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Annual Operating Plan for Cooperative Wildland Protection	

2021 BOULDER COUNTY ANNUAL OPERATING PLAN

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APPENDIX

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1.0 PREAMBLE

The Annual Operating Plan (AOP) is a working document compiled each year by wildfire agencies participating in the plan, and shall be attached to and considered a part of the Agreement for Cooperative Wildland Fire Protection in Boulder County referenced as Appendix A of this AOP. This AOP is also a component of the 2016 Colorado Statewide AOP and the "Statewide Cooperative Wildland Fire and Stafford Act Agreement". (Appendix C)

2.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of the Annual Wildland Fire Operating Plan (AOP) is to set forth the standard operating procedures, agreed-upon procedures, and responsibilities to implement cooperative wildland fire management on all lands within Boulder County.

3.0 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
Agreement Number A11PG00030
 - UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE – MOUNTAIN PRAIRIE REGION
 - UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOREST SERVICE – ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION
Agreement Number 11-FI-11020000-017
- Agreement for Cooperative Wildfire Protection in Boulder County (Appendix A)
- Boulder County, Intergovernmental Agreement for Participation in the Colorado Emergency Fire Fund (Appendix B)
- Boulder County Emergency Operations Plan (Appendix J)

4.0 RECITALS

National Response Framework activities will be accomplished utilizing engaged partnerships, tiered response, scalable, flexible and adaptable operational capabilities, unity of effort through unified command and readiness to act. Situation and damage assessment information will be transmitted through established fire suppression intelligence channels.

Actions are implemented according to the Jurisdictional agency policies and applicable decision support tools.

4.1 Third Party Beneficiary

The enforcement of the terms and conditions of this plan and all rights of action relating to such enforcement shall be strictly reserved by the county and the signatories to this plan; nothing contained in this plan shall give or allow any claim or right of action whatsoever by any other or third person. It is the express intent of the parties to this plan that any person receiving services or benefits under this plan shall be deemed an incidental beneficiary only. This plan will remain in effect until such time as the signed 2022 Boulder County Annual Operating Plan replaces it. If no changes are made, a statement letter with signatures of all parties to this AOP will be distributed.

5.0 INTERAGENCY COOPERATION

5.1 Interagency Dispatch Centers

The Fort Collins Interagency Dispatch Center (FTC) will be the point of contact for all Boulder County fires threatening or involving federal (USDA Forest Service, USDI Bureau of Land Management, and USDI National Park Service) lands.

The Boulder County Sheriff's Office Communication Division is the contact point for all fires threatening or involving non-federal lands in Boulder County.

Assistance for a DFPC Representative must be requested through the State of Colorado Emergency Operations Line: 303-279-8855.

5.2 Interagency Resources

The parties to this operating plan agree to coordinate all resource requests from cooperating agencies as follows:

- I. **FEDERAL RESOURCES** (ARF, BLM, NPS): Requests for all federal resources, shall be coordinated through the FTC Interagency Dispatch Center.
- II. **COLORADO DIVISION OF FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL:**
 - A. Requests for DFPC state resources to respond in Boulder County will be coordinated through the FTC Interagency Dispatch Center or in communication with the DFPC Battalion Chief (BC). To determine availability of FTC area state staffed engine resources, reference Fort Collins Interagency Dispatch Center or the appropriate resource status tool.
 - B. Requests for aircraft and crews will be coordinated through Boulder County Dispatch and FTC Interagency Dispatch Center.
 1. Reimbursement under the Wildfire Emergency Response Fund

(WERF) is subject to availability of WERF funds. Some costs may not be reimbursed. See the WERF Guidelines (Appendix D) for further details.

2. All requests for the Very Large Air Tanker (VLAT) through WERF must first be approved by the DFPC Deputy Chief of Operations or designee.

C. Requests for State resources/assistance under the Resource Mobilization Annex must be made through the State of Colorado Emergency Operations Line at 303-279-8855. A DFPC BC, OEM Regional Field Manager or designee will respond to this request.

D. Requests for DFPC Regional BC Assistance on EFF/Technical Assistance incidents will go through the State of Colorado Emergency Operations Line at 303-279-8855.

III. **BOULDER COUNTY RESOURCES** Requests for county resources during initial attack shall be made through the Boulder County Sheriff's Office Communications Division. Once capacity to support resource needs for the incident are exceeded at the Communications Division, requests for resources will be made through the Boulder EOC Resource Mobilization Section after a Delegation of Resource Ordering Responsibility has been completed between the Communications Division and EOC Resource Mobilization Section. Requests for Boulder County resources during extended attack shall be made through the FTC Interagency Dispatch Center and/or Boulder Office of Emergency Management or the Boulder Emergency Operations Center, pursuant to C.R.S. §24-33.5-705.4.

IV. **AVIATION RESOURCES:** All federal and state aviation resources shall be ordered by an authorized ordering official through the FTC Interagency Dispatch Center. The State Multi-Mission Aircraft (MMA) should be ordered through the State of Colorado Emergency Operations Line at 303-279-8855.

5.3 Standards

I. **PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE) AND QUALIFICATIONS**

A. **PPE:** Each agency or department is responsible for providing PPE for their personnel in accordance with the NWCG PMS 310-1 Wildland and Prescribed Fire Qualification System Guide. Those not meeting this standard must clear the incident or be placed in a non-hazardous position and may not be eligible for reimbursement

under the terms of this AOP. The same criteria will apply for incidents that transition to extended attack. However, cooperating agencies may assist by supplying equipment on an incident.

