

**MASTER COOPERATIVE WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT AND STAFFORD ACT
RESPONSE AGREEMENT**

EXHIBIT C

Operating Plan

Between

State of Alabama/Alabama Forestry Commission

DOI/Bureau of Indian Affairs

DOI/Bureau of Land Management

DOI/National Park Service

USDA Forest Service

DOI/U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

This Operating Plan is hereby made and entered into by and between the parties pursuant to the Master Cooperative Wildland Fire Management and Stafford Act Response Agreement (Agreement) signed and dated Sept. 6, 2019. This Operating Plan, inclusive of any referenced attachments or exhibits, is tiered to the Agreement. A formal modification to the Agreement is unnecessary but shall not contradict the Agreement.

All portions of this Operating Plan should be addressed. State if any item is not applicable, but do not remove the item. To facilitate review of this Operating Plan, do not change the format or delete sections. Items may be added as necessary to each of the sections.

I. PURPOSE

This is a Statewide Operating Plan applicable to all signatory parties within the State of Alabama. Its purpose is to address statewide issues affecting cooperation, interagency working relationships and protocols, financial arrangements, sharing of resources, and joint activities/projects. The Southern Area Mobilization Guide is considered part of this Operating Plan.

II. RECITALS

Stafford Act responses and related National Response Framework activities will be accomplished utilizing established dispatch coordination concepts. Situation and damage assessment information will be transmitted through established fire suppression intelligence channels.

Jurisdictional Agencies are responsible for all planning documents, i.e. land use, resource and fire management plans and decision support documents, for a unit's wildland fire and fuels management program. Protecting Agencies implement the actions documented and directed by the appropriate planning documents and decision support documents for initial and extended attack on wildfire incidents. They provide the supervision and support including operational oversight, direction and logistical support to Incident Management Teams.

III. INTERAGENCY COOPERATION

Interagency Dispatch Centers: Alabama Interagency Coordination Center (AICC), located in Montgomery, Alabama at the National Forest's in Alabama, serves as the State Interagency Coordination Center for agencies in this agreement.

- a. Purpose and Overview: The National Forests in Alabama Dispatch Office is the Alabama Interagency Coordination Center (AICC); which provides dispatch support for the U.S.D.A. Forest Service, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, Alabama Forestry Commission, Bureau of Land Management and Bureau of Indian Affairs. The AICC also provides support to the National Forests in AL.; fire, prescribed burning and all-hazard incidents.

The Coordination Center is part of the Forest Fire/Safety section located in the Supervisor's Office in Montgomery. The center is staffed to lend support and coordination for state and federal agencies within the state of Alabama. The primary support role of the center is wildland fire suppression and expanded dispatch. This does not exclude natural disasters or other human caused incidents.

- b. Administrative Oversight/Structure

- i. Executive Board – N/A
- ii. Operations Group – N/A

- c. Dispatch Organization

- i. Staffing - Hours of operations will be 0700 to 1730 hours, Monday thru Friday. As activity increases, AICC will staff as long as necessary, or upon request for activities such as prescribed burning or other emergency Incidents. There will be a dispatcher on call seven days a week. AICC staff consists of a Center Manager, Assistant Center Manager, and one Initial Attack Dispatchers (which is currently located on the Oakmulgee Ranger District in Brent, Al.) During periods of high fire danger or increased activity, AICC may temporarily increase staffing to meet the needs of the situation.

- d. Roles and Responsibilities

- i. Center Manager - The Center Manager's primary purpose is to direct, plan, organize, supervise, coordinate, and manage personnel and operational activities of the Alabama Interagency Coordination Center (AICC) by providing focused responsive coverage during daily operations and emergency situations involving Federal agencies. In addition:
 - a. Determines priorities and supervises normal fire activities.
 - b. Responsible for the development and execution of operating plans and action guides for efficient and cost effective mobilization of resources to emergency situations.
 - c. Ensures all activities directed by the dispatch center are conducted safely and is responsible for the effectiveness of decisions made at the Center.

- d. Performs a variety of staff, personnel and administrative duties related to fire management activities.
- e. Provides daily briefings for assistant center manager and any detailers.
- f. Acts as liaison for support operations and incident commanders.
- g. Troubleshoots procedural problems in support operations and network. Identifies where bottlenecks or breakdowns are occurring and work to correct them.
- h. Evaluates cost effectiveness and information flow.
- i. Recognizes sensitive political or other special issues. Reacts to these issues to minimize their impact on operations.
- j. Reviews intelligence summaries and reports, and ensures reporting timeframes are met.
- k. Ensures accurate data and maintains current knowledge of area activity.
- l. Ensures coordination occurs. Monitors workload distribution and shift briefings.
- m. Resource availability: Monitors status of national resources. Identifies shortages or potential problems and resolves them.
- n. Coordination: Maintains communications concerning resource orders with field units, keeps abreast of general situations, and works to resolve conflicts. Shares information with appropriate entities.
- o. Gives and provides briefings as requested.
- p. Monitors weather patterns and forecasts; and maintains liaison with the National Weather Service and fire weather meteorologist. Identifies potentially significant weather situations.
- q. Maintains contact with other intelligence operations as appropriate.
- r. Reacts to special requests for information in a timely manner.
- s. Supervision: Builds and manages an appropriate staffing level. Acts as focal point for all sections, resolves problems, and provides direction. Maintains a broad perspective for overall operation.
- t. Serves as first line supervisor to the Assistant Center Manager and Initial Attack Dispatchers in terms of performance evaluations, development plans, time and attendance.
- u. Initiates performance appraisals, development plans, awards, or adverse actions with concurrence of the Forest Fire Management Officer.
- v. Oversees all daily operations of AICC including staffing levels and schedules, resource availability, fire activity, resource mobilization.
- w. Implements the safe, cost effective ordering, scheduling, dispatching, and tracking of aviation resources. Coordinates Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFR) and Notices to Airmen (NOTAM) with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Coordinates and implements emergency response plans.

