## EAGLE COUNTY WILDLAND FIRE OPERATING PLAN

**Summary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mutual Aid Zone</th>
<th>Countywide</th>
<th>All ground and aviation resources are considered mutual aid.</th>
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<td><strong>Mutual Aid Period</strong></td>
<td>Until Midnight of the first operational period or midnight of the second operational period if mutually agreed upon by the Parties.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Local Dispatch</strong></td>
<td>Vail Public Safety Communications Center</td>
<td>(970) 479-2201</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Interagency Dispatch</strong></td>
<td>GJC, CRC</td>
<td>(970) 257-4800, (970) 826-5037</td>
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*Last modified on April 1, 2021*
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PREAMBLE
This Operating Plan (OP) is prepared pursuant to the Statewide Cooperative Wildland Fire Management and Stafford Act Response Agreement and the Colorado Statewide Wildland Fire Management Annual Operating Plan and the Agreement for Cooperative Wildfire Protection.

PURPOSE
The purpose of this Operating Plan (OP) is to set forth standard operating procedures, agreed upon policies, and responsibilities to implement cooperative wildfire protection on all lands within Eagle County.

AUTHORITIES
- Colorado Statewide Cooperative Wildland Fire Management and Stafford Act Response Agreement Between:
  - BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT – COLORADO Agreement Number BLM-MOU-CO-538
  - NATIONAL PARK SERVICE – INTERMOUNTAIN REGION Agreement Number F1249110016
  - BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS – SOUTHWEST REGION (no agreement number)
  - UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE – MOUNTAIN PRAIRIE REGION
  - UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOREST SERVICE – ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION Agreement Number 21-FI-11020000-001
- Eagle County, Memorandum of Understanding for Participation in the Colorado Emergency Fire Fund
- Agreement for Cooperative Wildfire Protection in Eagle County

RECITALS
It is to the mutual advantage of the Parties to this Plan to coordinate efforts for the prevention, detection, and suppression of wildfires in and adjacent to their areas of responsibility, and to limit duplication and improve the effectiveness of wildland fire response.

INTERAGENCY COOPERATION
Interagency Dispatch Centers

Grand Junction (GJC) and Craig (CRC) Interagency Dispatch Centers
GJC and CRC are the primary dispatch for initial attack and extended attack on all federal lands within the county and will coordinate with the Vail Public Safety Communications Center for
wildfire response on state and private lands. Interagency dispatch centers utilize Wildcad while dispatching for initial attack and IROC to dispatch resources beyond the mutual aid period.

**Vail Public Safety Communications Center (VPSCC)**
The Vail Public Safety Communications Center is the primary dispatch for the Eagle County Sheriff’s Office and Fire Protection District’s/Department’s initial attack response on private and state lands within the county and will coordinate with GJC and CRC for wildfire response on federal lands.

**Emergency Operations Center (EOC)**
If activated, the EOC and Interagency Dispatch Center(s) will coordinate closely with each other in order to not duplicate efforts.

**Interagency Resources**
All wildland fire agencies are limited by current staffing and funding levels. A wildfire is normally a seasonal event and as such, fire suppression capability will vary by time of year.

**Standards**
During initial action, all agencies (local, state, and federal) accept each other’s qualification standards. Once jurisdiction is clearly established, then the standards of the agency(s) with jurisdiction prevail. All fireline personnel at the incident, including during the mutual aid period must be a minimum of 18 years old and be equipped with personal protective equipment that meets standards identified in the Interagency Standards for Fire and Aviation Operations-NFES 2724 (Red Book), Chapter 7.

The Incident Command System (ICS) will be utilized on all wildland fires.