- B. Qualifications:** All personnel involved with wildland fire suppression on federal, state, or county incidents shall possess documentation of qualifications (incident qualification card, red card, or records) issued by their host or employing agency, department, or fire protection district and shall meet the minimum standards set forth in the most current version of NWCG PMS 310-1.

II. INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM

- A.** The parties to this operating plan will use the ICS system during all wildland fire operations that is consistent with the National Incident Management System (NIMS) Incident Command System.
- B.** *Unified Command* is a unified team effort which allows all agencies with jurisdictional responsibility for the incident, either geographical or functional, to manage an incident by establishing a common set of incident objectives and strategies.
- C.** When Boulder County is the jurisdictional authority and incident is managed solely by Boulder County, all incident management practices and procedures shall be conducted in congruence with the Boulder Emergency Operations Plan, hazard specific operational annexes and functional annexes. Any deviation from these plans shall be authorized by authorities having jurisdiction or agency administrators.

6.0 PREPAREDNESS

6.1 Protection Planning

Boulder County has several Special Protection Districts, County Resources, and Federal partners that provide response to all areas of the County.

Jurisdictional agencies are responsible for all planning documents (i.e. land use, fire management plans, mitigation plans) for a unit's wildland fire and fuels management program per their agency's policy.

6.2 Protection Areas and Boundaries

I. **Boulder County Sheriff's Office (BCSO)**

The sheriff is the fire warden of the county and is responsible for the planning for, and the coordination of, efforts to suppress wildfires occurring in the unincorporated area of the county outside the boundaries of a fire protection district, or that exceed the capabilities of the fire protection district to control or extinguish in accordance with C.R.S §30-10-513. In the case of a wildfire that exceeds the capabilities of the fire protection district to control or extinguish and that requires mutual aid and outside resources, the sheriff shall appoint a local incident management team to provide the command and control infrastructure required to manage the fire. The sheriff shall assume financial responsibility for the firefighting efforts on behalf of the county and the authority for the ordering and monitoring of resources.

II. **Arapaho & Roosevelt National Forests (ARF) and Pawnee National Grassland**

The ARF is responsible for all management activities on national forest lands. For this plan, the primary role of the ARF is wildland fire management, where the protection of human life is the overriding priority. Setting subsequent priorities will be based on the values to be protected, human health and safety, and the cost of protection. The ARF will serve in a support role during structural fire protection operations and may assist in exterior structure protection measures where wildfires threaten improvements or where structure fires threaten wildland natural resources.

III. **Bureau of Land Management (BLM)** In Boulder County, the ARF has initial attack and management responsibilities on BLM lands through a cooperative agreement with the BLM.

Due to the complex interspersing of state, public, private, and BLM lands, the Boulder County Sheriff's Office Communications Division may dispatch the initial attack resources as necessary and advise the Fort Collins (FTC) Interagency Dispatch Center if the fire is determined to be on BLM land. The ARF will advise the BLM of all fires on BLM lands, regardless of size. A BLM representative will respond when deemed appropriate by the BLM district office or when requested by the affected cooperators. For large wildland fires requiring extended attack, the BLM will coordinate with ARF fire personnel as soon as possible upon being notified.

IV. National Park Service (NPS)

The NPS is responsible for all wildland fire management activities on Rocky Mountain National Park (RMNP) lands. For this plan, the primary role of the RMNP is wildland fire management, where the protection of human life is the overriding priority. Setting subsequent priorities will be based on the values to be protected, human health and safety, and the cost of protection. RMNP will serve in a support role during structural fire protection operations and may assist in exterior structure protection measures where wildfires threaten improvements or where structure fires threaten wildland natural resources. The FTC Interagency Dispatch Center will dispatch the initial attack phase on all wildland fires reported on RMNP lands, and will also notify the Boulder County Sheriff's Office Communications Division of any fires reported near or outside the park's boundary that may impact Boulder County. The Boulder County Sheriff's Office Communications Division will notify the FTC Interagency Dispatch Center of any reported fire affecting or threatening RMNP. For fires on or approaching jurisdictional boundaries, the Boulder County Sheriff's Office Communications Division will notify all potentially affected agencies.

V. Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control (DFPC)

The DFPC is the lead state agency for wildfire. The DFPC will, upon request, aid, support, and assist BCSO and/or federal agencies on wildland fires within Boulder County. To request DFPC Regional BC or designee assistance on wildfires, contact the State of Colorado Emergency Operations Line at 303-279-8855. Upon mutual agreement of the Boulder County Sheriff or his representative and the DFPC Director or representative, and in accordance with the Agreement for Cooperative Wildland Protection, DFPC may assume any of the Sheriff's Wildland Fire duties or responsibilities. When a fire is accepted by the state as an EFF incident, an incident cost-share agreement will be developed and entered in to by the DFPC and the respective jurisdictional agencies.

VI. Boulder Office of Emergency Management (OEM) & Emergency Operations Center (EOC)

The mission of the Boulder Office of Emergency Management is to develop, coordinate and lead a comprehensive emergency management program. During an event requiring EOC activation and support, the Boulder EOC is to coordinate communications, provide resource mobilization, information management, situational awareness, policy group support, event management, operational coordination and support, and continuity of government. During an EFF declared fire the Boulder EOC shall continue to provide resource mobilization to agencies or sectors not covered under the EFF declaration.

