Alaska Interagency Wildland Fire Management Plan 2016

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SIGNATURES

As the Administrator of an agency represented on the Alaska Wildland Fire Coordinating Group, I concur with their recommendation to update the *Alaska Interagency Wildland Fire Management Plan, as amended 2010*. This updated plan affirms that firefighter and public safety is the single overwhelming priority in all fire management activities. It also reiterates the concepts presented in the 2010 plan and previous Alaskan interagency fire planning efforts for a consistent, cost-effective interagency approach to wildland fire management. It is the interagency reference for fire operations and provides the standards and terms to be used by all state, federal and Alaska native entities. This plan does not supersede individual agency policies and requirements. Where available, individual unit fire management plans should be used in conjunction with this plan and referenced for supplemental information applicable to that unit.

My signature authorizes the use and implementation of the *Alaska Interagency Wildland Fire Management Plan 2016* on lands under my agency's jurisdiction:

For the U.S. Department of the Interior:

for

Weldon Loudermilk
Bureau of Indian Affairs, Alaska Regional Director

5/20/16
Date

Bud Cribley
Bureau of Land Management, Alaska State Director

5/2/2016
Date

Herbert C. Frost, Ph.D.
National Park Service, Alaska Region Director

7 June 2016
Date

Mitch Ellis
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 7 (Alaska) Chief of Refuges

5/3/2016
Date

For the U.S. Department of Agriculture:

Beth Pendleton
U.S. Forest Service, Regional Forester, Region 10 (Alaska)

5/18/2016
Date

For the State of Alaska:

Marty Rutherford — Date: 5/18/16
Department of Natural Resources, Acting Commissioner

Sam R. Cotten — Date: 6/27/16
Department of Fish and Game, Commissioner

Larry Hartig — Date: May 31, 2016
Department of Environmental Conservation, Commissioner

For Alaska Natives:

INACTIVE

Mike Hoffman — Date
Association of Village Council Presidents, Interim President

Angela J. Vanderpool — Date: 5/18/16
Chugachmiut, Executive Director

for Victor Joseph — Date: 6/7/16
Tanana Chiefs Conference, President

For Structural Fire Departments and other Organizations:

INACTIVE

Denis LeBlanc — Date
Anchorage Fire Department, Fire Chief

The Plan and its appendices will be available on the Alaska Wildland Fire Coordinating Group's webpage (http://fire.ak.blm.gov/). The plan will be reviewed annually and updated as needed. Appendices will provide for dynamic updates.

1 INTRODUCTION, POLICY, AND LAND MANAGEMENT PLANNING

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

This Plan (AIWFMP 2016) updates and supersedes the Alaska Interagency Wildland Fire Management Plan, as amended 2010 (AIWFMP 2010). It provides operational detail for the Alaska Master Cooperative Wildland Fire Management and Stafford Act Response Agreement (Alaska Master Agreement) and the Alaska Statewide Annual Operating Plan (Alaska AOP) into which it has been incorporated by reference. Its purpose is to promote a cooperative, consistent, cost-effective, interagency approach to wildland fire management; and it is the interagency reference for wildland fire operational information. The 2016 update clarifies and updates interagency guidelines, policies, and operational direction for responses to wildland fires, and brings terminology up to date.

Firefighter and public safety is emphasized throughout this plan as the single, overriding priority in all fire management activities for all agencies.

This plan does not supersede individual agency policies and requirements. Some agencies and units rely solely on this plan for fire direction; however, it must be used in conjunction with jurisdictional unit fire management plans (FMPs) where they exist. Unit FMPs contain definitive objectives and constraints based on jurisdictional agency policy and land/resource management plans for individual units.

The Plan describes four Fire Management Options that define initial responses to a wildfire ranging from aggressive suppression to surveillance/point protection. These Options were originally developed during the 1980s in a set of interagency plans that spanned the State, and were later merged into the 1998 *Alaska Interagency Wildland Fire Management Plan (AIWFMP 1998)* and carried forward in the *AIWFMP 2010 (*See **Appendix G***).* Jurisdictional agencies have worked collaboratively to apply these Options at a landscape scale across agency boundaries, based on resource management goals and objectives, and the likely consequences of a fire on firefighter and public safety. The Options offer an opportunity for agencies to achieve both protection and natural resource management goals and objectives. The standard responses identified for each option address normal fire conditions and a high percentage of wildfire situations that occur in Alaska. In some cases non-standard responses are prudent and justifiable. Procedures for implementing non-standard responses are included; as are procedures for revising management option boundaries to reflect new management direction or changed conditions on the landscape.

In addition to providing initial response direction, the Plan briefly summarizes direction from the following sections of the Alaska Master Agreement and Alaska AOP:

- Fuels Treatments
- Post-fire Response (BAER/ES/BAR/FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program)
- Prevention
- Origin and Cause Determination
- Fire Investigation
- Air Quality and Smoke Management

1.2 INTERAGENCY ORGANIZATION AND COLLABORATIVE PLANNING

An essential element of Alaska wildland fire management is interagency cooperation and collaboration. Individual agencies are individually responsible to provide safe, cost-effective fire management programs in support of land and resource management plans through appropriate planning, staffing, training, equipment and management oversight; however the integrated, full spectrum wildland fire management program in Alaska is a joint effort among federal, state, and native organizations.

The Alaska interagency wildland fire organization offers the opportunity for federal, state and Alaska Native organizations to collaborate to provide for public safety, accomplish fire-related management objectives, and maintain healthy ecosystems while each partner agency adheres to agency-specific rules and regulations that support their agency's mission. Agency employees are trained, certified and available to participate in the wildland fire program locally, regionally, and nationally as the situation demands. Each agency's role and responsibilities contribute to the success of interagency wildland fire and fuels management. Individual agency fire management plans, the Alaska Master Agreement, and the Alaska AOP identify and define these roles.

1.2.1 POLICY AND AUTHORITIES

General authorities underlying *AIWFMP* fire management direction are cited in the *Alaska Master Cooperative Wildland Fire Management and Stafford Act Response Agreement.* Additional agency-specific direction to fire management programs is provided by Agency manuals and handbooks. Agency-specific resource management and planning authorities are cited in agency land use plans and fire management plans that tier from them.

An integrated fire management program must allow individual agencies to adhere to their agency-specific policies, regulations, laws, and missions. The following sub-chapters provide brief descriptions of directives that promote the interagency working relationship in Alaska and provide the basis for current wildland fire management practices.

1.2.1.1 FEDERAL FIRE MANAGEMENT POLICY

Federal wildland fire policy forms the basis for Department of the Interior (Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) and Department of Agriculture (U.S. Forest Service) fire management programs in Alaska. Additional guidance for the Lands Withdrawn for Military Use can be found in Memorandum of Agreements and Annual Operating Plans between Bureau of Land Management-Alaska Fire Service and the Department of Defense agencies. Federal policies and programs are implemented through Congressional appropriations and funding levels vary annually.

GUIDANCE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF FEDERAL WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT POLICY

The *Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy and Program Review Final Report (December 18, 1995)* was the first joint comprehensive fire policy for the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture. The Final Report contained guiding principles that directed federal agencies to achieve a balance between suppression to protect life, property and resources, and fire use to regulate fuels and maintain healthy ecosystems. It promoted the use of wildland fire to accomplish resource management objectives and

supported implementation of policies and recommendations in conjunction with states, tribes and local governments.

The *Review and Update of the 1995 Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy (January 2001)* contained specific actions to enhance wildland fire management and seeks to build on the strengths of the original policy. Firefighter and public safety is listed as the first priority and the 2001 policy directs all fire management plans and activities to reflect this commitment. The 2001 guiding principle and policy statements guide the philosophy, direction, and implementation of fire planning, activities and projects on federal lands. All the principles and policy statements are incorporated by reference into this plan and, where appropriate, the statements are included within this plan.

The first Interagency Strategy for the Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy was issued in 2003; it was replaced by the Guidance for Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy (February 13, 2009). The 2009 Guidance affirmed the soundness of the 2001 Review and Update and clarifies implementation direction to fully achieve the intent of the 2001 policy.

