene.
* Wildland Fire/Smoke Checks will be dispatched through the Forest frequency dispatcher and not “one voice” dispatching (i.e. CAL FIRE Local Net).
* Unfound FCS will be changed in CAD to FFAS