6.3 Methods of Fire Protection and Suppression

Initial attack is defined as the action taken by the resources on a wildland fire that are first to arrive at the incident.

Extended attack is defined as the actions taken by resources on a wildland fire that has not been contained within the first operational period.

All unplanned fires on federal land require a response and a decision. This is best communicated with clear objectives and an "incident strategy". The incident strategy is based on the following criteria:

- Should lead to meeting the objectives
- Risk to firefighters (Life-First Concepts/Risk Management – probability and the consequences of fire impacting values at risk vs. the risk to firefighters put in place to mitigate the risk of fire impacting values.)
- Fuels, Weather and Topography influencing the fire and the anticipated spread of the fire
- Values truly at Risk: Communities, Infrastructure, Watersheds, Social, Ecological, Cultural, etc.
- Partner agencies and their objectives (if the fire is or is expected to be multi-jurisdictional)
- Cost of meeting objectives
- Smoke Management: Coordination with the States and monitoring
- Desired conditions (outlined in the USFS Land Management Plan or other documents)
- Resource Availability
- Fire modelling Tools
- Seasonality – duration of fire/change in conditions

Agency Administrators and Fire Managers assess the criteria above and then develop a strategy to successfully manage the fire and meet objectives. The strategy may use natural barriers, changes in weather, fuel changes or rely heavily on the efforts of firefighters and aircraft. It could be a combination of all these elements (and usually is).

Cooperator resources responding to a wildfire within any Wilderness Area should still respond, but seek guidance from the jurisdictional Duty Officer to employ strategies and tactics to manage the fire by the most effective, efficient, and safest means possible with the protection of human life as the overriding priority. The use of mechanized equipment, aviation assets, and the application of retardant and foam all require additional approvals from Agency Administrators of the ARF and RMNP.

6.3.1 Reciprocal (Mutual Aid) Fire Assistance

Reciprocal (Mutual Aid) Fire Assistance: The Jurisdictional Agency will not be required to reimburse the Supporting Agency(s) for costs incurred following the initial dispatch of any ground and aviation resources to the fire for the duration of the mutual aid period. Assistance beyond the Mutual Aid period will be reimbursable assistance, and the Supporting Agency may bill the Jurisdictional Agency for resources assigned to the fire outside the Mutual Aid

period. It is understood that no supporting Agency will be required to assist or expected to commit resources to a Jurisdictional Agency.

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 that are not signatory to this Annual Operating Plan are not obligated to provide Mutual Aid assistance for fire in the County unless specified by other agreements.

6.3.2 Acquisition of Services

Following mutual aid, the National Wildfire Coordinating Group publication, Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook, NWCG Handbook 2: PMS 902 (NWCG IIBMH) will guide cooperative, exchange, contract/fee basis fire protection services. Federal agencies and DFPC follow NWCG IIBMH, Chapter 50 specifically for cooperative and reimbursable fire protection services.

In addition to NWCG IIBMH, local fire agencies follow the *Department of Public Safety, Division of Fire Prevention & Control and Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management (DHSEM) Cooperator Incident Reimbursement Guidelines* for the reimbursement process. The Colorado Resource Rate Form (CRRF) is the basis for the reimbursement process. CRRFs within this County are part of this AOP and officially referenced in Attachment C.

USFS ARF provides fire protection services for the BLM Rocky Mountain District on BLM lands in Boulder County by separate agreement.

Any other loaning, sharing, exchanging, or maintenance of facilities, equipment, or support services will be considered on a case by case basis and must be mutually agreed upon by the participating parties.

6.4 Joint Projects and Project Plans

Nothing in this plan shall prohibit agencies from entering into joint project agreements.

Standard project planning and written agreements will be utilized when entering into joint projects.

6.5 Fire Prevention

I. Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests

The Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests performs Fire Prevention activities, including visitor contacts, patrols and fire danger sign maintenance on National Forest System lands. ARF personnel may also conduct educational programs in adjacent communities, distribution of fire

danger information and restrictions to the media and community organizations.

II. Boulder County

- A. Under C.R.S. §30-15-401 (1)(n.5)(l) the Board of County Commissioners has delegated to the Sheriff the authority to institute and rescind countywide fire bans as conditions demand. Fire bans and restrictions are instituted only when the risk of wildfire is high to extreme and the threat to life and property is severe.
- B. Fire danger rating signs are placed at various locations throughout Boulder County and are maintained and updated by local fire jurisdictional authorities.
- C. During times of high fire danger, Boulder County Sheriff's Office patrols all areas of the county, making educational and enforcement contacts with the public.

6.6 Public Use Restrictions

Operational personnel from each of the cooperating agencies will determine the need for restrictions on open burning and/or area closures. Criteria for such restrictions or ban should follow the Fire Restrictions and Fire Ban Criteria found in Appendix F. Whenever possible, restrictions and closures should be coordinated among all cooperators. Unified restrictions are desirable.

The FTC Interagency Dispatch Center should be advised of any restrictions or bans placed upon any lands covered by this plan.

The intent of this section is not to restrict the authority of individual land management agencies from independently placing timely restrictions or bans deemed necessary.

For the purposes of fire restrictions, bans, and other law enforcement needs, the ARF and the BCSO will act under the auspices of local Sisk Act Law Enforcement Cooperative Agreements. The NPS Superintendent shall act under the auspices of Title 36 CFR. During fire restrictions and bans on BLM lands, BLM may employ BCSO or ARF personnel to assist in the enforcement of closures. BCSO will enforce state and/or local restrictions and closures affecting state, public, and private.