**BLM**

*Local fire department personnel responding to incidents on BLM lands must:*
- Be 18 years of age or older;
- Have and use the required personal protective equipment (PPE) found in Chapter 7; and
- Have a basic level of wildland fire training. The National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) course S-190 and S-130 are recommended, both courses can be modified to fit local needs (local fire department requirement).
- Pre-identified incident communication protocols will be established and followed (e.g., frequencies plans, points of contact, and inter-operable radio hardware).
- The Incident Command System (ICS) will be used to manage all incidents.
PREPAREDNESS

Protection Planning
Each jurisdictional authority is responsible for their protection planning documents to be created in accordance with the jurisdictional authority’s policy and goals.

Protection Areas and Boundaries
Federal jurisdictional agencies have responsibility for wildfire protection on federal lands. Within Fire Protection Districts and/or Fire Departments, the Fire Chief is responsible for fire protection on non-federal lands, unless this responsibility is transferred by mutual consent to the County Sheriff. The County Sheriff is responsible for wildfire protection on all non-federal lands in the county that are outside of Fire Protection District boundaries. The Division of Fire Prevention and Control does not have jurisdiction on any lands, until authority and responsibility are transferred by mutual consent from the County Sheriff to DFPC.

Methods of Fire Protection and Suppression
The Incident Command System (ICS) is a component of NIMS and is a standardized emergency management system specifically designed to provide for an integrated organizational structure used for incident management. ICS will be used to manage all wildland fires.

Reciprocal (Mutual Aid) Fire Assistance

Mutual Aid Zone:
Mutual aid is considered to be county-wide.

Mutual Aid Period:
The mutual aid period is defined as the time of initial dispatch and ends at either midnight of the first operational period or midnight of the second operational period. All mutual aid periods will preferably end at midnight for ease of financial accounting and the development of cost share agreements. Agencies are responsible for their own costs during the mutual aid time period.

It is understood that no agency will be required or expected to commit its forces through mutual aid to assist another agency to the extent of jeopardizing the security or responsibilities of its own jurisdiction.

Mutual Aid Resources:
- All ground and aviation resources are considered mutual aid resources.

Mountain Area Mutual Aid
The Mountain Area Mutual Aid Operating Plan (MAMA) establishes mutual aid between local Fire Departments and Counties in the Mountain Area Region. The parties to MAMA consist of
Eagle, Garfield, Grand, Lake, Pitkin, Rio Blanco, Routt and Summit Counties. When Mountain Area Mutual Aid is implemented, an Agency Representative (AREP) may be assigned to the incident to facilitate the tracking and allocation of MAMA resources and coordinate with the agency(s) having jurisdiction. Resources who respond under MAMA may be assigned to the incident and placed on a resource order for extended attack if needed and available in IROC.

**Acquisition of Services**

Each agency will follow their own policies and procedures for acquiring services in support of an incident. Examples of these services include food caterers, portable toilets, hand wash stations, land use agreements, etc. The agency(s) having jurisdiction are responsible for supporting the incident.

**Joint Projects and Project Plans**

The Parties may jointly conduct cooperative projects, within their authority and as authorized by law, to maintain or improve their fire management services and activities. The CWPPs for Eagle County and those communities within Eagle County should be a driver in this effort.

**Fire Prevention**

Prevention efforts should be coordinated to provide uniform and consistent information to the public. News releases and media events should be coordinated to prevent duplication, maintain a consistent message to the public, and reduce costs.

**Public Use Restrictions**

The purpose of fire restrictions is to reduce the risk of human-caused fires during high fire danger and/or burning conditions, and for the protection of human life and property. Fire restrictions and closures are invoked on federal, state, county, and private lands under federal and state laws. It is essential that the restrictions and closures are easily understood by the public and that implementation should be closely coordinated across all lands and jurisdictions involved in the county. Fire restrictions may be implemented all together at the same time or individually as needed given the differences in elevation and fuel conditions. In the case that fire restrictions are implemented, the county sheriff will be responsible for the enforcement on non-federal lands and the respective federal agency is responsible for enforcement on federal lands. The procedures for initiation and rescinding fire restrictions and emergency closures are described in Attachment B - Fire Restriction Process. In addition to the criteria listed in the Fire Restrictions Process, fire managers may consider other factors such as fire occurrence, resistance to control, availability of resources, etc.