NATIONAL FIRE PLAN

The *National Fire Plan (NFP)* was developed in August 2000, following a landmark wildland fire season in the Lower 48, with the intent of actively responding to severe wildfires and their impacts to communities while ensuring sufficient firefighting capacity for the future. The NFP addresses five key points: firefighting, rehabilitation, hazardous fuels reduction, community assistance, and accountability.

HEALTHY FORESTS INITIATIVE & RESTORATION ACT

Fuels management was addressed further in the *Healthy Forests Initiative (August 2002)* which sought to reduce the risks severe wildfires pose to people, communities, and the environment. The Initiative was followed by the *Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003* which contains a variety of provisions to speed up hazardous-fuel reduction and forest-restoration projects on specific types of federal land that are at risk of wildfire and/or of insect and disease epidemics.

COHESIVE WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Recognizing that wildland fire management issues cross all lands and jurisdictions and involve a complex matrix of land and resource values, social concerns, and varying agency missions, goals, and policies, the *Federal Land Assistance, Management, and Enhancement Act of 2009* directed the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to submit a joint report to Congress containing a cohesive wildfire management strategy, consistent with Government Accountability Office recommendations. The report, *A National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy,* was published in 2011 and describes a collaborative approach for Federal, state, tribal, local and nongovernmental partners to develop a comprehensive wildland fire management strategy. This collaborative effort seeks solutions to wildland fire management issues on all lands, with active involvement of all levels of Government and non-governmental organizations, as well as the public.

1.2.1.2 STATE FIRE MANAGEMENT POLICY

Alaska statutes sections 41.15.010 - 41.15.240 mandate the Department of Natural Resources to manage the wildland fire program for the State of Alaska. Statute 41.15.010 addresses "protection from wildland fire and other destructive agents, commensurate with the values at risk, on land that is owned privately, by the state, or by a municipality."

Alaska State House Bill 395 signed on May 4, 2005 defines the official Alaska Fire Season as April 1 to August 31; this was incorporated into state law under statute 41.15.050.

The State of Alaska is not bound by federal policies on lands under state jurisdiction i.e. state, private and municipal lands.

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES (DOF)

The mission of the State of Alaska, Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry (DOF) is to develop, conserve, and enhance Alaska's forests to provide a sustainable supply of forest resources for Alaskans. The Division provides wildland fire protection services on over 150 million acres of land. The goal of the Fire and Aviation Program is to provide safe, cost-effective, and efficient fire protection services and related fire and aviation management activities on State, private, municipal lands, and lands negotiated through agreement, commensurate with the values at risk.

The Division of Forestry is bound by the Alaska statutes and administrative code sections that directly govern forest management activities on state forest land and by the Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act and Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Regulations. Information on the state fire management and forest health programs including burn permits, grants available, Community Wildfire Protection Plans and Firewise is available at http://forestry.alaska.gov/.

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME (ADF&G)

The mission of the State of Alaska, Department of Fish and Game, (ADF&G) is to protect, maintain, and improve the fish, game, and aquatic plant resources of the state, and manage their use and development in the best interest of the economy and the well-being of the people of the state, consistent with the sustained yield principle. The goal in the 2009 ADF&G fire management policy is to encourage wildland and prescribed fire management policies, practices and decisions that benefit the fish and wildlife resources of Alaska.

1.2.1.3 POLICY AFFECTING FIRE MANAGEMENT ON ALASKA NATIVE LANDS

Policy affecting fire management responsibilities relating to Alaska Native organizations and lands can be found in the following documents:

- 1891 Townsite Act
- 1906 Alaska Native Allotment Act (amended 1956)
- 1971 Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA)
- 1980 Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA)
- 1998 Alaska Native Veteran Allotment Act
- Department of the Interior Manual 620 Chapter 2.4

Fire Management responsibilities for three categories of Native lands in Alaska are described briefly below. More detailed information is available in *Attachment 4* of the *Alaska Statewide Annual Operating Plan*:

ANCSA NATIVE CORPORATIONS

Alaska Regional and Village Native Corporations (ANCSA Corporations) were established in 1971 by the *Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA)*. Individual ANCSA Corporations are considered the Jurisdictional Agency for surface lands that have been conveyed to them, and are annually given the opportunity to validate or change the AIWFMP Fire Management Options for those lands. BLM- Alaska Fire Service (AFS) provides fire management liaisons to the ANCSA Corporations to ensure they are informed about fires occurring on or threatening their lands, and are represented in fire management decisions.

TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS

There are 229 federally recognized tribes in Alaska. Most have tribal councils as their governing bodies. Tribal governments in Alaska are distinct from ANCSA Regional and Village Corporations and have the same governmental status as other federally recognized Indian tribes by virtue of their status as Indian tribes. They have a government-to-government relationship with the United States, and are entitled to the same protections, immunities, and privileges as other federally recognized tribes.

Even though *ANCSA* places its land entitlement with the ANCSA Corporations, most tribes in Alaska own some land. Tribally owned land is in fee simple status and in Alaska is not considered held in Trust for jurisdictional purposes, and at this time cannot be converted into Trust status. Although tribally owned lands are in fee simple status, and fire management responsibilities are not identified in *ANCSA*, *ANILCA*, or *620 DM 2.4*, tribal lands are currently treated similarly to ANCSA Corporation lands for fire management purposes.

FEDERALLY ADMINISTERED INDIAN TRUST LANDS (INCLUDING NATIVE ALLOTMENTS)

Federally administered Indian trust lands in Alaska include Native Allotments, the Annette Island Indian Reservation, and some Town Site lots created under the 1891 Townsite Act. The Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) has been tasked with the protection of Indian Trust lands in Alaska and serves as the Jurisdictional Agency for fire management purposes.

Some of Alaska's federally recognized tribes as well as several tribal consortiums have compacted with the BIA through their Tribal Governments to become a service provider for some allotment owners. These providers provide additional services for fire managers; however, notwithstanding the compacting process, the BIA never relinquishes its trust responsibility as the jurisdictional agency tasked with the protection of Trust Lands.

1.2.2 INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION & ORGANIZATION

Wildland fire management in Alaska has been accomplished on an interagency basis since the mid-1970s when the State of Alaska, Department of Natural Resources - Division of Forestry began to assume wildfire suppression responsibilities for state, municipal, and private lands.

Department of the Interior Manual 620 Chapter 2, the *Alaska Master Cooperative Wildland Fire Management and Stafford Act Response Agreement (Alaska Master Agreement)* and the *Alaska Statewide Annual Operating Plan (Alaska AOP)* work together to define an interagency organization that manages wildland fire across agency boundaries throughout the state. The organization separates protecting responsibilities from jurisdictional responsibilities in order to reduce duplication and provide efficiencies of scale. See **Appendix A** for a more thorough history of wildland fire management in Alaska.