See below for websites/resources to obtain information regarding fire danger, staffing, and weather.

- Fire Danger Ratings, Fire weather forecasts, Fire resource status, RAWs observation and planning information are maintained by Fort Collins Interagency Dispatch (FTC) at:

http://gacc.nifc.gov/rmcc/dispatch_centers/r2ftc/

Fire Danger: FTC tracks daily fire danger ratings and staffing/action class predictions. Fire danger can be obtained from:

https://gacc.nifc.gov/rmcc/dispatch_centers/r2ftc/FTCFireDanger.htm

- This information covers the Fire Weather Zones within the FTC Dispatch area. Fire Danger Ratings are also broadcast daily (during fire season) by FTC over the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests frequencies at 1630 hours. For public information and updating Fire Prevention signs, NFDRS adjective classes will be used as follows: Low; Moderate; High; Very High; and Extreme. Fire Weather Forecasts can be obtained via:

<https://www.weather.gov/bou/firewxfcstmap>

- Remote Automatic Weather Stations: Links to real-time RAWS observations are available at:

http://gacc.nifc.gov/rmcc/dispatch_centers/r2ftc/FTCWeather.htm

- Interagency Coordination and Planning during fire season, FTC coordinates a conference call on Wednesdays at 1000 for Planning Levels 1 and 2, and daily for PL 3, 4, 5. Call FTC for phone number and access code.

6.7 Burning Permits

Per Boulder County Ordinance 2014-1 "No person shall commence open burning without a permit. Any person who initiates open burning requiring a permit in an unincorporated area of Boulder County without having first obtained an Open Burning Permit commits a class 2 petty offense...Open burning and agricultural burning requires prior notification to the Boulder County Sheriff's Office. Any person who initiates open burning or agricultural burning without having first notified the Boulder County Sheriff's Office of the intent to initiate such a fire, commits a class 2 petty offense."

Federal Agencies are exempt from the Boulder County Ordinance 2014-1 rules above.

6.8 Prescribed Fire (Planned Ignitions) and Fuels Management

Agencies agree to cooperate in the development and implementation of prescribed burning programs and projects. All cooperators will notify both the Boulder County Sheriff's Office Communications Division and the FTC Interagency Dispatch Center, along with the jurisdictional authority, prior to any prescribed fire activity and coordinate beforehand on appropriate naming conventions of prescribed fire projects so as not to confuse the public.

The agency lighting any prescribed fire is responsible for that fire. In the event of a wildland fire declaration, the mutual aid response principles will apply. If interagency resources must be directed to the control and suppression of that fire, it is agreed that the agency initiating the prescribed fire will be responsible for all suppression costs. Senate bill 13-083 created a prescribed burning program for the State of Colorado under the Division of Fire Prevention and Control (DFPC). Under this bill, the board of county commissioners of each county in the state, subject to the requirements of C.R.S. §25-7-123, may prepare, adopt, and implement a county fire management plan that details individual county policies on fire management for prescribed burns, fuels management, or natural ignition burns on lands owned by the state or county. Such plans shall be developed in coordination with the county sheriff, the DFPC, and the appropriate state and local governmental entities. All interested parties shall have the opportunity to comment on the plan prior to its adoption and implementation. All DFPC personnel using prescribed fire on State Lands must follow the current Colorado Prescribed Fire Planning and Implementation Policy Guide and current Prescribed Fire Planning Forms. Contact the DFPC Regional BC for information on the current Guide.

6.9 Smoke Management

The Boulder County Board of Commissioners approved the development of a permitting and notification system by the Boulder County Sheriff, in cooperation with Boulder County Public Health. The system meets the purpose and requirements of C.R.S. §30-15-401 and C.R.S. §25-7-123 and is contained in Boulder County Ordinance 2014-1. The Sheriff is authorized to develop education, outreach and information sharing programs that will assist the public in preserving public health and safety as it relates to open burning, red flag warning days, fire weather watch days, high wind watch and high wind warning days.

Agricultural burning and Federal Agencies are exempt from these rules under C.R.S. §30-15-401(1)(n.5)(II)(E).

7.0 OPERATIONS

7.1 Fire Notifications

The responsible jurisdictional agency must be notified of wildfires on or threatening their lands as soon as possible after the arrival of initial attack forces. Notification of the jurisdictional agency will be made by the Dispatch/Communication Center handling the initial attack fire forces.

7.2 Boundary Line Fires

Wildland fires burning on, or adjacent to, a known or questionable protection boundary will be the initial attack responsibility of the protecting agencies on both sides of the boundary. Fires occurring in areas where structures are located nearby and in areas of multiple jurisdictions can cause significant safety as well as financial concerns.

Agencies agree to coordinate suppression management through the use of a Unified Command or with Delegations of Authority from all jurisdictions to an agreed-upon incident commander. The initial attack Incident Commander(s) of the involved agencies shall mutually agree upon fire suppression objectives, strategy, and the commitment and funding of agency suppression resources.

7.3 Response to Wildland Fire

Federal Response Zone:

The Federal Response Zone is defined as any land within 2 miles of the accepted federal land management boundary. Agencies will respond upon request (or may voluntarily if adjoining land is threatened) to any other agency or fire protection district for the duration of the 24-hour mutual aid period within the Federal Response Zone.