**Burn Permits**

An open burn permit is required in Eagle County for prescribed fires and open burning on private land. Burn Permits are issued by Eagle County and require both the applicable Fire Protection District/Department and County signature for approval.
Prescribed Fire (Planned Ignitions) and Fuels Management
The Parties may cooperate in the development and implementation of prescribed burning programs and projects. Each agency will notify the other agencies of major prescribed burning activity prior to ignition.

If parties to this OP conduct a cooperative prescribed fire, details covering cost sharing, reimbursement, and responsibility for suppression costs, should it escape, shall be agreed upon and documented in the burn plan.

Wildfires resulting from escaped prescribed fires ignited by a party to this OP on lands it manages shall be the responsibility of that party. The party responsible for the prescribed fire will reimburse other parties to this OP consistent with the terms and conditions contained herein for costs incurred in suppression of such fires.

Smoke Management
The Parties to this plan will try and minimize negative smoke impacts as a result prescribed burning. All prescribed fires will conform to standards set forth in local, state, and federal regulations. Smoke Management Permits are required to conduct prescribed burns and are administered through the State of Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE).

OPERATIONS

Fire Notifications
The responsible jurisdictional agency will be notified of a wildfire on or threatening their land as soon as possible once jurisdiction is determined. Notification of the jurisdictional agency may be made by the Dispatch or Communication Center tracking the initial attack resources.

Boundary Line Fires
A boundary line fire is a fire that occurs on lands of intermingled and/or adjoining protection responsibilities. A fire adjacent to a protection boundary or located in an area of undetermined jurisdiction will be the initial attack responsibility of the protecting agencies on both sides of the boundary. If multiple agencies are engaged in a fire on or near common boundaries, the agency representatives should convene as soon as possible to decide upon the best fire strategy.

Response to Wildland Fire
Firefighter and public safety are the first and foremost priority. Upon arriving on scene initial attack resources should provide a size-up, determine jurisdiction, and make the appropriate notifications if necessary. Resources should only commit to tactics and strategies that have a high probability of success while accomplishing incident objectives. The parties agree to establish LCES and follow the 10 Standard Fire Orders.
The closest forces concept will be utilized. There should be no delay in response pending
determination of the precise location of a fire, land ownership, fire jurisdiction or responsibility.
The jurisdictional agency will assume command of the incident as soon as possible or as
otherwise agreed.

**Special Management Considerations**

**Management Objectives:**
All lands under the Sheriff’s jurisdiction are managed under a full suppression strategy.
However, it is recognized that federal agencies may manage fire for multiple objectives on lands
within their jurisdiction. A supporting agency taking independent action within another agency’s
jurisdiction should notify that agency as soon as possible, in order to avoid conflicting land
management objectives.

**Evacuations**
Evacuation efforts will be coordinated and controlled by the Eagle County Sheriff’s office. Traffic
control will be provided by the County Sheriff, upon request, to expedite the routing of vehicles
and personnel to and from major fires and to exclude unauthorized personnel from the fire area.

**Greater Sage-Grouse:**
Greater Sage-Grouse protection and habitat enhancement is a high priority for the federal land
management agencies, however firefighter and public safety is the first priority on every fire and
takes precedence over natural resource protection. When unplanned ignition occurs in Greater
Sage-Grouse habitat the appropriate federal land management agency will be immediately
notified.

**Retardant Avoidance Areas:**
Avoid aerial application of all wildland fire chemicals within 300 feet (ft.) of waterways or other
mapped avoidance areas. Waterways are defined as any body of water (including lakes, rivers,
streams, and ponds) whether or not it contains aquatic life. Deviations from the policy are
allowed only for the protection of life or safety (public and firefighter).