1.2.2.1 JURISDICTIONAL AGENCIES

A jurisdictional agency has land and resource management responsibility for a specific geographical or functional area as provided by federal, state or local law. Jurisdictional agencies must develop and adhere to agency planning documents describing unit level wildland fire and fuels management programs. Alaska jurisdictional agencies are identified in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Alaska Jurisdictional Agencies based on Ownership/Land Status	
Jurisdictional Agency	**Ownership/Land Status**
Alaska Department of Natural Resources* **	• Alaska State managed lands including: o State Parks, Forests, Mental Health, and other state lands o State Critical Habitat Areas, Range Areas, Refuges and Sanctuaries (joint w/Alaska Department of Fish & Game) o Lands "Tentatively Approved" for conveyance to the State o DNR-issued permits and leases • City, Borough and Municipality lands • Private fee simple lands
Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) Village and Regional Corporations (AFS may act as the Agency Administrator Representative, when necessary)	• Patented or Interim Conveyed ANCSA Regional or Village Corporation lands
Bureau of Indian Affairs** **	• BIA managed lands including: o Restricted Native Allotments (patented or certificated) o Annette Island Indian Reservation o Other federally-administered Indian trust lands
Bureau of Land Management	• BLM managed lands including: o National system of public lands as defined in Federal Land Policy and Management Act o National Conservation Areas o National Recreation Areas o National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska o BLM-issued permits and leases o Native Allotment Applications (not yet patented or certificated) o ANCSA Regional or Village Corporation selected lands outside of National Parks, Wildlife Refuges, and Forests that have not yet been conveyed o State selected lands outside of National Parks, Wildlife Refuges, and Forests that have not yet been conveyed
National Park Service	• NPS managed lands including: o National Parks and Preserves o National Monuments in Mainland AK o NPS-issued permits and leases o ANCSA Regional or Village Corporation selected lands within National Parks and Monuments that have not yet been conveyed o State selected lands within National Parks and Monuments that have not yet been conveyed
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	• FWS managed lands including: o National Wildlife Refuges o FWS-issued permits and leases o ANCSA Regional or Village Corporation selected lands within National Wildlife Refuges that have not yet been conveyed o State selected lands within National Wildlife Refuges that have not yet been conveyed

Table 1: Alaska Jurisdictional Agencies based on Ownership/Land Status (Continued)	
Jurisdictional Agency	**Ownership/Land Status**
U.S. Forest Service	• USFS managed lands including: o National Forests o National Monuments in Southeast AK o USFS-issued permits and leases o ANCSA Regional or Village Corporation selected lands within National Forests that have not yet been conveyed o State selected lands within National Forests that have not yet been conveyed
Department of Defense Agencies including: • **U.S. Army*** • **Missile Defense Agency** • **U.S. Air Force**** • **U.S. Navy**	Each of these agencies is responsible for management of wildland fire on their own lands except where specific agreements exist.
Other Federal Agencies including (but not limited to): • **U.S. Postal Service** • **U.S. Coast Guard** • **Federal Aviation Administration** • **General Services Administration** • **U.S. Public Health Service** • **National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service** • **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**	Each of these agencies is responsible for management of wildland fire on their own lands except where specific agreements exist. As of March 2016 there are no reimbursable arrangements in place beyond initial attack for lands in these jurisdictions.

* U.S. Army Alaska, Fort Wainwright Garrison (FWA) manages some lands in conjunction with the Bureau of Land Management. The AFS Military FMO works with FWA and BLM to determine Jurisdictional Agency for fires on these lands. As of March 2016 there are no reimbursable arrangements in place for US Army lands (including Corps of Engineers) outside of the Fort Wainwright Cantonment or lands co-managed with BLM.

** A draft agreement between the USFS and Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER) allows for billing of the Air Force through the USFS. As of March 2016 there are no reimbursable arrangements in place for USAF lands outside of JBER.

***Under State statute, the State of Alaska, Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry maintains jurisdictional authority over private lands (excepting restricted Native Allotments, and Alaska Native Corporation lands conveyed under ANCSA). Private landowners may negotiate response management option changes with the State.

****In some cases BIA authority may be managed by a service contract provider. Jurisdictional authority for lands sold out of trust is based on the purchaser's status.

Federal and state permits, leases, sales contracts and other documents that allow for private use of federal and state lands may contain information regarding wildfire protection levels and management option designation in the document or document's stipulations. Those designations are applicable to the lands and personal property located on those lands; the issuing jurisdictional agency is responsible for selecting the response management option.

1.2.2.2 PROTECTING AGENCIES

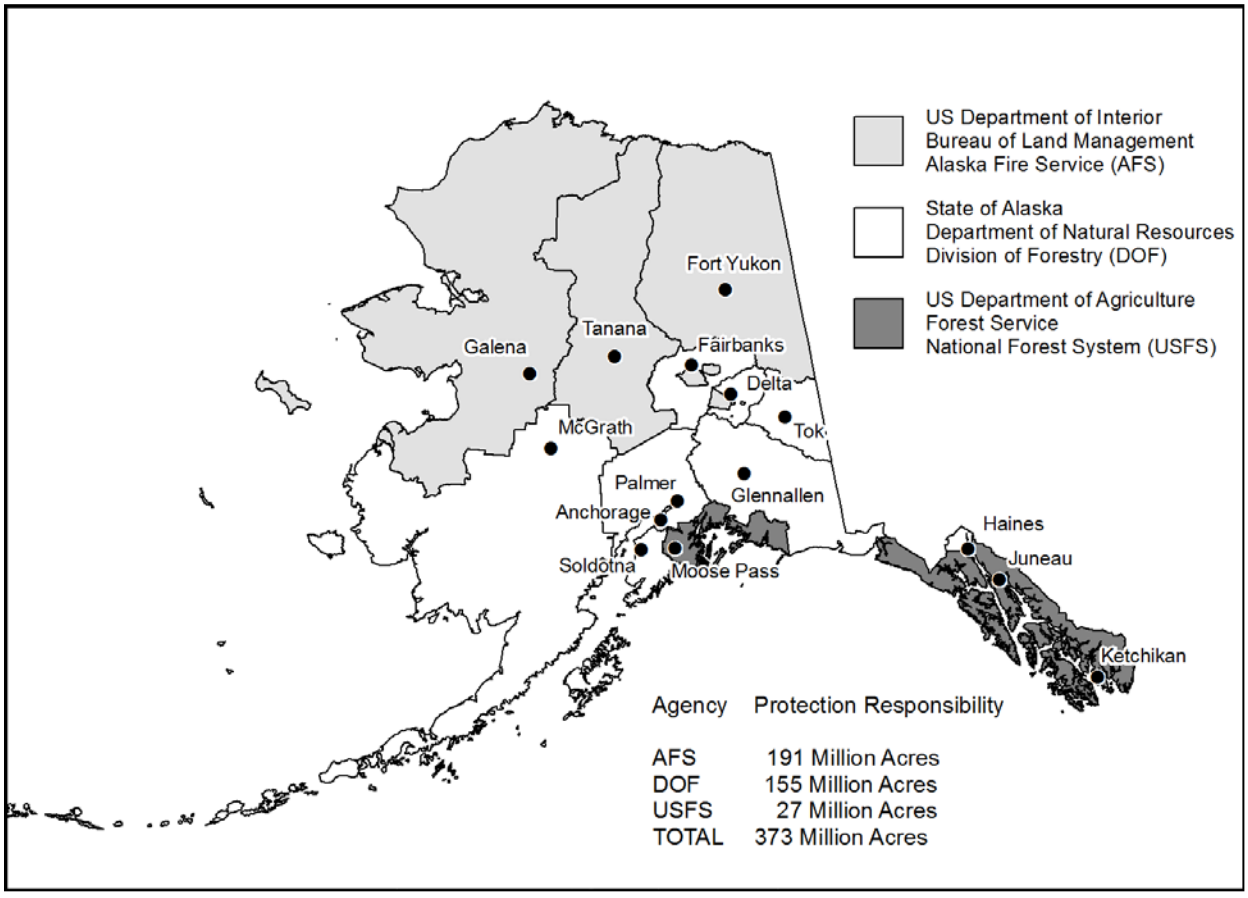
Protecting agencies provide wildfire suppression services to jurisdictional agencies within their area of operation. Protecting agencies are responsible for implementing courses of action that support strategic direction provided by jurisdictional agencies through land/resource management plans, unit FMPs, and decision documents for incidents that have been developed through a decision support process. The protecting agency may provide operational expertise and assist, as requested, in the development of jurisdictional strategic objectives and management requirements.

To promote cost-effective suppression services and minimize unnecessary duplication of suppression systems, three protecting agencies have been delegated suppression responsibility for all lands in Alaska based on geographic location instead of jurisdictional authority:

- Alaska Department of Natural Resources – Division of Forestry
- Bureau of Land Management – Alaska Fire Service
- U.S. Forest Service

Each protecting agency responds to all wildfires within their area of responsibility regardless of jurisdictional agency. Agreements and annual operating plans delineate services and billing procedures in accordance with state and federal laws.