- x. **Span of control** -First Line Supervisor of Assistant Center Manager and Initial Attack Dispatchers.
- ii. Assistant Center Manager(s) - The Assistant Center Manager is responsible for the technical accuracy in the execution of resource orders and operational efficiency of the section. This position performs routine dispatching duties and supervises support dispatchers and dispatch recorders, if assigned. This position organizes and disseminates incident intelligence through formalized reports, informal contacts and other sources.
 - a. Receives resource status from field offices and all resources via telephone; situation reports, electronic mail, verbal updates, and briefings.
 - b. Utilizes resource-tracking systems. Documents resource status on appropriate log notes, resource order, and resource database. Verbally updates Center Coordinator on resources which are critically in short supply and those where shortages are anticipated.
 - c. Displays resource status. Maintains visual status of appropriate resources using maps and other established systems.
 - d. Places resource requests determining closest available resource and alternatives. Sources include NFES catalog, availability displays, reference books, mobilization guides, manager input, etc. Places order.
 - e. Processes assigned resources. Documents assigned resources to allow for good resource tracking using resource order forms/Resource Ordering and Status System (ROSS), and resource database. Documents travel information and passes information to requesting unit.
 - f. Closes order per identified procedure.
 - g. Provides field units with information concerning use, capabilities, and availability of specific resources. Advises field of proper ordering procedures. Using General Message Forms.
 - h. Refers questions concerning policy or interpretation of general operating procedures to the manager.
 - i. Beginning each shift review: dispatch logs, notes, and resource orders/ROSS.
 - j. Documents significant events in log to ensure continuity of information.
 - k. At close of shift review: orders and logs to ensure complete documentation. Conducts briefing with replacement.
 - l. Monitors resource tracking systems. Receives verbal updates from dispatchers on resources, noting any shortages or opportunities for reassignments. Relays this information to manager, document in shift log, makes sure information is discussed with other shifts, and relays to other entities as appropriate.
 - m. Observes chain of command. Receives assignments for section from Center Coordinator and delegate as appropriate. Sets timeframes and standards. Deals with

personnel problems and concerns in a conscientious and diplomatic manner. Assigns work schedules for employees.

- n. Acts as technical specialist for reviewing resource requests.
- o. Helps dispatchers by giving insight as to best resource to fill a request.
- p. Supervises processing of resource orders. Monitors information on subsequent unavailability of referred resource or major changes in agreed upon plan of action. Thinks ahead for alternatives and is aware of length of assignment issues. Considers resource availability, closest forces, cost effectiveness, safety, transportation availability, areas of fire activity or anticipated activity, and established priorities. Identifies preferred course of action to the manager.

iii. Initial Attack Dispatchers

- a. Performs general dispatch duties for the AICC initial attack operations.
- b. Keeps the center manager/assistant center manager informed of fire situations.
- c. Receives fire report and initiates proper response as dictated by protocol, Dispatch Level, and local intelligence.
- d. Tracks all initial attack resources on a daily basis.
- e. Collects and distributes weather reports, fire behavior information, resource availability, etc.
- f. Provides a communication link to all suppression and prescribed resources.
- g. Coordinates with District Point of Contact regarding resource status, detection requests, and other suppression duties.
- h. Provides initial coordination for other emergency response (haz-mat, search & rescue, etc.).
- i. Completes all necessary records and distributes as appropriate.
- j. Keeps supervisor informed of all activity.
- k. Updates maps, resource lists, hazards, etc., as required.

e. Dispatch Services:

- i. Initial and Extended Attack – Identified Agency Initial Attack Dispatch Centers are located in the following locations:
 - a. Alabama Forestry Commission: 2201 Congressman WL Dickson Dr, Montgomery, 36109
 - b. USDA Forest Service, NF. in Alabama, Supervisors Office, 2946 Chestnut St., Montgomery, Al., 36107

- ii. Mobilization, Demobilization and Support - AICC is the central focal point for statewide incident support coordination and initial attack dispatching for the National Forests in Alabama. Additionally for the NF. in Alabama, AICC is responsible for collection and dissemination of intelligence, weather forecasts, NFDRS indices, wildland fire and prescribed fire activity information. Another mission of the Coordination Center is to provide the National Forests in Alabama and cooperating agencies with prompt delivery of suppression and all-risk resources, logistical support/coordination, information to assist units in daily planning intelligence and logistical support/coordination during periods of high activity when requested.

Dispatchers will dispatch all resources on a closest known resource available basis, without regard for district boundaries. Preference shall be given to the resources from the district/unit on which a fire occurs when response times are about the same. Resource location, experience, and capability will be considered for each dispatch. Threat to life and property, incident location, fuels, fire behavior, as well as current and forecasted weather information will be considered to determine the amount and type of resources initially dispatched.