Each agency may make its personnel and equipment available upon request to the other agencies for fires outside the Federal Response Zone. For such fires, the jurisdictional agency may reimburse the assisting agency for costs, subject to all agreements concerning mutual aid or other applicable standards. It is understood, however, that no agency will be required or expected to commit its forces in assisting another agency to the extent of jeopardizing the security of its own lands.

7.3.1 Special Management Considerations

Repair of impacts caused by suppression actions is normally conducted during suppression operations and may be covered by a cost-share agreement, if one is in place.

Aerial application of fire retardant will be restricted within 300 feet distance of all lakes or waterways (containing water) on Federal jurisdiction lands. Retardant is further restricted within 600 feet of designated waterways that have critical habitat for Greenback Cutthroat Trout.

Use of mechanized, earthmoving equipment such as bulldozers, graders, etc., will not be permitted on the following lands without the expressed approval of the appropriate agencies (shown in parentheses):

- All federal lands (USFS, BLM, or NPS); Seek approval through FTC
- All Boulder County Lands; Seek guidance through the Boulder County Sheriff's Office or appropriate land ownership agency

Personnel responding to incidents on BLM Lands must meet the following requirements:

- Be 18 years of age or older

- Have and use required personal protective equipment (PPE) found in chapter 7 of the Interagency Standards for Fire and Aviation Operations (Red Book)
- Hold the qualification of NWCG firefighter Type 2

BLM District/FMO will coordinate with local fire departments to provide qualified instructors if needed.

- For fires occurring on lands owned or managed by special districts, utilities, quasi-governmental agencies, state and local agencies, and other political subdivisions, every attempt will be made to notify a representative of the property. Agency Representatives for said lands will be engaged as necessary to ensure land management and infrastructure concerns are identified.

7.3.2 Decision Process and Decision Support Systems (DSS)

Federal agencies are required to complete an appropriate decision support tool for all wildland fires that escape initial attack on federally-managed lands to determine the appropriate response. This is done via the Wildland Fire Decision Support System (WFDSS). This procedure requires federal agency administrator participation. DFPC requires that a DSS be completed for all fires that receive a Fire Management Assistance Grant and recommends that a DSS be completed for all EFF fires. All agencies involved in extended attack on private and state lands should provide input on the DSS. The DFPC Agency Administrator will facilitate completion and review of the DSS for these fires. When a fire is burning, or threatens to burn on multiple jurisdictions, one DSS should be prepared that considers all jurisdictions and their interests.

7.3.3 Cooperation

The County, Federal partners and the State agree to cooperate to the extent possible to plan for and respond to fire incidents within the county.

7.3.4 Communication

- I. All agencies signing this plan authorize use of their radio frequencies by other agency personnel for emergency purposes only. All agencies, departments, and fire protection districts that use ARF FM frequencies for tactical or command purposes (through the FTC Interagency Dispatch Center) must have radios programmed in "narrow band" mode to facilitate clear transmission and reception.
- II. Due to the complex interspersing of private lands within national forest boundaries, the Boulder County Sheriff's Office Communications Division may make the initial dispatch for wildland fires reported within the national forest boundary, and will notify FTC Interagency Dispatch Center appropriately and when necessary.

When incidents exceed initial attack on federal lands, the incident should

consider using the extended attack communication strategy (Appendix H) for tactical and command radio traffic. On Boulder County-managed incidents, the Boulder County Communications plan shall be implemented for the period of initial attack. Once Boulder County-managed incidents transition into extended attack, communications may transfer to the extended attack communication strategy (Appendix H). This uses standardized frequencies that are available to all agencies and departments in the FTC zone. A resource request/order should be placed with the Boulder County Communications Center and the FTC Interagency Dispatch Center as soon as possible for a portable command repeater.

- III. The Boulder County Sheriff's Office Communications Division shall be the primary agency for the initial attack dispatching of county resources, regardless of land jurisdiction.
- IV. If the extended attack communication strategy (Appendix H) is in use during an incident, subsequent tactical and command frequencies must be ordered through FTC Dispatch.
- V. All Air-to-Ground communications will be on the NIICD assigned A/G frequency for NE Colorado. Additional A-G frequencies must be ordered through FTC Dispatch. See Appendix H.
- VI. The agency or agencies with command of the incident is responsible for all official public information sharing during incidents unless relinquished by agreement. If the EOC is activated for incident when Boulder County is the jurisdictional authority and the incident is managed solely by Boulder County, public information shall be managed through ESF 15 External Affairs and a Joint Information System shall be used to coordinate incident information with the response PIO positions within agencies or incident management teams. This includes information relayed on social media. For incidents that threaten two or more jurisdictions, the agency with command/delegation of the incident will collaborate with the other agencies to ensure there is only one official information source for the incident.
- VII. Public alerts and warnings for Boulder County incidents will be conducted in accordance with the Boulder Alert and Warning plan. Agencies initiating alert and warning capabilities should work to coordinate warning information with the EOC Situational Awareness Section Chief or ESF 15 External Affairs Lead or the established Joint Information System Manager.

7.4 Cost Efficiency

It is a goal of Boulder County, Federal Partners and the State of Colorado to provide cost efficient services. Agency administrators will make every effort to ensure cost effectiveness during firefighting operations. However, cost efficiencies will not take priority over firefighter or public safety. Additionally, the potential long-term financial impacts of the fire should be considered and balanced against the short-term costs savings of not ordering needed resources.

7.5 Delegation of Authority

A written delegation of authority may be generated whenever an agency, other than the authority having jurisdiction, will take over the management of a fire. Authority may also be delegated to an Incident Commander of an Incident Management Team.