Figure 1: Alaska Protecting Agency Areas of Responsibility



1.2.2.3 INTERAGENCY GROUPS

ALASKA WILDLAND FIRE COORDINATING GROUP (AWFCG)

AWFCG was organized based on direction in the *Interior Department Manual Part 620, Wildland Fire Management Chapter 2*. Its mission is to provide a forum that fosters cooperation, coordination, collaboration, and communication for wildland fire management and related activities within Alaska. It serves as the geographic area clearinghouse and forum for the identification of interagency fire management issues and their solutions.

The AWFCG is the leadership focus for planning and implementing interagency fire management statewide and has established committees to promote specific programs and interagency partnerships. The AWFCG is responsible for the oversight of this interagency wildland fire management plan and determines when updates, amendments or revisions are needed.

Agencies with voting membership in the AWFCG include the Anchorage Fire Department, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U. S. Forest Service, Tanana Chiefs Conference, Chugachmiut, Association of Village Council Presidents, the Alaska Department of Natural Resources of and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation is a non-voting member. Additional organizations seeking membership may petition the AWFCG.

The *AWFCG Memorandum of Understanding, Standard Operating Plan* and other AFWCG documents are posted at http://fire.ak.blm.gov/administration/awfcg.php

ALASKA MULTI-AGENCY COORDINATING GROUP (AMAC)

The Alaska Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (AMAC) is activated on a situational basis when fire activity or resource mobilization requires interaction between agencies to ensure that decisions are responsive to the priority interests of the geographic area as a whole. AMAC provides a forum to discuss strategic actions to be taken to ensure that an adequate number of resources are available to meet the anticipated needs. AMAC considers agency specific fire management priorities, addresses politically and publicly sensitive issues that are common to all in an interagency format, and provides mutual support to the National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (NMAC). AMAC functions include:

- Establish priorities for allocation of resources.
- State and federal disaster response or coordination.
- Political interfaces.
- Information flow to the public, the media and involved agencies.
- Strategic actions in anticipation 1 of future needs.
- Identification and resolution of issues common to all parties.
- Protection objectives revisions / Non-standard responses.
- Prescribed Fire Activity authorizations at Planning Levels 4 and 5.
- Burning restrictions suggestions.
- Coordination with NMAC.

The *AMAC Operations Handbook* is posted at http://fire.ak.blm.gov/administration/mac.php.

1.3 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

The IFMPs 1982-1988 and the AIWFMP 98 (See **Appendix G**) were developed with a broad goals and objectives that support the various agencies' missions in Alaska. An environmental assessment (EA) which met federal NEPA requirements was prepared for the Alaska IFMP, Tanana/Minchumina Planning Area 1982. The 1984 Alaska Interagency Fire Planning Guidelines (page 7 Step No. 12) references the authorization of that EA to serve as the programmatic EA for the original IFMPs completed during the1980s fire planning efforts. No further NEPA documentation was completed for the 1998, 2010, or the 2016 AIWFMP update.

Some agencies and administrative units rely solely on the interagency plan for fire management direction. However, the following agencies have analyzed fire management in Land/Resource management plans and/or fire management plans in order to comply with NEPA requirements, *Sections 304 and 810* of *ANILCA*, the *2001 Review and Update of the 1995 Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy,* and agency specific direction:

- The National Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service implemented agency-related fire management direction by completing administrative unit Fire Management Plans (FMP).
- The Bureau of Land Management completed a FMP for all Bureau of Land Management managed lands within Alaska.
- Tanana Chiefs Conference has prepared a plan for allotments within their service area.
- The U.S. Army-Alaska has included Forestry and Wildland Fire Management as an annex to their Integrated Natural Resource Management Plans that meets Army regulations and serves as their Fire Management Plan.

These plans reference agency-specific policies, authorities and missions; and facilitate the achievement of the land use and resource goals and objectives identified in unit land use plans that they tier from. These agency L/RMPs and FMPs are the foundation for the implementation of the interagency plan for their units.

2 FIRE MANAGEMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

This plan does not supersede individual agency policies and requirements. Some agencies and units rely solely on this plan for fire direction; however, it must be used in conjunction with jurisdictional unit fire management plans (FMPs) where they exist. Unit FMPs contain definitive objectives and constraints based on jurisdictional agency policy and land/resource management plans for individual units.

While each jurisdictional agency has agency-specific guidelines for their fire management program, the following mutually developed goals, objectives and management considerations cross jurisdictional boundaries and are applicable throughout Alaska.

2.1 GOALS

The protection of human life is the first priority in every fire management activity. Setting priorities among protecting communities and community infrastructure, other property and improvements, and natural and cultural resources is done based on human health and safety, the values to be protected, and the costs of protection. Once people have been committed to an incident, these human resources become the highest value to be protected.

The need to provide protection levels to protect human life and health, qualifying property, and valued natural and cultural resources while also allowing for jurisdictional agencies to complete mission-related activities and accomplish fire-related land-use and resource management in a cost-effective manner has driven the range of available responses.

The following goals are central to the statewide interagency fire planning effort represented by this Plan:

- Recognize firefighter and public safety as a core value that governs every decision and activity.
- Promote cooperation, collaboration and partnerships for fire management between federal, state, and local governments, Alaska Native groups and other organizations.
- Consider risk, benefits, and resource objectives within the scope of existing legal mandates, policies and regulations.
- Manage wildland fire using ecologically, operationally and fiscally sound principles.
    - Integrate fire management, mission objectives, land use, and natural resource goals.
    - Minimize adverse environmental impacts of fire suppression activities.
    - Balance the cost of suppression actions against the value of the resource warranting protection and consider firefighter and public safety, benefits, and resource objectives.
- Maintain a flexibility that allows agencies to adhere to their policies and respond to changes in objectives, fire conditions, land use patterns, resource information and technologies.

2.2 STATEWIDE PLANNING OBJECTIVES

The following statewide fire management objectives were developed to meet and support jurisdictional agency goals and to provide implementation guidance for fire operations:

- Emphasize firefighter and public safety as the single, overriding priority in all fire management actions.
- Use a full range of fire management activities to achieve ecosystem sustainability including its interrelated ecological, economic, and social components.
    - Prioritize areas for protection actions and allocation of available firefighting resources without compromising firefighter and public safety.
    - When and where appropriate, allow fires to burn naturally in order to protect, maintain, and enhance natural and cultural resources and maintain natural fire regimes.
- Realize short and long-term cost efficiencies by weighing costs and associated environmental impacts of suppression actions against the values to be protected.
- Manage vegetation through various fuels treatment techniques to reduce and mitigate risks of damage from wildland fire.
- Annually review fire management options and values inventories in order to maintain currency, reflect revised priorities and adapt to changing legal mandates, policies, and conditions.
- Adhere to state and federal laws and regulations.

2.3 STATEWIDE MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

This plan provides the framework for planning a response to a wildfire by selecting fire management options based on land use patterns, values to be protected, and resource objectives. General incident management considerations include:

- Lightning-caused wildfires are an important component of the boreal forest and arctic tundra ecosystems, and the complete exclusion of these fires is neither ecologically sound nor economically feasible.
- In the southeastern Alaska coastal forest, lightning caused wildfire is not ecologically significant. The majority of the fires are human-caused.
- The population of Alaska is increasing; subdivisions and residential areas are expanding into previously undeveloped areas.
- The natural role of fire in the environment must be tempered by the need to protect human life and health, qualifying property, and valued natural and cultural resources.
- Well-trained, well-equipped, and adequately funded fire-related resources are essential to maintain public safety and public confidence in the fire management programs and to provide cost effective suppression.
- During the fire season, the availability of suppression resources is limited and prioritization is necessary.