The responsible dispatch center will maintain staffing and providing support until IC releases them and all units are back at station or quarters, which ever is appropriate. For externally requested resources, the requesting unit will maintain coverage of them until release from incident at which time they will fall back under their home unit dispatch. All resources to include dispatch centers will clearly announce over radio when they go into and out of service.

Agencies involved in this plan should provide AICC their assigned duty officer's name's, contact number and area of coverage weekly by 8 am on Mondays. This would be for their state level duty officers covering the duty officer role from Monday 8 am when reported to the next Monday at 0759. State level duty officer's will be responsible for maintaining a current list of their unit duty officers. AICC will then compile a master list and share with the cooperating agencies through a standardized mailing list by noon on Monday's. Any updates or change of duty officer status on this shared list should be provided promptly by those initiating the change to those on the mailing list.

Incidents detected on participating agency lands by employees not under the umbrella of agency on whom's land the incident is occurring will contact their duty officer and/or their dispatch/point of contact whom will then contact the agency duty officer and/or dispatch on which the incident is occurring. At a minimum, the initial notifier will document the following information and pass up the line who will record in incident log.

- Incident detection (who/how)
- Relevant date and times (i.e. ignition, when reported, etc.)
- Address or reference location of fire,

- Phone number (if available) of initial reporter and one passing the information on.
- Type of incident (wildfire, escaped burn, etc.)
- Status of incident (ie is it running up the side of mountain, are there vfd on scene, resources threatened, etc.)
- If other resources on scene, identify.
- To the best of their ability, what additional resources do they feel are needed.

Immediate designation of an I.C. as soon as possible is critical and should be relayed to involved agencies promptly.

iii. Off-Unit Assistance

AICC will place resource requests and coordinate with other ranger districts and cooperating agencies with priority given to closest available resources. For resources not available in Alabama, orders will be placed with adjacent state coordination centers or SACC, provided the requests do not exceed the amount listed in the Southern Area Mobilization Plan (Chapter 40 - Inter-Forest Cooperation).

SACC (Southern Area Coordination Center) will request resources through AICC for incident support outside of Alabama. When resource orders are received, District FMOs, AFC employees, or cooperating agency duty officer will be contacted by the Coordination Center to fill requests. The Center Manager will keep the Forest FMO informed of ordering activity and resources assigned.

Movement of resources will require both parties be responsible for safety of personnel involved. Responsibilities will include, but are not limited to the following:

Sending unit will check personnel for such items as adequate and required personal protective equipment (PPE), forest map, physical fitness standards met, current IQCS qualification cards (and that they are qualified for the position they are being dispatched to perform), tools and equipment are in good conditions and safe for use.

Personnel being dispatched off-forest or out of the Southern Area should be briefed on what to expect. Briefing should cover: PPE item checks, transportation, weight limitations, crew boss expectations, any assignment details, fire situation, etc.

Receiving unit is to be responsible for the safe use of personnel and equipment after it is received, including personnel welfare and equipment maintenance. Receiving units ensure sufficient safety officers and other overhead are available to manage the fire safely. Personnel not familiar with the area will be briefed before going on the fire.

Requests to SACC (Southern Area Coordination Center)

All requests for resources will be processed through ROSS (IROC once it comes online) with the exception of Supplies. Requests for supplies will either be filled by local purchase or submitted directly to the Southern Area Cache.

NICC (National Interagency Coordination Center)

AICC will place requests for resources outside the Southern Area through SACC to the National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC) located in Boise, Idaho. AICC will not order resources directly from NICC except for communications equipment, i.e. radio kits.

Initial Attack Dispatch

In regards to local fire response, personnel initially discovering fire or receiving report of a fire will contact their respective dispatch office/point of contact to report incident. Personnel receiving reports from the public should get the fire information and the name and phone number of the person reporting the fire. That dispatch office will then contact the local duty officer and begin coordination of dispatch. At this time also, the responsible dispatch office will initiate their notifications plan to contact the appropriate next level duty officer, unit leads, etc. as identified on the plan. For instance a fire occurs on the Bankhead N.F. and is found by one of the timber markers on their way home from work. That timber marker would contact the Alabama Interagency Coordination center (AICC) AICC would then contact the Bankhead unit Duty officer (typically district FMO) who would then work with AICC to coordinate dispatch of resources. At that time also, AICC would implement their notification plan to advise the Forest level duty officer, local district ranger, law enforcement and other positions as needed based on the situation at hand.

Once an Incident Commander is identified, they will take over responsibility for coordination with dispatch unless duty officer is designated to continue in this role. If additional resources are needed outside the responsible agency resources available, they will be requested through responsible agencies dispatch who will then coordinate with either requested agencies duty officer/and or dispatch. Request made must include:

- What type of resource is requested? Quantity?
- Where they will report to?
- Whom will they report to?
- Frequency to use
- Any known hazards they may encounter enroute to their reporting area.

Once requested resource order is filled, the responding dispatch center will inform the requesting agency, at a minimum, the following:

- Whats coming.
- Who is in charge of it.

- Estimated time of arrival.
- Any special circumstances.

Responding externally requested units will maintain contact with their home unit till on scene and briefed. At that time they will be under the coverage of the requesting unit who will maintain responsibility for them until they are released from incident.