Jurisdictional agencies will provide the supervision and support including operational oversight, direction and logistical support, to incident management teams as outlined in the delegation of authority.

The delegation does not absolve the jurisdiction with authority from any legally owed responsibility. It does however; provide another agency or individual, the authority and power to act on behalf of the agency delegating the authority. It also lists the parameters of the delegated authority.

A delegation of authority should include the following items;

- The Jurisdiction with authority who is delegating that authority;
- Agency or individual accepting authority;
- Specific authorities delegated;
- Specific limits to the authority;
- End terms of the authority.

7.6 Preservation of Evidence

The jurisdictional agency will determine as soon as possible the origin and cause of all wildland fires on their respective lands.

The ARF and the BCSO will act under the auspices of local Sisk Act Law Enforcement Cooperative Agreements. The NPS Superintendent shall act under the auspices of Title 36 CFR.

For all non-federal land, as a condition precedent to entering into this plan, and to maintain eligibility for continuing participation in the EFF throughout the term herein, the county agrees that in the event of a human-caused fire, the sheriff of said county shall conduct an investigation as to the cause of such fire and will provide the DFPC Director

a copy the preliminary investigation report within 30 days of control of the fire, and a final report upon the conclusion of that investigation consistent with state law. The county sheriff shall have administrative and financial responsibility with respect to the conduct of the investigation.

8.0 STATE EMERGENCY FIRE FUND (EFF)

The EFF may be used to assist counties with whom the DFPC has signed an *Emergency Fund Contract Agreement for Watershed Fire Control* (Appendix B) and who have paid their latest annual assessment. The fund will be used only for approved wildfire suppression and control activities. The DFPC Director, or designee, approves and implements the fund.

Boulder County is a participant in the EFF agreement with DFPC. As a participant to this plan, the state agrees to come to the aid of Boulder County should suppression resource needs exceed the county's capabilities. Boulder County will notify the DFPC Regional BC or designee immediately should a wildfire incident occur which has the potential to exceed county capabilities. Notification will go through the State of Colorado Emergency Operations Line at 303-279-8855. EFF fire incidents will be coordinated through the FTC Interagency Dispatch Center.

When the DFPC 1 and DFPC 3 forms are completed, the DFPC Regional BC or designee will contact the DFPC Director or designee and relay the information collected. The Regional BC or designee will also make his/her recommendation on whether or not the situation warrants implementation of the fund.

The DFPC Director may give their decision directly to the requesting Regional BC or designee, or it may be relayed through the division director's designee. This decision will be documented in writing on the DFPC 3 form, or attachments, as necessary. Upon approval of EFF implementation, the DFPC Director or designee will assign a DFPC Agency Administrator to the incident.

When EFF is implemented, a fire may be elevated from a County Responsibility Fire to a State Responsibility Fire as agreed upon in the Agreement for Cooperative Wildland Fire Protection and the Emergency Fire Fund Agreement. The county shall continue to make its maximum effort to provide firefighting resources from within the county (see Appendix B).

All EFF fires will have a designated command structure consisting of, at a minimum, the Boulder County Sheriff (or designated representative) and a DFPC Agency Administrator. If areas administered by another land management agency are threatened or involved, that agency will provide a representative to the Unified Command structure.

When a fire is approved for EFF implementation within Boulder County, the following minimum fire suppression forces will be maintained, as much as possible, throughout the duration of the incident:

- Local resources available to the county through mutual aid or contract basis, while still providing a minimal level of response for other, new incidents within that district and without jeopardizing the ability of the assisting agencies to mount a reasonable response within their own jurisdiction.
- Law enforcement and traffic control through the Boulder County Sheriff's Office and partner law enforcement agencies
- Other county-owned equipment as may be available and as mutually agreed upon between the county and the DFPC Agency Administrator, given the specific conditions and needs of the incident.
- As an incident returns to a County Responsibility Fire, DFPC will transfer any authority including financial, of an EFF fire back to Boulder County when agency administrator's objectives have been met for turn back, and a written plan has been developed for the next operational period.
- Rehabilitation of natural resources impacted by fire effects is the responsibility of the jurisdictional agency. Rehabilitation of the fire area is not covered under EFF; it may be authorized by the DFPC Line Officer only when part of the Incident Action Plan during the EFF period. All other reclamation work must be funded by the landowner or other sources (see Appendix B).
- On EFF-declared fires, reimbursement requests from cooperating agencies will be made to the Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control. All DFPC cooperators subject to DFPC reimbursement will have invoices sent to the DFPC Fire Billing Office within the recommended number of days after incident resources are released. Invoices are required to have proper documentation supporting those expenses before the process for payment can be completed. Current, agreed-upon DFPC reimbursement procedures will be followed.

For County managed fires, the Boulder County Sheriff's Office may identify a separate process and procedure for reimbursement of cooperators not identified in this plan.

- EFF funds will be the primary reimbursement mechanism for EFF-declared fires. All State-Responsibility fires, which include EFF-declared fires, will be reimbursed where funding is approved and available.

9.0 USE AND REIMBURSEMENT OF INTERAGENCY FIRE RESOURCES

9.1 Cost Share Agreement (Cost Share Methodologies)

Cost-share agreements shall be prepared when an incident burns across or threatens jurisdictional boundaries. The intent is to distribute the financial burden based on a method agreed upon by a representative from each affected jurisdiction. A cost-share agreement should be negotiated as soon as practical. For wildland urban interface (WUI) fires involving structures, the distribution of costs should be commensurate with the values protected.

