



Arizona State Forestry Division
Bureau of Indian Affairs: Southwest, Navajo, Western Regions
Bureau of Land Management: Arizona, New Mexico
National Park Service, Intermountain Region
New Mexico State Forestry Division
U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 2
U. S. Forest Service



Date: May 11, 2012
To: Firefighting Personnel, Southwest Area
From: Chair, Southwest Coordinating Group
Subject: Ethical Behavior and Conduct

The Southwest Geographic Area consists of agencies that are committed to the highest principles of ethical behavior and conduct. The public, for which we serve, needs to know that they can trust each of us to do what we say while being fiscally responsible in our day-to-day operations. Our success as an interagency team is built on this trust and on our personal and professional commitment to conduct operations in full compliance with the laws and policies of our agencies.

There have been recent incidents of ethical misconduct and financial mismanagement within and outside the fire management community that have led to loss of jobs, legal prosecutions and loss of the public trust. These incidents have brought high levels of scrutiny to all our actions thus demanding we operate above the standards that are rooted in our principles of integrity and set forth by each of our agencies policies.

To reset the baseline we ask that each of you review the Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook and your agency's policies on business practices. We must all understand and comply with these requirements, ask questions if there is doubt on interpreting a policy or legal requirement and above all, if you are aware of a legal or ethical violation it is your obligation to report it promptly to your manager.

The Southwest Coordinating Group asks each of you to commit to the highest level of personal integrity. Every time you are performing your duties, you are ambassadors for the entire wildland fire management community.

Your actions reflect upon all of us.

Sincerely,

Leon W. Ben, Jr.
Chair, Southwest Coordinating Group