- Fire management option areas are based upon the protection of human life and qualifying properties, the value of the resources to be protected, and ecosystem health and sustainability, and are not based on administrative boundaries.
- The pre-fire season assignment of management options establishes priorities for allocation of fire-related resources and substantially improves the effectiveness of wildland fire management.
- Strategies and tactics will be based on firefighter safety, the management option designation, the availability of firefighting resources, site condition and location, surrounding vegetation, accessibility and the overall statewide situation.
- Non-standard responses may be appropriate in some situations. Incident specific or geographic area conditions may indicate either a higher or lower level of initial response.
- Documentation of wildland fire decisions will be in accordance with applicable federal or state wildland fire management policies and procedures.
- Fuels (vegetation) management activities are necessary and important resource management tools to reduce and mitigate risks from wildfire and accomplish land and resource management objectives. Treatments by the use of wildland fire, prescribed fire, manual or mechanical means are viable.
- Pre-suppression efforts, such as fuel break construction and hazard fuel reduction will reduce the potential threat to human life and private property and help meet the objective to reduce fire suppression expenditures.
- Agencies will work together and with their partners and other affected groups and individuals to prevent unauthorized ignition of wildfires.
- Agencies will work both individually and jointly to enhance knowledge and understanding of wildland fire management policies and practices through internal and external communication and education programs.
- All fire management activities should be based on best available science and information. Alaska-specific fire-related research is encouraged.
- Under climate change scenarios, fire seasons are anticipated to change and the range of variability for Alaskan ecosystems may change (i.e. shrubs growing further north in areas that previously were tundra).
- Wildland fire management programs, activities, and processes should be compatible within and between jurisdictional and protecting agencies.
- Land ownership and land management objectives as well as knowledge of natural and cultural resources will continue to change over time. Reviews, modifications, and updates of the fire management options will accordingly be made by the affected agencies.
- The annual review of fire management options by each jurisdictional agency is necessary to ensure the appropriate option has been selected within the scope of their policies and regulations and in support of their land use and resource management plans.

3 WILDLAND FIRE OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE

3.1 PREPAREDNESS

Preparedness responsibilities for jurisdictional and protecting agencies are described in the Alaska Statewide Annual Operating Plan, the Alaska Interagency Mobilization Guide, and in agency-specific plans.

3.2 MANAGEMENT OF WILDFIRES

Fire occurrence is a vital component of many ecosystems, particularly those associated with the boreal forest; and is important to the biodiversity of the resources and the long-term ecological health of the land. Jurisdictional agencies in Alaska have acknowledged and supported a natural fire regime in their planning efforts. However, the need to protect certain resources and the density and distribution of populated areas warrants fire management that also regulates the extent of fire on the landscape.

3.2.1 STATEWIDE MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS

Jurisdictional agencies have identified the following general constraints and guidelines; additional constraints applicable to specific incidents are at the discretion of the jurisdictional agency and are documented in the jurisdictional agency's fire management plans, the incident's decision record and/or the Delegation of Authority.

- Weigh the cost and environmental impacts of suppression actions against the value of resources warranting protection. Consider risk to firefighters and the public in all fire management decisions.
- To the extent possible, minimum impact suppression tactics should be used. Firelines will be constructed in a manner that minimizes erosion and will follow natural contours wherever possible. Indirect attack will be used to the extent practical. A suppression repair plan for wildfire suppression activity damage, as approved by the jurisdictional agency(s), must be completed before the final demobilization occurs.
- Jurisdictional agencies will be made aware of all support areas such as camps, staging areas, and helispots located on their lands.
- If a game animal is killed in defense of life or property (DLP) on an incident, an ADF&G DLP report will be filed and jurisdictional agencies will be notified.
- Base camps, spike camps, helispots and other support areas should be located in natural clearings if possible. The construction of helispots should be minimized. Any opening created for support areas will be cut with an irregular perimeter. Such areas will be kept clean so as not to attract animals and will be cleaned up before departure of the last suppression personnel.
- Support areas on private lands or Native Allotments require a land-use agreement. No resources (e.g. firewood) will be removed from private lands or Native Allotments without an approved agreement. Agreements involving Native Allotments must be prepared by the BIA or the local BIA service provider.
- The use of tracked or off-road vehicles requires approval by the jurisdictional agency(s) prior to use.

- If heavy equipment is used, comply with the non-anadromous water crossing stipulations in the ADF&G statewide Fish Habitat Permit FH14-SW-0001 Amendment No. 1.
- Comply with the water withdrawal and reporting stipulations in the ADF&G statewide Fish Habitat Permit FH14-SW-0002 Amendment No. 1, including ADF&G notification within 24 hours of initial use of portable pumps, scooper aircraft, or aerial buckets.
- Take measures to prevent the introduction and spread of terrestrial and aquatic invasive plant species during fire operations. Waterbodies known to harbor invasive species will not be used as dip sites. Communicate concerns, questions, and needs regarding invasive species to jurisdictional resource advisors in a timely manner.
- Application of aerial fire retardant near lakes, wetlands, streams, rivers, and sources of human water consumption or areas adjacent to water sources should be avoided. A minimum of 300 feet is identified in the Red Book. Individual jurisdictional agencies may have more restrictive retardant use guidelines.
- Suppression activities including flight patterns on or near cultural sites or those designated as "Avoid" must be coordinated with the jurisdictional agency.
- Jurisdictional agencies should be consulted concerning any operational restrictions in designated wilderness areas.
- Wildland firefighters are neither equipped nor trained to fight structure fires. Furthermore, agency policies do not allow it. Structural fire suppression within defined service areas is the responsibility of volunteer, city or borough fire departments; there are areas outside defined service areas where there are currently no structural fire-fighting forces. Wildland firefighting efforts will be limited to areas where the fire has spread onto agency protected lands.
- Wildland firefighters will not take direct suppression action on vehicle or dump fires or in areas where hazmat or unexploded ordnance has been identified. Should firefighters encounter hazmat, unexploded ordnance, burning vehicles, or dump fires during the performance of their normal wildland fire suppression duties, firefighting efforts will be limited to areas where the fire has spread onto agency protected lands.

3.2.2 WILDFIRE MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

Alaska fire management agencies recognize the differences in missions among local, state, tribal and Federal agencies and have collaborated to develop Wildfire Management options that consider a full spectrum of responses to wildfire: from suppression actions designed to contain and control fire growth, to periodic surveillance of fires that are allowed to spread naturally across the landscape.

Options are selected by jurisdictional agencies based upon legal mandates, policies, regulations, resource management objectives, and local conditions, including but not limited to population density, fire occurrence, environmental factors, and identified values. Management options are assigned at a landscape scale and apply across jurisdictional boundaries. Ideally, boundaries are readily identifiable from both the air and ground, are based on fuel types, access, topographic features, natural barriers and fire regimes, and can be feasibly defended. Management option designations are intended to be flexible to respond to changes in objectives, fire conditions, land-use patterns, resource information, and technologies. Jurisdictional agencies are responsible for updating and reviewing management option

and site designations annually. Management options may only be changed with the approval of all affected jurisdictional agencies.

Four wildfire management options (**Critical, Full, Modified, Limited)** are employed statewide by federal and state agencies, and Alaska Native groups in order to:

- Prioritize areas for protection actions and the allocation of available firefighting resources to achieve protection objectives
- Optimize the ability to achieve land use and resource management objectives and integrate fire management, mission objectives, land use, and natural resource goals
- Reinforce the premise that the cost of suppression efforts should be commensurate with the values identified for protection.

Initial response to a wildfire will be based on various factors including:

- Firefighter safety (considerations include but are not limited to site condition, location, surrounding vegetation, and presence of hazardous materials)
- Fire Management Option at point of origin
- Probability of Success
- Availability and prioritization of firefighting resources
- Analysis of the overall statewide situation.

For all fire management options, management decisions beyond initial response should be assessed situationally by the protecting agency and the affected jurisdictional agencies. If the pre-designated response is no longer appropriate or has a low probability of success, a decision support process including situational assessment and risk analysis will be used to develop incident-specific objectives, requirements, and courses of action; and document the rationale behind them.

Decision support documentation requirements vary by agency (see *Alaska Annual Operating Plan, Attachment 5*); however, non-standard initial responses, escaped prescribed fires that are converted to wildfires, and fires likely to require complex and/or expensive suppression efforts should be well documented per the requirements of affected agencies.