During fires that threaten private lands and structures, cost of jurisdictional fire suppression and support resources are borne whenever possible by the jurisdictional agency, department, or fire protection district in which the structures and/or fire is located. A cost-share agreement (see Appendix E) may be developed to allow for reimbursement if agreed upon by all authoritative parties.

Repair of impacts caused by suppression actions is normally conducted during suppression operations and is covered by a cost-share agreement, if one is in place. Rehabilitation of natural resources impacted by fire effects is the responsibility of the jurisdictional agency.

9.2 Training

Each agency shall be responsible for the training of its own personnel; however, cooperating agencies will advise each other of planned training sessions and issue invitations to participate. All agencies and fire departments are encouraged to utilize all available avenues for wildland fire training, including federal, state, or local agencies. Each agency is responsible for certifying the qualifications of its own personnel utilizing the IQS Web data entry system or the IQCS system for Federal Partners and issuing an Incident Qualifications card ("red card") to its personnel following the standards as outlined in PMS 310-1, Wildland Fire Qualification System Guide or current policy guide for federal partners.

Safety of personnel involved in an incident is critical. Therefore, it is the stated goal of the participating agencies in this AOP that all personnel that may be involved in suppressing wildland fires meet current NWCG requirements for the position they are filling as specified in the Wildland Fire Qualification System Guide (PMS 310-1) or current federal policy of federal partners.

Each agency will be responsible for providing personal protective gear for their personnel; however, cooperating agencies may assist by supplying specific equipment needs for an individual incident. It is understood that suppression forces operating on Federal lands must be equipped with personal protective equipment (PPE), and for any work beyond the mutual aid period must be certified for wildland fire suppression

Incident Qualification Carded for the position they are filling, as specified in the NWCG Guidelines.

9.3 Communication Systems

See Section “**Operations**”- Subheading **Communication** on pages 15 for Communications Systems.

For the purposes of conducting business authorized by this plan, all parties to this operating plan agree that assisting agencies may use the jurisdictional agency’s radio frequencies as approved to conduct emergency communications on fires of the jurisdictional agency. No party to this operating plan will use, or authorize others to use, another agency’s radio frequencies for routine day to day operations.

9.4 Fire Weather Systems

Information on Fire Weather Stations, Fire Danger, Current Fire Situation, Current Fire Restrictions, and other information can be seen at the FTC website:

https://gacc.nifc.gov/rmcc/dispatch_centers/r2ftc/

Red Flag/Fire Weather Announcements - The National Weather Service in the Denver/Boulder office periodically issues “FIRE WEATHER WATCH” and “RED FLAG WARNING” bulletins. Fire Weather Forecast information can be seen at the National Weather Service’s Fire Weather Index Page:

<https://www.weather.gov/bou/firewxfcstmap>

Each agency party to this plan may release fire danger information it deems necessary to enhance public awareness and safety with regard to current fire conditions. News releases may be coordinated between cooperators to lend a unified approach to current conditions when period of HIGH to EXTREME fire danger or when RED FLAG WARNING or FIRE WEATHER WATCHES are issued.

Because of the renewed awareness of the importance of having current fire weather forecasts to help ensure personnel safety, each agency is encouraged to obtain forecasts from the National Weather Service, Fire Weather Forecasters. Each agency shall be responsible for gathering fire weather information and requesting spot weather forecasts for their individual fire incidents, but may request assistance in gathering or transmitting such information from any of the other fire agencies. Requests should be sent directly to the National Weather Service Fire Weather Forecaster in Boulder. Web-based inquiries can submit their spot weather request to:

<https://www.weather.gov/spot/>

9.5 Aviation Operations

AIRCRAFT USE PROVISIONS

Parties to this operating plan undertaking initial attack may utilize aviation resources before land jurisdiction is determined when fire conditions and potential losses warrant it. Where possible, concurrence among potentially affected agencies will be obtained prior to dispatch. However, fire control actions shall not be hampered if agreement is delayed as a result of communication difficulties. The jurisdictional agency assumes responsibility for the costs of aviation resources under these circumstances.

The Colorado State Legislature House Bill 02-1025 created the Wildfire Emergency Response Fund (WERF) to encourage the use of air tankers, helicopters, and crews for initial attack on state and private lands. Some costs may not be reimbursed. See the WERF Guidelines (Appendix D) for further details.

The DFPC sponsors a DFPC Aviation Program, including fixed wing and rotor wing assets, for use on wildland fires within the State of Colorado. These assets have home bases, but frequently move locations to preposition in areas of risk. Requests to have State of Colorado assets moved or prepositioned to cover a specific area (such as Boulder County) should be made by local cooperators through the DFPC Regional BC, and may not be covered by the WERF

DFPC will be responsible for the carding of the ship and pilot, and all logistical and support arrangements for all state air resources. DFPC will cover the cost of pre-positioning flight time, standby, and any associated per diem expenses for local use under predetermined pre-positioning criteria. DFPC will also be responsible for assuring the aircraft operates within all applicable FAA, USFS, and USDI-OAS regulations.

Criteria for placing a State of Colorado Aircraft on standby may include the following: no measurable precipitation for 14+ days, very high fire danger predicted, a holiday or other event expected to increase human-caused fires, or experiencing multiple fire starts.