**Decision Process**
Federal agencies are required to utilize the Wildland Fire Decision Support System (WFDSS)
for fires on their lands. If multi-jurisdictional fires occur that involve federal and non-federal
lands, then one WFDSS should be completed for the incident that includes input from all
affected jurisdictional agencies. Additionally, all State Responsibility Fires require a Decision
Support System be utilized.
Cooperation
The parties agree to coordinate fire suppression efforts and will continue to enhance strong partnerships between local, state, and federal agencies.

Communication
Each agency is responsible for providing public information as necessary for fires that they are responsible for. The parties agree to coordinate public information efforts as needed.

On multijurisdictional fires a Joint Information Center (JIC) may be established. A JIC can act as a single point of coordination for public information on an incident. The agencies having jurisdiction on the incident are all represented and can jointly disseminate official, timely, and accurate information to the public through their respective PIOs.

Cost efficiency
Cost effectiveness of any fire operation is the responsibility of all involved, including those that authorize, direct, or implement those operations. Cooperation and coordination during the decision process should be the intent with the goal being to accomplish fire operations objectives safely and efficiently.

Each party is fiscally accountable and responsible for the cost of the suppression of wildfires within their respective jurisdictional boundaries. The parties agree to coordinate and make joint decisions when resources are being ordered that may have a financial impact on a partner agency.

Delegation of Authority
In the event of an extended attack incident, a Delegation of Authority should be issued to the Incident Commander prior to he or she assuming command of the fire. If that is not possible due to time constraints then the delegation should be issued as soon as possible following the assumption of command.

If the fire is a multijurisdictional fire, then an Agency Administrator from each jurisdictional agency should issue a single joint Delegation of Authority to the incident commander.

Preservation of Evidence
The Jurisdictional Agency will be responsible for fire origin and cause investigation. Regardless of whether the Initial Attack Incident Commander is a representative of the Jurisdictional Agency, he or she should protect and preserve the general origin area of the fire, as well as information and evidence pertaining to the origin and cause of the wildland fire. The general origin area of the fire should be immediately identified and protected by the first Participant to arrive on the scene in order to protect evidence for the fire origin and cause investigation. Fire cause investigations are required for Federal Fires, State Responsibility Fires, and any wildland fire that receives a Federal Emergency Management Agency declaration. The Participants acknowledge that an accurate origin and cause investigation and determination is essential to
an effective and fair administrative, civil or criminal action. Federal policy requires Federal agencies to use an NWCG qualified Fire Investigator (INVF) and to pursue cost recovery for all human-caused fires on public land. Joint investigations are encouraged on multijurisdictional fires.

**STATE EMERGENCY FIRE FUND (EFF)**

Eagle County is a participant in the Emergency Fire Fund program. This process formalizes the transfer of a qualifying fire from a County Responsibility Fire to a State Responsibility Fire. Details are outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding for Participation in the Colorado Emergency Fire Fund.

**USE AND REIMBURSEMENT OF INTERAGENCY FIRE RESOURCES**

**Cost Share Agreement (Cost Share Methodologies)**

A cost share agreement should be considered for any multi-jurisdiction fire that goes beyond the mutual aid period or utilizes non-mutual aid resources. Cost share agreements should be negotiated as soon as practical, signed by agency administrators, and may be updated as needed. A copy of all cost share agreements should be provided to the DFPC Battalion Chief. An example template that may be used can be found in Attachment – D.

Examples include but are not limited to the following methodologies for determining shared costs to the agencies involved:

- Each agency assumes its own costs as expended by it in the fire control effort.
- Division of costs based upon percent ownership.
- Each agency agrees to a negotiated portion of the suppression costs.
- Etc.

For any cost share agreement that Eagle County is Party to, the agency signatories shall include:

- “Eagle County Sheriff’s Office”
- “County of Eagle, State of Colorado, by and through its______________”

**Training**

Each party is responsible for the training of their respective personnel. Standardized fire training courses are provided periodically within the County. As courses are offered, the Parties should advise the others and issue invitations to participate.