For Forest Service

Any wildland fires occurring on the forest will be reported to AICC. This information should be immediately relayed to AICC for dispatch response.

AICC will dispatch the closest available resources, provide map coordinates and available size up information. During PL II and above, the districts will provide AICC a list of available initial attack resources by 0930 each day. Upon checking with the Coordination Center, resource will report their equipment number, number of crew members, status and location when leaving their stations. When a dispatch is received, resource will acknowledge the dispatch and proceed to the incident. Upon arrival, the incident commander will size up the situation and inform the AICC current and anticipated activity and additional resource needs. Reinforcements will be dispatched as requested by the I.C. If no I.C is identified, AICC will request the name of the I.C. so that all personnell will know who is in charge of the Incident.

Incident Commanders should keep the Coordination Center informed of anticipated resource releases and make resources available for dispatch as they become excess.

For USFWS

USFWS initial attack wildfires will be dispatched through each individual dispatch office or Refuge Complex responsible for their agency landscapes. Occurrence reports to USFWS will be multiple and diverse. Most will be received from municipalities and county emergency services dispatch centers. USFWS Station dispatchers will record all pertinent information from reporting parties and maintain a log of events throughout the incident period. Notification of an incident and requests for additional resources will be requested through AICC and or MFC via Incident Commanders or Local Dispatchers.

Other agencies did not provide any input in regards to specific operations.

Extended Attack

Extended attack incidents are those which will not be contained in the first burning period and may require resources beyond that available for initial attack. "Burning period" is defined as the part of each 24-hour period when fires spread most rapidly, typically from 10:00 AM until sundown. As soon as it is apparent that a fire will extend into the next burning period with reasonable likelihood that it will burn for multiple periods, the responsible agency dispatch will inquire of the IC about need for ordering of additional

resources. The responsible Agency dispatch will then coordinate with other agency dispatch and /or duty officers, to identify and order available resources through the appropriate protocol in place at time of the incident.

The districts/ units may be requested by their agency Coordination Center to begin acquiring needed supplies and equipment through established agreements with local businesses. For incidents under Forest Service responsibility, AICC will fax copies of the current resource orders to the district with the project order number and "P" code assigned. The resource orders will be used to document any future requests as orders are generated at the incident. Use of the orders will provide a systematic method of documenting requests, eliminate duplication and allow for smoother information transfer between the incident and AICC.

Incident Status Summary's (ICS 209) are nationally required for fires that burn in 100+ acres of timber or 300+ acres of grass or brush or has a type 1 or 2 incident management team assigned to it. Most extended attack fires will require Incident Status Summary's (ICS 209). Incident Commanders are responsible to complete, update and send the ICS 209 **to SACC (Southern Area Coordination center) by 1900 daily** until the fire is declared controlled. Incident Status Summaries are used to prioritize allocation of resources, suppression planning, and tracking incident costs.

Other agencies did not identify any specific processes to their organization.

Reports

Daily Situation Report

Throughout the year AICC will submit the daily situation report via the internet. Specific instructions for accessing the report and completing data entry are found in the Situation Report Users' Guide. The report will be prepared by AICC and submitted electronically by the close of business each day. All wildland fires and planned or accomplished prescribed burning since the last report, will be reported. The minimum standards for situation reporting are as follows:

- a) All significant fire information will be reported by the Center Manager to the Forest FMO, Southern Area Coordinator, District Rangers, and cooperators to ensure the timely recognition of approaching critical fire situations.
- b) AICC will report all wildfire activity and accomplished prescribed fire activity for the National Forests in Alabama to SACC throughout the year on the daily situation report.

Individual Fire Reports

An Individual Fire Report (FS 5100-29) will be completed for all statistical wildland fires. The 5100-29 is to be completed by the appropriate district personnel. Individual fire reports are to be completed within ten days of the fire being declared out.

USFWS will create fire codes for their agency wildfires. If USFWS resources are officially requested to support non-federal cooperating agencies then a support firecode will be created.

Reporting Wildland Fire & Prescribed Fire Activity

As part of the Daily Situation Report, districts and cooperators should report the following information on prescribed burning and fire activity as follows:

- a) Number of units/acres by objective planned for the day.
- b) Units/acres accomplished by objective during past 24 hours.
- c) Number of people committed to burning projects.
- d) Number of equipment units committed (engines, dozers, aircraft).

Note for RX burns only need to share on those that may affect other agencies operations.

Wildland fire information shall include:

- a) Number of fires
- b) Size of each
- c) Cause
- d) Status (est./actual time contained/controlled)
- e) Assigned resources

Prescribed fire notification to the public or local cooperators (within the same county) is the responsibility of the unit executing the project. The notifications will be made as described in each agencies Prescribed Fire Burn Plan and documented.

Districts and cooperators are to report the above information daily to AICC by 1030 - anytime prescribed burning is planned or when wildland fires have occurred since previous days P.M. Situation Report.

Aviation

AICC will hire only aircraft and pilots approved by the FS Regional Aviation Group or the Office of Aircraft Services (OAS).

Only federal agency approved and carded aircraft will be used for federal government flights. All Forest Service or Department of Interior users of aircraft are personally responsible for checking aircraft approval certificates: Forest Service form 5700-21 (all aircraft) or Office of Aircraft Services (OAS) forms OAS-36A (fixed wing) or OAS-36B (helicopters).