Air reconnaissance and detection flights will be coordinated among cooperating agencies through the FTC Interagency Dispatch Center. The DFPC Multi-Mission Aircraft should be ordered directly through the DFPC Fire Duty Officer. The fillable-information request form can be downloaded from the DFPC website:

<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/dfpc/request-mma>

or

<https://goo.gl/forms/WA9grWHQU41H7AdI3>

The incident commander on each fire incident will be responsible for initiating any requests for airspace restrictions from the FAA. Such requests may be routed through the Boulder County Sheriff's Office Communications Division or the FTC Interagency Dispatch Center.

All Air-to-Ground communications will be on the NIICD assigned A-G frequency for NE Colorado. Additional A-G frequencies must be ordered through FTC Dispatch.

The ARF may provide tactical air support or aerial supervision as reciprocal fire protection services within the protection boundary. If the incident is determined to be a threat to Federal Lands.

9.6 Billing Procedures

Invoicing for reimbursable fires occurring in Boulder County in which costs are incurred by the county, fire protection district, or volunteer fire department, may be coordinated, if necessary, through consultation with the DFPC Regional BC or designee. This especially applies to fires that go beyond the mutual aid period before being declared contained or controlled.

Out of Jurisdiction Assignment

All reimbursement requests for fire costs that go through DFPC will have invoices sent to DFPC Fort Collins Office within 30 days after incident resources are released from the assignment. The DFPC Fort Collins Office will attempt to make payment as soon as possible after receiving the invoice. Invoices are required to have the proper documentation supporting expenses before the process for payment can be completed.

9.7 Cost Recovery

The County, Federal Partners and the State reserve the right to pursue reasonable cost recovery efforts for equipment, personnel, and supplies utilized in response to a wildland fire that extends beyond the mutual aid period. This includes pursuing legal action against any party determined to be responsible for the cause of the fire.

DFPC serves as the coordinator for all inter-jurisdictional wildland fire billing in Colorado. Following a County Responsibility Fire, DFPC shall assist the County by requesting cost reports from assisting agencies and producing invoices payable by the County. To start the process, within thirty (30) days after declared containment of a County Responsibility Fire, the County and/or Sheriff shall submit to DFPC a written request for cost reports from assisting agencies. Following receipt of the County's written request, DFPC shall request cost reports from assisting agencies for review and validation by the County and/or Sheriff. Following the County's review and validation, DFPC shall make reasonable efforts to submit written invoices, along with adequate supporting documentation, to the County and/or Sheriff within one hundred and twenty (120) days after the date the Wildland Fire is declared contained. If the DFPC cannot submit written invoices within one hundred and twenty (120) days, the DFPC shall at a minimum

submit a written estimate for the anticipated expenses by November 15th of the year in which the wildland fire occurred.

Agencies (non-federal), cooperators and contractors seeking reimbursement directly from the County under this plan shall submit invoices with supporting documentation to the County within 60 days of the date the resource was released.

Any agency party to this plan unable to meet the above billing and/or reimbursement timetables must contact affected agencies to advise them of any delays and attempt to provide estimates before the end of the calendar year. Billing and/or reimbursement that does not follow the timetables or guidelines in this document will negate payment. When late billing will negatively impact any agency's future fire budget, it is highly recommended that both parties work together to mutually agree on a solution.

Financial obligations of the county payable after the current fiscal year are contingent upon funds for that purpose being appropriated, budgeted and otherwise made available.

10.0 GENERAL PROVISIONS

This AOP is the framework for cooperation between the State, federal partners and the County. It does not supersede any other lawful policy, rule, or procedure.

10.1 Personnel Policy

Boulder County, State of Colorado and Federal partners each agree to follow their own personnel policy and procedures.

10.2 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. Any Party shall have the right to terminate their participation under this Operating Plan by providing six months written notice to the other Parties.

10.3 Annual Review

This Operating Plan is reviewed annually by April 1st and revised, as needed. Operating plans will remain current until a revised Operating Plan is signed by all parties.

10.4 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.

10.5 Previous Plans Superseded

Any and all previously dated Annual Operating Plans pertaining to wildland fire within Boulder County are hereby null and void upon the date of the signatures on this current plan.

11.0 SIGNATURES

Authorized Representatives

BOULDER COUNTY SIGNATURES

Joseph K. Pelle

Signature

February 16, 2021

Date

Joe Pelle

Printed Name

County Sheriff

Title

Matt Jones

Signature

02/23/2021

Date

Matt Jones

Printed Name

Chairperson, County Commission

Title

ATTEST: Cecilia Lacey

Cecilia Lacey, Clerk to the Board

COLORADO DIVISION OF FIRE PREVENTION & CONTROL SIGNATURES

Tony Simons

Signature

2/11/21

Date

Tony Simons

Printed Name

Regional Battalion Chief

Title

FEDERAL LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY SIGNATURES

Monte Williams

February 19, 2021

Signature

Date

Monte Williams

Forest Supervisor

Printed Name

Title

USDA Forest Service, Arapahoe/Roosevelt National Forest
Federal Agency, Unit



12 FEB 21

Signature

Date

Darla Sidles

Park Superintendent

Printed Name

Title

USDI National Park Service, Rocky Mountain National Park
Federal Agency, Unit

CATHERINE COOK Digitally signed by CATHERINE COOK

Date: 2021.02.01 08:42:36 -07'00'

Signature

Date

Catherine Cook

Rocky Mountain District Manager

Printed Name

Title

USDI Bureau of Land Management
Federal Agency, Unit