**Communication Systems**

Local, state and federal agencies utilize different radio systems and frequencies. The Parties agree to share the appropriate radio frequencies with each other in order to enhance firefighter
safety and allow for an effective mutual aid response. Fireground operations will be conducted on VHF using the UCR radio plan whenever possible. During the initial attack period, 800 MHz will be used to communicate with VPSCC to coordinate non-fire suppression activities. The VHF Communications Plan for the UCR and Craig Interagency Fire are included in Attachment - A.

**Fire Weather Systems**

Fire weather forecasts are issued by the National Weather Service. Each agency may obtain fire weather forecasts and is responsible for requesting spot weather forecasts for their individual fire incidents. Red Flag Warnings and Watches are issued by the National Weather Service.

**Aviation Operations**

Aviation resources for wildland fire should be ordered through Grand Junction Interagency Dispatch. When aircraft are ordered, the request should include the following:

- Type and kind of aviation resource being requested.
- Lat/Long (degrees decimal minutes)
- Ground contact for who will work with the aircraft on the incident.
- Aerial Hazards in the area.

Air Attack will be ordered automatically under certain circumstances per the Interagency Aerial Supervision Guide.

Designated VHF air-to-ground frequencies are required when using aircraft and GJC will designate the appropriate air-to-ground frequency for the incident.

Aircraft must be DOI/USFS carded for use on fires where federal resources are being used or where federal lands are involved.

**Multi-Mission Aircraft (MMA)**

To order the MMA call the DFPC Duty Officer at (720) 460-9367 and/or fill out and submit the MMA Ordering Form.

**Billing Procedures**

DFPC administers wildfire billing in Colorado for Local, State, and Federal agencies. The Parties may aggregate expenses incurred and present an invoice for such expenses to DFPC. Required documentation includes but is not limited to Resource Orders, Crew Time Reports, Equipment Shift Tickets, and Colorado Resource Rate Forms (CRRFs). DFPC will then bill the jurisdictional authority and reimburse the applicable party. A copy of all cost share agreements between non-federal and federal agencies should be provided to DFPC for billing purposes.
Cost Recovery
In the event that cost recovery is pursued on a trespass fire, all costs from the time of initial report of the fire may be pursued including those incurred during the Mutual Aid period. Federal policy requires Federal agencies to pursue cost recovery for all human-caused fires on federal jurisdiction.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Personnel Policy
The Parties are subject to the personnel laws, rules and policies of their respective organizations.

Modification
Modifications within the scope of this Operating Plan shall be made by mutual consent of the Parties, through the issuance of a written modification signed and dated by all Parties prior to any changes being performed. Attachments may be updated annually without a formalized approval process in order to maintain current and up-to-date information.

Annual Review
This Operating Plan is reviewed annually by April 1st. This Operating Plan will remain current until a revised Operating Plan is signed by all Parties.

Duration of Plan
This Operating Plan is executed as of the date of last signature and remains in effect for five years unless modified or superseded.

Previous Plans Superseded
Once signed, this Operating Plan supersedes the previous Operating Plan.
SIGNATURES
Authorized Representatives

EAGLE COUNTY SIGNATURES

James Van Beek  3/2/2021
Signature  Date
James Van Beek  County Sheriff
Printed Name  Title

Matt Scherr  3/9/2021
Signature  Date
Matt Scherr  County Commissioner
Printed Name  Title

Regina O’Brien  3/9/2021
Signature  Date
Regina O’Brien  County Clerk
Printed Name  Title
COLORADO DIVISION OF FIRE PREVENTION & CONTROL SIGNATURE

Ryan McCulley  
Signature  
3/9/2021  
Battalion Chief  
Colorado River Region

FEDERAL LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY SIGNATURES

Greg Larson  
Signature  
3/1/2021  
District Manager  
Bureau of Land Management – Upper Colorado River District