USFWS and BLM will follow all DOI National and Regional Aviation Policy Requirements.

AFC will follow their policies in place at time of operations.

When single-engine aircraft or helicopters are used for reconnaissance work, only those passengers essential to the mission and allowed by policy will be carried. Those missions will

be carried out so that the aircraft will remain at 500 feet or more AGL (above ground level). The pilot in command must select a flight pattern that will ensure a proper route in case of engine failure. The pilot has the final say concerning the safety of the aircraft and its' occupants.

AICC will order an coordinate the use of aircraft on Forest Service lands. Prior to ordering a flight, the requesting unit will be provided the following flight request containing the following information:

1. Name of person requesting flight
2. Date of flight (s) and time
3. Purpose of flight/ objectives
4. Passengers names and weights
5. Passenger pick-up points
6. Job Code

There are various "Call When Needed" (CWN) and exclusive use helicopters available through the ordering system. Orders for these types of resources need to be placed through the AICC using the appropriate flight request form. Ensure that Job code or payment process you are using is valid. Also ensure units ordering aviation resources are up to date on policy requirements such as but not limited to:

- Current Interagency Aviation Mishap response guide and checklist.
- Signed and approved Helibase plan (if applicable)
- Signed and approved Project Aviation Safety plan if mission is not a wildfire.
- Aviation Hazard Map to include military routes.
- Appropriate emergency response equipment.

AICC and requesting units will maintain current copies of the above documents. All dispatch personnel should be trained and aware of the particulars in regards to these. They should know the military routes across the forest and how to contact their coordinators, where the helibases are, etc.

Other aviation resources.

Alabama Forestry Commission.= Has 2 agency single engine fixed wings and other contracted fixed wing platforms. that perform fire patrols as needed. If needed a request be made to Balsie Butler. At that time specifics of operations should be worked out between requesting and receiving agency.

No input from other agencies.

Prescribed Fire

For day to day RX assistance between cooperators for training or good neighbor purposes where no funds are exchanged, this operating plan will be sufficient to allow for that. For more extensive projects where funds will be exchanged a supplemental fire project agreement can be done.

All Hazard (law Enforcement, Natural Disaster, etc, as appropriate)

Follow guidelines as outline in Chapter 10 page 11 of the Southern Area Mobilization guide.

Emergency Incidents (Non-Fire)

The appropriate county sheriff's office is the coordinating office for all non-fire incidents and search-and-rescue missions within their counties. Units will coordinate all activity with the sheriff's office when requested with coordination going through the requested agencies duty officer and /or dispatch office. Appropriate requested responder's agency protocol at time of incident should be followed.

For circumstances involving in-house searches for Government aircraft/personnel on participating agency lands, the only requirement is for notification of the sheriff's office in order to let them know we are coordinating a search and rescue. The Forest Service has the latitude to enter Collection Agreements with the counties. These agreements would make available supplies, equipment, facilities and personnel to the counties during emergency incidents however none are currently in place.

Upon request, Responsible participating agency dispatch or duty officer for county incident is occurring on will initiate appropriate action regarding incidents involving agency personnel and/or occurring on agency lands, in accordance with county sheriff.

USFWS Hurricane Responses and other Non-Fire emergencies will be internally managed through the Zone Fire Management Office unless the facility is compromised from storm damages. In the event other refuges may host expanded operations. Funding sources for these types of emergencies will be internal within the agency.

Communication for in house searches occurring on Forest service lands will be made through the AICC (Alabama Interagency Coordination Center). No operation will be allowed to proceed or continue unless prompt communication with AICC or a designated unit can be maintained. Uses of cellphones, human repeaters, or other means are acceptable as long as they permit immediate communication by Forest Service personnel to the unit dispatch. Radios should be used as a primary means of communications so that other resources responding can stay current on the developing information. A check in / check out process should be established for all responders.

All agencies to follow their protocol in place at time of incident.

- a. Funding – N/A
 - i. All agencies have cost sharing mechanisms at their disposal and will be utilized where appropriate
 - ii. Financial plan (attach as Appendix) - N/A

IV. PREPAREDNESS

Protection Planning: Agencies will maintain responsibility for protection of lands under their jurisdiction. Closest forces concept will be used when appropriate and conducive to public safety.

Protection Areas and Boundaries:

- The Alabama Forestry Commission has primary wildfire protection responsibilities on all private and state-owned land as directed by Alabama Law.
- The National Park Service has primary wildfire protection responsibilities on lands within the legislative boundaries of the following National Park Service Units in Alabama.
 - Gulf Islands National Seashore, Ocean Springs
 - Vicksburg National Military Park, Vicksburg
 - Natchez Trace Parkway
- The Forest Service has primary wildfire protection responsibilities for all lands administered by the National Forests in Alabama except for the Tuskegee N.F. An agreement is in place with the Alabama Forestry Commission to provide initial attack on lands under Tuskegee Ranger district administration.
- The US Fish & Wildlife Service has primary wildfire protection responsibilities for all lands administered by the US Fish and Wildlife Service in Alabama.
- Other agencies did not identify any specific wildfire protection responsibilities. It is assumed that their primary wildfire protection responsibilities for all lands administered by their agency.