The following sub-chapters predesignate detection and initial resource allocation priorities, default initial actions, and initial action priorities for wildfire ignitions in each management option. **There is no guarantee of protection from wildfire in any management option.** Ultimately it is the responsibility of permittees, leasees, allotees, private landowners, and jurisdictional agencies to mitigate and minimize risk to their property before it becomes threatened by a wildfire.

3.2.2.1 CRITICAL MANAGEMENT OPTION

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS –CRITICAL OPTION

Lands in wildland urban interface and other densely populated areas where there is an immediate threat to human life, primary residences, inhabited property, community-dependent infrastructure, and structural resources designated as National Historic Landmarks should be considered for the Critical Management option. This classification is applicable to an entire village or town as well as a single inhabited structure. (See **Site Protection Designations 3.3**)

Excluding fire from Critical Management option areas may necessitate vegetation (fuels) management projects to reduce and mitigate the risks of damage from a wildfire.

OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES – CRITICAL OPTION

Table 2: Operational Guidelines – Critical Option	
Initial Resource Allocation Priority	Wildfires occurring in the Critical Management option or that threaten Critical Sites are assigned the highest priority for suppression actions and assignment of available firefighting resources.
Detection	Critical Management option areas and sites are the highest priority for detection coverage when lightning activity or human use indicate a high potential for ignition, or at the request of a jurisdictional agency.
Initial Notification Requirements	Immediately contact jurisdictional agencies whose lands may be impacted by the fire during the first two burning periods. Initial action should not be delayed if contacts cannot be made.
Default Initial Action (Standard Response)	Mobilize resources to protect the area and/or sites and suppress the fire without compromising public or firefighter safety.
Initial Action Priorities	1. Protect human life.
	2. Protect qualifying sites and natural resources from damage by wildfire.
	3. Contain fires at the smallest acreage reasonably possible in order to limit short and long-term threats to values.
Extended Action	Actions beyond initial response should be assessed situationally by the protecting agency and the affected jurisdictional agencies. If the pre-designated response is no longer appropriate or has a low probability of success, a decision support process including situational assessment and risk analysis will be used to develop incident-specific objectives, requirements, and courses of action; and document the rationale behind them. Contact additional jurisdictional agencies if their lands become threatened.
Resource Benefit Objectives	Only appropriate in extraordinary circumstances at the explicit documented direction of an affected jurisdictional agency. The course of action will be documented with a decision analysis and support process.

3.2.2.2 FULL FIRE MANAGEMENT OPTION

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS - FULL OPTION

The Full Management option provides for protection of moderately populated areas, cultural and paleontological sites, developed recreational facilities, physical developments, administrative sites and cabins, structures, high-value natural resources, and other high-value areas. Structures on or eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places and non-structural sites on the National Register are placed within this category. Either broad areas or specific sites qualify to be designated as Full. (See **Site Protection Designations 3.3**)

The long range effects on fire-dependent ecosystems are a land management consideration when designating Full at the landscape scale. The attempt to exclude fire may necessitate implementing vegetation (fuels) management programs.

OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES - FULL OPTION

Table 3: Operational Guidelines - Full Option	
Initial Resource Allocation Priority	Wildfires occurring in the Full Management option are assigned a high priority for suppression actions and assignment of available firefighting resources, but are below wildfires within or threatening a Critical Management option area or site.
Detection	Full Management option areas and sites are the next priority after Critical for detection coverage when lightning activity or human use indicate a high potential for ignition, or at the request of a jurisdictional agency.
Initial Notification Requirements	Immediately contact jurisdictional agencies whose lands may be impacted by the fire during the first two burning periods. Initial action should not be delayed if contacts cannot be made.
Default Initial Action (Standard Response)	Mobilize resources to protect the area and/or sites and suppress the fire without compromising public or firefighter safety.
Initial Action Priorities	1. Protect human life.
	2. Protect qualifying sites and natural resources from damage by wildfire.
	3. Contain fires at the smallest acreage reasonably possible in order to limit short and long-term threats to values.
Extended Action	Actions beyond initial response should be assessed situationally by the protecting agency and the affected jurisdictional agencies. If the pre-designated response is no longer appropriate or has a low probability of success, a decision support process including situational assessment and risk analysis will be used to develop incident-specific objectives, requirements, and courses of action; and document the rationale behind them. Contact additional jurisdictional agencies if their lands become threatened.
Resource Benefit Objectives	Only appropriate on rare occasions, based on site-specific circumstances (e.g. the initial size-up and response is delayed beyond 24 hours, or a fire is primarily burning into Limited). The course of action will be documented with a decision analysis and support process.

3.2.2.3 MODIFIED FIRE MANAGEMENT OPTION

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS - MODIFIED OPTION

The Modified Management option provides a management level between Full and Limited. It allows for a response to wildfire that tailors the initial action to the time of year that the fire starts. It provides for an initial response designed to protect identified sites early in the season when the probability is high that they will eventually be affected; but later in the year allows fire-related land-use and resource objectives to be accomplished in a cost-effective manner while still providing appropriate levels of site protection. The Option is based on the assumption that in a normal fire year early season ignitions are more likely to spread to the point that they threaten values than late season ignitions. Prior to a pre-identified "Conversion Date" the initial response to a fire is similar to the Full Management option, recognizing that lands placed in this category will usually be suited to indirect attack. After the conversion date, when it is less likely that the fire will spread and threaten values, the initial response is similar to the Limited Management option in order to balance acres burned with suppression costs and accomplish land and resource management objectives when conditions are favorable. As with the Limited Fire Management option, sites that warrant higher levels of protection may occur within Modified areas.

The initial response to wildfire ignitions within the pre-conversion Modified Management option will be similar to those in the Full Management option. Early suppression action will be taken in order to avoid threats to values later in the season that may require potentially costly and difficult protection actions. Post-conversion Modified Management option ignitions will be allowed to burn within predetermined areas. Periodic surveillance will be conducted to evaluate the need for action to protect human life or site-specific values. By allowing fire to spread naturally, a natural mosaic of fire footprint and intensity can be maintained. This option reduces both long-term risks and costs while sustaining a natural range of variation in plant composition and structure. Protecting agencies will adhere to jurisdictional policy and guidelines regarding decisions to protect individual sites. The highest priority must always be placed on firefighter and public safety. The costs and environmental impacts of suppression actions should be weighed against the potential benefits of taking action. Every effort should be made to minimize the adverse effects of fire suppression efforts and realize short and long term cost efficiencies.

CONVERSION DATES

When establishing Modified Management option areas, jurisdictional agencies assign one of the several Conversion Dates: July 10, August 10, August 30, or September 30. AWFCG reviews assigned conversion dates each season as they are approached and determines if conversion is appropriate based on local and statewide fire and weather conditions. The decision to convert may be made statewide, by a geographically defined area, or by administrative unit.

A jurisdictional agency may request, through their AWFCG representative, that the AWFCG consider an earlier date during unusually wet fire seasons; or request postponement of the conversion date during unusually dry fire seasons. Requests must include a rationale and supporting data for the change as well as the opinions of all affected jurisdictional agencies. Protecting agencies may facilitate this process. The rationale and supporting data will be included with the AWFCG decision record. If the conversion date is postponed, the AWFCG will re-evaluate at intervals no longer than 10-days until conversion takes place.

Operational Guidelines - Modified Option (Pre-conversion)

Table 4: Operational Guidelines - Modified Option (Pre-conversion)	
Initial Resource Allocation Priority	Before the conversion date, fires occurring within Modified will receive priority for allocation of initial action forces after the protection of Critical and Full areas.
Detection	Detection coverage will be commensurate with fire conditions and availability of detection resources. Jurisdictional agencies may negotiate additional detection flights with protecting agencies.
Initial Notification Requirements	Immediately contact jurisdictional agencies whose lands may be impacted by the fire during the first two burning periods. Initial action should not be delayed if contacts cannot be made.
Default Initial Action (Standard Response)	Mobilize resources to protect the area and/or sites and suppress the fire without compromising public or firefighter safety.
Initial Action Priorities	1. Protect human life.
	2. Protect qualifying sites and natural resources from damage by wildfire.
	3. Contain fires in order to limit short and long-term threats to values.
Extended Action	Actions beyond initial response should be assessed situationally by the protecting agency and the affected jurisdictional agencies. If the pre-designated response is no longer appropriate or has a low probability of success, a decision support process including situational assessment and risk analysis will be used to develop incident-specific objectives, requirements, and courses of action; and document the rationale behind them. Contact additional jurisdictional agencies if their lands become threatened.
Resource Benefit Objectives	May be appropriate, based on site-specific circumstances and time of season (e.g. pre-conversion Modified ignition that as of the conversion date has little potential to threaten values). The course of action will be documented with a decision analysis and support process.