Elijah Waters  
Signature  
2/26/2021  
District Manager  
Bureau of Land Management – Northwest District

Lisa Stoeffler  
Signature  
2/28/2021  
Acting Forest Supervisor  
US Forest Service – White River National Forest
## 2021 UCRIFMU FREQUENCIES

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Changes/Additions for 2019 highlighted in yellow

** Denotes frequencies used on the UCR. Other A/G frequencies are listed for reference
# Craig Zone Frequencies

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## RTF WEST (BLM Group 4-USFS Group 9)

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PROCESS FOR IMPLEMENTING FIRE RESTRICTIONS

- ERC 90-96% LAST 5 DAYS WITH REPRESENTATIVE SIG GROUPS
  - HIGH HUMAN CAUSED RISK
  - LIVE FUEL MOISTURES ARE AT OR APPROACHING HISTORIC THRESHOLDS
  - NO SIGNIFICANT RELIEF IN FIRE WEATHER FORECAST DURING THE NEXT 7 DAYS

- ERC GREATER THAN 97% LAST 5 DAYS WITH REPRESENTATIVE SIG GROUPS
  - HIGH HUMAN CAUSED RISK
  - LIVE FUEL MOISTURES WELL BELOW HISTORIC THRESHOLDS
  - NO SIGNIFICANT RELIEF IN FIRE WEATHER FORECAST DURING THE NEXT 7 DAYS

- High human Caused Risk may include Holidays, Special Events or High Visitation levels to certain areas
- Stage III-Area Closures are extremely rare events, and will only be implemented in extraordinary situations after significant interagency coordination.
PROCESS FOR RESCINDING FIRE RESTRICTIONS

- ERC 75% or LESS LAST 3 DAYS WITH REPRESENTATIVE SIG GROUPS
- HUMAN CAUSED RISK IS MODERATE OR LESS OVER NEXT 14 DAYS
- LIVE FUEL MOISTURES ARE AT ABOVE HISTORIC THRESHOLDS
- RMA PREDICTIVE SERVICES FORECASTS THAT MODERATE TO LOW FIRE CONDITIONS WILL PREVAIL FOR THE NEXT 30 DAYS

All Criteria are met, Rescind Restrictions
Three Elements are Present, Consider Rescinding Restrictions
Less Than Three Elements are Present, No Change in Fire Restrictions

Note: Once implemented all levels of Fire Restrictions will generally not be reduced until fuels and weather conditions have moderated greatly. This is to avoid having to re-implement fire restrictions in a short period of time.
Attachment C

2021 Eagle County Contacts
Cost Share Agreement

xxxxx Fire
Incident #
(Responsibility) Period

Fire Start Date and Time: xx/xx/xxxx @ xxxx hours MDT

Mutual Aid Period: Mutual aid ended on xx/xx/xxxx @ 2400 hours MDT

Location: Lat/Long and general location

Acres: Approximately xxxx acres as of xx/xx/xxxx, include acreage breakdown and ownership if known.

This Cost Share Agreement between the (agency name here) and the (agency name here) was prepared with the following authorities provided by:

2. Agreement for Cooperative Wildfire Protection between xxxx County and the State of Colorado.
4. xxxx County Wildfire Annual Operating Plan

It is agreed that:

- Address costs during the Mutual Aid Period.
- Specify the Cost Share Responsibility Period with date and time it begins. (Fire Department, County, State)
- Clearly specify who is paying for what with the following examples.
  - Percent acreage split
  - Identify specific resources and who pays for which
  - Each agency covers their own costs
  - Etc.
- Include any additional information needed to clearly communicate the terms of this CSA.
- This Agreement does not cover fire rehabilitation. Rehabilitation costs other than on the fireline suppression repair (to repair suppression impacts) will be borne by the jurisdictional agency(s).
- In the event of injury, each Agency will cover their own workman’s compensation costs.