Methods of Fire Protection and Suppression:

Reciprocal (Mutual Aid) Fire Assistance: The closest available resource may initiate suppression action on any wildfire on reciprocally protected lands regardless of land ownership. The reciprocal area is identified by a one-mile buffer adjacent to the participating agencies managed land borders. The Protecting Agency will not be required to reimburse the Supporting Agencies for its costs of fire suppression within the first 24 hours. For wildfires located outside of the reciprocal areas, agencies may provide assistance upon request of the Protecting Agency. Supporting Federal Agencies will not bill the State, or vice-versa, for the first 24 hours. Resources will charge to their established pay code until the non-billable mutual aid period is met, at which time they may convert to the established job code for the incident.

- All requests for assistance will be processed through the Responding and requesting Dispatch Centers.
- Resource orders will be processed at AICC as appropriate for all cooperators. USDA Forest Service Dispatch Center will process all orders for incidents within their jurisdictional boundaries and will be supported as needed by AICC.
- The requesting agency agrees to assume responsibility for making necessary arrangement and paying all expenses for lodging and meals for personnel from the sending agency unless

otherwise specified in order.

- **Equipment:** When billing for equipment use all agencies agree to use the Alabama Forestry Commission rates identified in Chapter 100 of the Southern Area Mobilization Guide. If an agency plans on using different rates they will identify the source of those rates here.

Acquisition of Services: All areas that are not under reciprocal protection will be managed according to cooperative protection standards. Assistance from the agency that does not have protection responsibility will be reimbursable. However, if the fire is controlled with initial attack forces within the first 24 hours, there will be no charges or reimbursement by either agency.

Joint Projects and Project Plans: If any of the State or Federal Agencies wish to engage in joint cooperative projects, such as prescribe fire/fuels management, preparedness, fire analysis/planning, rehabilitation, training, prevention, public affair, and other mutually beneficial efforts in support of interagency fire management, a Supplemental Project Agreement (as outlined in Exhibit I) or other written document will be prepared.

- a) **Fire Prevention:** When appropriate agencies will work together to provide Fire Prevention and Education.
- b) **Public Use Restrictions:** When feasible, agencies should coordinate the implementation of restrictions for consistency in a given area. Each agency will retain the rights to limit public use on lands under their jurisdiction. Agencies shall notify appropriate partners of any area closures, burn bans, or other restrictions. Whenever such closures, restrictions, or burn bans are established, the other agencies will comply with them to the extent possible within their own agency's rules and regulations.
- c) **Burning Permits:** All Agencies will coordinate with the appropriate State Dispatch Office for smoke permits.
- d) **Prescribed Fire (Planned Ignitions) and Fuels Management:** Prescribe burns will comply with State smoke management guidelines.
- e) **Smoke Management:** Prescribe burns will comply with State smoke management guidelines.

V. OPERATIONS

Fire Notifications:

- a) To assist with reporting requirements and situational awareness all fires requiring 209 or impacting other agency's operations should be reported to AICC with a location, protection unit, and acreage.
- b) All agencies will report their own fires through the appropriate reporting systems.
- c) Fires requiring reporting to AICC should be processed through and email or phone call to them as soon as possible.
- d) When a federal agency takes sole action on wildfires that threaten or involve private lands the State Dispatch Center will be notified.
- e) When the State takes sole action on lands that threaten or involve federal lands the appropriate agency will be notified as soon as possible.

Boundary Line Fires: A fire threatening the reciprocal area boundary may be considered a fire within the reciprocal boundary at the discretion of the agency officer in charge. Standard fire notification procedures will be followed.

Independent Action on Lands Protected by Another Agency: Each agency may take independent action

in reciprocal areas on any lands under protection responsibility of the other agency.

Response to Wildland Fire:

1. Special Management Considerations:

- National Park Service – The use of Minimal Impact Suppression tactics (MIST) shall be used on all National Park Service (NPS) lands. The use of heavy mechanized equipment is forbidden unless approved by the Park Superintendent. No chemical (retardant, foam) application on NPS lands unless approved by the Park Superintendent.
- US Fish & Wildlife (USFWS) – The use of Minimal Impact Suppression Tactics (MIST) shall be used on all USFWS nationally designated Wilderness areas. No application of retardant or foam within 300 feet of water ways. No use of heavy equipment within 300 feet of water ways. The use of heavy mechanized equipment is within the range of appropriate management responses for suppression activities.
- US Forest Service (USFS) – The use of Minimal Impact Suppression Tactics (MIST) shall be used in Wilderness areas and no mechanized heavy equipment, chainsaws, leaf blowers, etc. except by approval of the Regional Forester or Forest Supervisor.
- Unless otherwise agreed, the Jurisdictional Agency will provide an Agency Representative or appropriate environmental technical specialist to advise a Protecting Agency of any special management considerations that may influence suppression action. The cost of these individuals shall be paid by the Jurisdictional Agency. The Incident Commander will incorporate special management considerations into the incident planning process, subject to the delegation of authority.

2. Decision Process: For wildfires which are expected to exceed initial attack capabilities all parties involved with jurisdiction will meet to develop and document their decisions regarding suppression strategies and tactical actions that are cost efficient and consider loss and benefit to land resources, values-at-risk, social and political values, and existing legal statutes.

3. Cooperation: Pre-season meetings should be held to discuss areas which require a higher priority protection. Values-at-risk should be identified and ranked in order of priority. This would help set priority if multiple fire starts occurred at the same time and require prioritization. The group should also identify those areas requiring fuels treatment/mitigation for future analysis.

4. Communication: Should occur prior to fire seasons and during the early stages of wildland fires. Agencies managing fires, especially those with multiple objectives, should consider: firefighter and public safety, predicted weather conditions, resource drawdown, proximity to values-at-risk, smoke, current and anticipated fire activity, and time of season. Neighboring jurisdictions should provide prompt notification to agencies when concerns exist about wildfires that are managed strategically and have the potential to impact adjacent jurisdictions. The appropriate management response (Confine, Contain, and Control) will be selected for each incident. If the wildfire will impact adjacent jurisdiction, all parties will be asked to participate in the development of the Wildland Fire Decision Support System (WFDSS) decision.

5. Cost efficiency: Jurisdictions will identify conditions under which cost efficiency may dictate where suppression strategies and tactical actions are taken. Points to consider include loss and benefit to land, values at risk, resource, social and political values, and existing legal statutes.

6. Delegation of Authority: In the event that overhead teams are called in to stage, or to assume control of an incident, the agency with protection responsibility will prepare the delegation of authority.

7. Preservation of Evidence: Evidence will be preserved in accordance with applicable Agency regulations and policies.

VI. USE AND REIMBURSEMENT OF INTERAGENCY FIRE RESOURCES

Cost Share Agreement (Cost Share Methodologies) - The type of cost share methodology utilized will vary according to a great variety of environmental, resource, tactical, political, and other considerations. The following factors will influence the ultimate selection for a cost share methodology for any given wildland fire.

- a) The cost-sharing methodologies that will be utilized should wildfire spread to a neighboring jurisdiction in a location where fire is not wanted.
- b) The cost-share methodologies that will be used should a jurisdiction accept or receive a wildland fire and manage it for multiple objectives.
- c) Any distinctions in what cost-share methodology will be used if the reason the fire spreads to another jurisdiction is attributed to a strategic decision, versus environmental condition (weather, fuels, and fire behavior) or tactical considerations jurisdictional boundaries. Examples of cost-sharing methodologies may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - i) When a wildland fire that is being managed for multiple objectives spreads to a neighboring jurisdiction because of strategic decisions, and in a location where fire is not wanted, the managing jurisdiction may be responsible for wildfire suppression costs.
 - ii) In those situations where weather, fuels, or fire behavior of the wildland fire precludes stopping at jurisdiction boundaries, cost-share methodologies may include, but are not limited to:
 - (1) Each jurisdiction pays for its own resources – fire suppression efforts are primarily on jurisdictional responsibility lands.
 - (2) Each jurisdiction pays for its own resources – services rendered approximate the percentage of jurisdictional responsibility, but not necessarily performed on those lands.
 - (3) Cost-share by percentage of ownership.
 - (4) Cost is apportioned by geographic division or percent of effort. Examples of geographic divisions are: Division A and B (using a map as an attachment); privately owned property with structures; or specific locations such as campgrounds.
 - (5) Reconciliation of daily costs (for larger, multi-day incidents). This method relies upon daily agreed to costs, using Incident Action Plans or other means to determine multi-Agency contributions. Reimbursement must be followed up by a final bill.

Training: Interagency training opportunities can be made available. This can include, but is not limited to the annual fire refresher, wildfire academies, and in-house training. Each agency agrees to operate under the National Incident Management System (NIMS) standards as developed by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG). State employees and employees of the DOI Agencies will adhere to the Wildland Fire Qualifications System Guide (PMS 310-1) and the US Forest Service employees will adhere to the Forest Service Fire and Aviation Management Qualification Guide. Each agency will accept the qualification system used by the other agency.

Communication Systems: To enhance communications, radio stations may be added, deleted, or relocated by mutual agreement between representatives of both agencies. Each agency may install the others radio frequency in its radios for use in cooperative activities. All federal licensing requirements will be followed. All headquarters and/or dispatch centers of all agencies will have commercial telephone service. When it becomes necessary for an agency to operate radio equipment belonging to another agency, all operating procedures of the agency owning the equipment will be followed. Each agency will maintain its own radios and will fully cooperate in maintaining efficient communications between agencies. Radio communication will be maintained between aircraft and State and Forest Service Dispatchers.

Fire Weather Systems: The State and Federal Agencies will share information from RAWs stations owned and/or operated by each respective agency and agrees to maintain those stations to the standards outlined in PMS 426-3 Interagency Wildland Fire Weather Station Standards and Guidelines.

Incident Meteorological (IMET) Services: The procedure shall be made in accordance with the provision of the Interagency Agreement for Meteorological and Other Technical Services (IMET Agreement) and shall not conflict with the procedures of the Mobilization Guides. Reimbursement and expenditures for IMET services shall follow the procedures detailed with the IMET Agreement.

Aviation Operations: Directions provided in the appropriate agency Safety Plans.

- a) Aircraft involved in joint operations will be equipped with multi-channel compatible radios.
- b) Aircraft will use and monitor 122.925 unless otherwise directed.
- c) AL-Alf will provide flight following for all USFS contracted aircraft and will use National Flight Following.
- d) USFWS will follow all DOI national and regional aviation policy requirements.
- e) As there was no input from other agencies, it is assumed they will follow their own protocol and policy regarding Aviation operations.

VII. BILLING PROCEDURES

Suppression Billing:

- a) Billing information, provide:
 - Agency name and billing address
 - Financial Contact (name, phone, email)
 - Invoice Bill
 - Agreement Number
 - Incident name and number
 - Dates of incident covered by billing
 - Location and jurisdictional unit
 - Appropriate Incident Fire Code
 - Summary Cost data for the amount being billed. Use incident cost information or standard generated cost reports by Agency to support billing whenever possible. Charges between Federal Agencies will utilize equipment rates identified in Chapter 100 or the Southern Area Mobilization Guide.
 - Agency DUNS
- b) Billing timeframes – Provide contact information for written request for extensions beyond timeframes established in Reimbursable Billings and Payments, Exhibit D.
- c) Indirect Cost Rates, if applicable
- d) Identify a process for handling any supplemental billing information, summary data or additional billing documentation. Such supplemental billing information, summary data or additional billing documentation may be requested and provided if agreed upon by the Parties. The process should include:
 - Points of Contact
 - Process for handling requests,
 - Any standardized reports information

Fee Based Services – billings will be in accordance with separate written agreement or contract(s).

Non-Suppression Billings: As described in this Operating Plan, the parties may jointly conduct cooperative projects and/or share resources to carry out non-suppression activities in support of interagency fire

management. These joint projects or activities may involve sharing of costs and/or a transfer of funds between parties involved, at which time a separate, local agreement, procurement, or other appropriate written document will be required. Billing will be defined under the terms of that document.

Stafford Act Billings

- a) Refer to Exhibit H of the Master Coop Agreement – Use of and Reimbursement for Shared Resources in Stafford Act Response Actions
- b) Billing timeframes – Provide contact information and process required for any written request for extensions beyond timeframes established in Exhibit H.

For Alabama Forestry commission billing, the fee to cover administrative costs of preparing invoices, will be the same as indicated in the Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate memo dated August 7, 2018 Between Donna Snyder, Chief Financial Officer for State of Alabama and John Hernandez, USFS Resource Audit Branch Chief. This rate has been predetermined to be 25% and will remain effective till 9/30/2021.

VIII. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Principal Contacts: Refer to Exhibit B of Master Coop Agreement – Principal Contacts. Complete and add to this Operating Plan.

Personnel Policy N/A

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 one year advance written notice to the other Parties.

Annual Review: This Operating Plan is to be reviewed annually by June 1st. Annual meeting will be held 1st week of May to provide input.

Duration of Operating Plan: This Operating Plan is executed as of the date of last signature and remains in effect throughout the life of the master agreement unless modified or superseded.

If the current Master Coop Agreement is superseded by a new Agreement, this Operating Plan may remain in effect to the extent that it does not conflict with provisions of the new Agreement, but only until such time that all activities and conditions can be incorporated into a new Operating Plan.

Previous Instruments Superseded: List, as applicable.

Authorized Representatives: By signature below, all signatories to this Operating Plan certify that the individuals listed in this document are authorized to act in their respective areas for matters related to this Operating Plan.

IX. REVIEW AND SIGNATURES

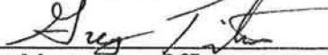
The Geographic Area Operating Plan will be approved by the signatory State and Federal NWCG member agencies.

The Statewide Operating Plans will be approved by the signatory State and Federal NWCG members.

Unit Administrators will have the responsibility for developing and approving sub-geographic area operating plans.

Each signatory agency may have policies/procedures for entering into agreements (including this Operating Plan) that require additional review by attorneys, agreement specialists, or contracting officers.

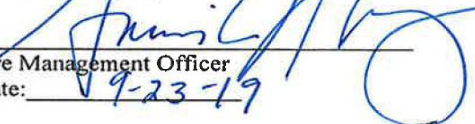
USDOI FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Southeast Region, Zone 4



Fire Management Officer
Date: 9-23-19

USDOI NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Southeast Region

SHAWN NAGLE Digitally signed by SHAWN NAGLE
Date: 2019.11.13 13:29:49 -05'00'
Regional Fire Management Officer
Date: 11/13/19

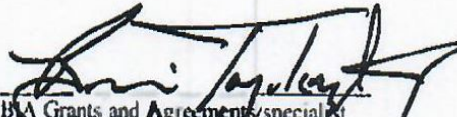
USDOI FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Southeast Region, Zone 7


Fire Management Officer
Date: 9-23-19

USDOI BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
Eastern Region

Regional Fire Management Officer
Acting
Date: 11/21/19

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Eastern States Office



Regional Fire Management Officer
Date: 09/23/2019

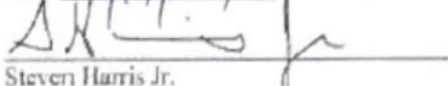

BIA Grants and Agreements Specialist
Date: 11/21/2019

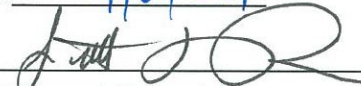
USDA FOREST SERVICE
National Forests in Alabama


Cherie E. Hamilton
Forest Supervisor
Date: 11/19/2019

STATE OF ALABAMA
Alabama Forestry Commission


State Forester
Date: 9/30/2019


Steven Harris Jr.
Agreements Specialist
Date: 9.19.19


AFC General Counsel
Date: 9-24-19