Operational Guidelines - Modified Option (Post-Conversion)

Table 5: Operational Guidelines - Modified Option (Post-conversion)	
Initial Resource Allocation Priority	After the conversion date, the priority is low for the allocation of initial action forces and equal to Limited. **Exception:** When on-the-ground actions are warranted, the resource allocation priority is equivalent to the management option designation of the site being protected. For example, if an action on a fire within post-conversion Modified is an attempt to keep the fire from burning on to a Full site, the resource allocation priority should be equal to that given to Full.
Detection	Detection coverage will be commensurate with fire conditions and availability of detection resources. Jurisdictional agencies may negotiate additional detection flights with protecting agencies.
Initial Notification Requirements	Immediately contact jurisdictional agencies whose lands may be impacted by the fire during the first two burning periods.
Default Initial Action (Standard Response)	Conduct surveillance, assessment, and site protection as warranted.
Initial Action Priorities	1. Protect human life.
	2. Protect qualifying sites and natural resources from damage by wildfire.
	3. Allow fires to burn naturally to the extent possible in order to protect, maintain, and enhance natural and cultural resources and maintain natural fire regimes.
Extended Action	Periodic surveillance will continue for the duration of the fire to evaluate fire behavior and threats. Surveillance frequency will be determined by the protecting agency in coordination with the affected jurisdictional agencies. If the pre-designated surveillance response is no longer appropriate, a decision support process including situational assessment and risk analysis will be used to develop incident-specific objectives, requirements, and courses of action; and document the rationale behind them. Contact additional jurisdictional agencies if their lands become threatened.
Resource Benefit Objectives	It is routinely appropriate to manage all or part of post-conversion Modified fires for resource benefit. A documented decision analysis and support process may be needed based on complexity or initiated at the discretion of an affected jurisdictional agency.

3.2.2.4 LIMITED FIRE MANAGEMENT OPTION

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS - LIMITED OPTION

The Limited Management option is designed for broad, landscape-scale areas where the low density and wide distribution of values to be protected best allows for fire to function in its natural ecological role. Wildland fire can be managed to protect, maintain, and enhance natural and cultural resources and, as nearly as possible, enable fire to function in its ecological role and maintain the natural fire regime. In these areas, fire is routinely able to function in its natural roles as an essential ecological process. Limited may also be assigned to areas where the cost of suppression may exceed the value of the resources to be protected, where the environmental impacts of fire suppression activities may have more negative impacts on the resources than the effects of the fire, and where safety considerations preclude the commitment of firefighters to an area (e.g. military impact zones).

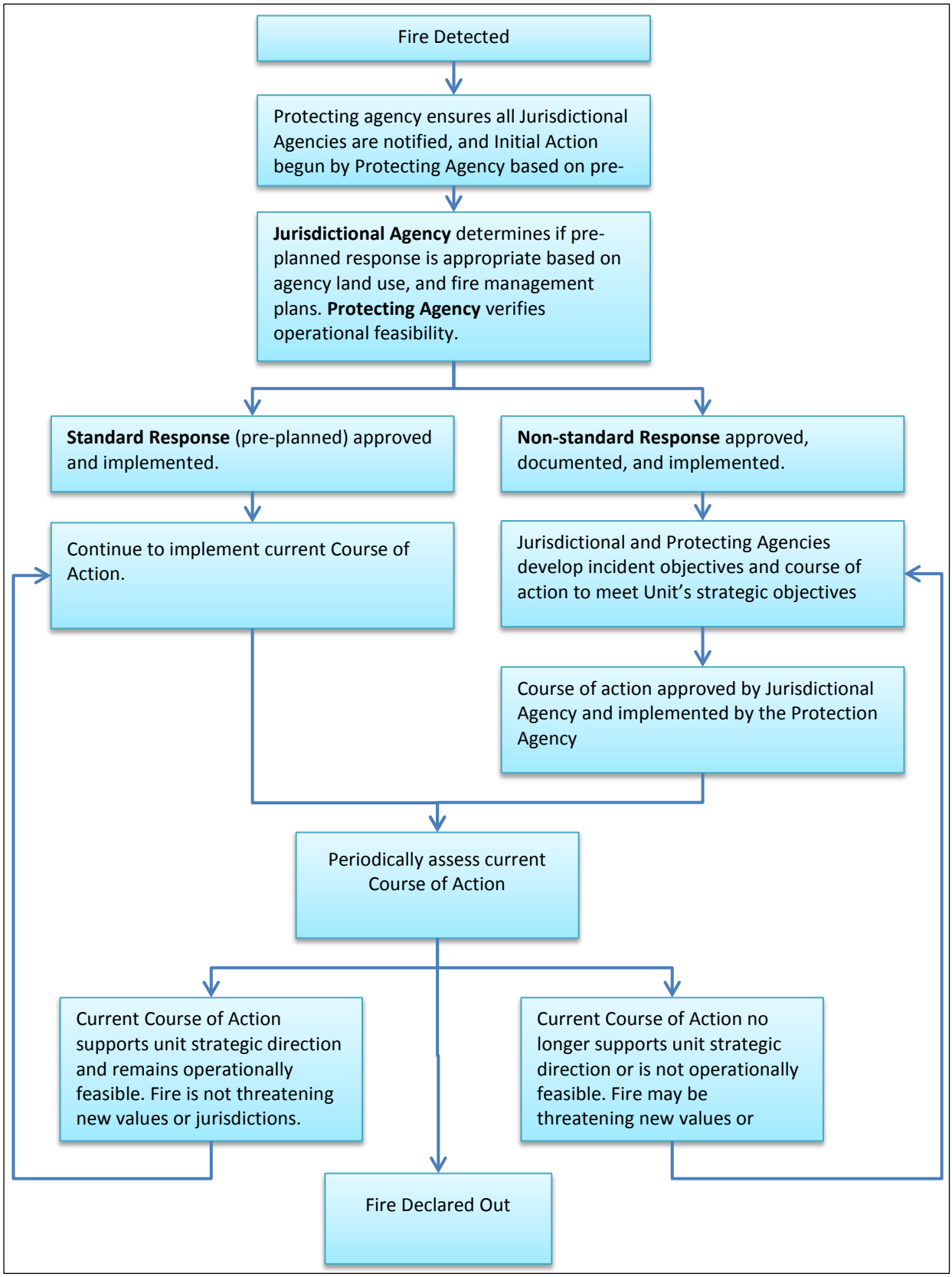
Wildfires occurring within the Limited Management option will be allowed to burn within predetermined areas. Periodic surveillance will be conducted to evaluate the need for action to protect human life or site-specific values. By allowing fire to spread naturally, a natural mosaic of fire footprint and intensity can be maintained. This option reduces both long-term risks and costs while sustaining a natural range of variation in plant composition and structure. Protecting agencies will adhere to jurisdictional policy and guidelines regarding decisions to protect individual sites. The highest priority must always be placed on firefighter and public safety. The costs and environmental impacts of suppression actions should be weighed against the potential benefits of taking action. Every effort should be made to minimize the adverse effects of fire suppression efforts and realize short and long term cost efficiencies.

Sites that have been assigned higher levels of protection may exist within the boundaries of Limited Response areas, and actions to protect these sites may be taken when warranted without compromising the intent of this management option. Site-protection actions that do not seek to contain the fire are considered a standard response to a Limited fire.

OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES - LIMITED OPTION

Table 6: Operational Guidelines - Limited Option	
Initial Resource Allocation Priority	Limited Management option fires are assigned the lowest resource allocation priority. **Exception:** When on-the-ground actions are warranted, the resource allocation priority is equivalent to the management option designation of the site being protected. For example, if an action on a fire within Limited is an attempt to keep the fire from burning on to a Full site, the resource allocation priority should be equal to that given to Full.
Detection	Detection coverage will be commensurate with fire conditions and availability of detection resources. Jurisdictional agencies may negotiate additional detection flights with protecting agencies.
Initial Notification Requirements	Immediately contact jurisdictional agencies whose lands may be impacted by the fire during the first two burning periods.
Default Initial Action (Standard Response)	Conduct surveillance, assessment, and site protection as warranted.
Initial Action Priorities	1. Protect human life.
	2. Protect qualifying sites and natural resources from damage by wildfire.
	3. Allow fires to burn naturally to the extent possible in order to protect, maintain, and enhance natural and cultural resources and maintain natural fire regimes.
Extended Action	Periodic surveillance will continue for the duration of the fire to evaluate fire behavior and threats. Surveillance frequency will be determined by the protecting agency in coordination with the affected jurisdictional agencies. If the pre-designated surveillance response is no longer appropriate, a decision support process including situational assessment and risk analysis will be used to develop incident-specific objectives, requirements, and courses of action; and document the rationale behind them. Contact additional jurisdictional agencies if their lands become threatened.
Resource Benefit Objectives	It is routinely appropriate to manage all or part of Limited fires for resource benefit. A documented decision analysis and support process may be needed based on complexity or initiated at the discretion of an affected jurisdictional agency.

Figure 2: Operational Decision Chart for All Wildfire Management Options



3.2.3 NON-STANDARD RESPONSES

The operational guidelines for each management option will be appropriate for a high percentage of wildfire situations that occur in Alaska given normal fire conditions; however, situations arise where non-standard responses are prudent and justifiable. The level of initial response to a fire may be increased or decreased regardless of the management option in order to mitigate risk, accommodate safety concerns, higher management priorities, and/or resource availability. Actions based on adjusted conversion dates for Modified lands do not constitute non-standard responses.

Non-standard determination will be based on initial response – regardless of intent. The following are considered **non-standard responses**:

- Critical, Full, or Pre-conversion Modified Management Option fires that receive no initial response beyond surveillance/monitoring (no IA suppression resources on fire within 12 hours of the initial report for Critical and Full fires; or within 24 hours for Pre-conversion Modified fires). Justifications include (but are not limited to):
    - Lack of available resources or higher priorities
    - Safety/weather concerns
    - Re-evaluation of threat potential, risks, benefits (e.g., natural barriers preclude escape, extended forecast for wet weather, or others)
- Post-conversion Modified or Limited Management Option fires that receive an initial response beyond surveillance/monitoring and site protection within 24 hours of the initial report. Justifications include (but are not limited to):
    - Re-evaluation of threat potential (e.g., site specific conditions warrant containment effort, proximity of values requiring protection)
    - Initial site protection most efficiently achieved by containing the fire.
    - Partial Containment/confinement

A non-standard response to an individual incident should be a collaborative decision, but may be initiated at the discretion of either the Protecting or a Jurisdictional Agency. Non-standard responses will be documented in a Decision Document.

The AWFCG and the AMAC have the authority to increase or decrease response and resource allocation priorities regardless of management option designation if conditions warrant. In addition, the AMAC may be convened to implement a temporary change from pre-identified management options for a specific geographic area during periods of unusual fire conditions (e.g., numerous fires, predicted drying trends, smoke problems, unusually wet conditions or suppression resource shortages). Past actions have included discretionary suppression of all new starts regardless of fire management options. These departures usually do not apply statewide but to specific regions of the state.

Jurisdictional agencies may request temporary management option change for a specific geographic area through an AMAC group representative. The jurisdictional agenc(ies) requesting the change must provide a supporting rationale that includes the opinions of all potentially affected jurisdictions. The protecting agency may facilitate this process. This document will be included with the AMAC group decision record.

Decision support documentation requirements vary by agency (see Alaska Annual Operating Plan, Attachment 5); however for all non-standard responses, a decision support process including situational assessment and risk analysis will be used to develop incident-specific objectives, requirements, and courses of action; and document the rationale behind them.

Non-standard responses provide an opportunity for agencies to validate existing management option boundaries, as well as to evaluate their ability to adjust quickly and respond appropriately to unusual or incident-specific situations. Each fire season's non-standard responses will be reviewed in an interagency forum at the annual Fall Fire Review and should be reviewed by affected jurisdictional agencies during their annual internal reviews to determine if management option designations should be re-evaluated.

3.3 Site Protection Designations

Critical, Full, Avoid and **Non-sensitive** site protection designations have been established to identify the appropriate actions to be taken within the landscape-scale management option areas. These site protection designations give protection agencies specific guidance for structures, cultural and paleontological sites, small areas of high resource value and threatened and endangered species nesting areas.

- ***Critical*** sites are to be protected from fire and receive the same priority as Critical Management Option areas.
- ***Full*** sites are to be protected from fire and receive the same priority as Full Management Option areas.
- ***Avoid*** sites are areas where ground fire suppression activities and/or aircraft activity should be avoided in order to minimize damage to a site or resource resulting from suppression efforts.
- ***Non-sensitive*** sites have been located and identified by the jurisdictional agency and do not require any type of protection, suppression actions, or other fire management consideration.
- ***Unknown*** sites have been located but have not yet been assigned a protection designation by the jurisdictional agency.

A Statewide Known Sites Database is maintained by the Alaska Fire Service. Jurisdictional Agencies are responsible for annually identifying infrastructure, cultural sites, and natural resources on their lands and for providing direction to the Protection Agencies regarding protection priorities. Jurisdictional Agencies are responsible for ensuring that fire management options reflect these priorities, and that individual sites are included in the Known Sites Database and assigned appropriate protection designations. Some sites (e.g., cultural resources, endangered species) may be excluded from the database in order to protect sensitive data.

Protecting agencies will immediately notify the appropriate jurisdictional agency when a site designated as Unknown or site not represented in the database is encountered; and will work with the jurisdictional agency to determine the appropriate site protection designation.

The safety of the public and fire suppression personnel is the first priority when planning actions to be taken to protect sites from wildfires. The presence of humans at any site may elevate its protection priority.

As with fire management option boundaries, Known Sites data should be reviewed annually by jurisdictional agencies and site protection designations should be updated as necessary.

3.4 Fire Notifications

Protecting Agencies are responsible for informing Jurisdictional Agencies when wildfires occur on their lands or when their lands may be threatened within two burning periods. Zones/Areas/Forests must maintain logs documenting notification attempts (**Appendix C**). Completed notification logs will be included with the final fire report package. Appropriate notification contacts are described in **Appendix B**. (Reference *Exhibit B* of the *Master Agreement* for current contact names and phone numbers)

3.5 Fuels Treatments

Fuels (i.e. vegetation) management assists private landowners, communities and agencies in mitigating the risks of wildfire and achieving desired land use and resource management conditions.

3.5.1 Agency Programs

Fuels management activities assists in accomplishing land use and resource management goals and objectives. Fuels treatments may be necessary in areas where the objective is to exclude or restrict wildfires to improve the effectiveness of fire management programs, the efficiency of wildfire suppression efforts, or to achieve desired resource and land management conditions. Projects may also be developed and implemented in support of scientific research. Each project is approved and funded on a case-by-case basis and available funding varies annually.

Agencies follow their individual policies and guidelines when developing fuel management projects. Fuels projects, funding, and planning requirements are agency-specific; however, some aspects of fuels management are addressed at an interagency level. Ideally, large prescribed fire projects are implemented and coordinated between agencies to minimized public impacts and maximize the efficient use of available resources. Fuels treatment projects including prescribed fires require agency-specific reviews and approvals.

The following sections address general fuels management information.

3.5.1.1 Prescribed Fire

Prescribed fires are planned ignitions to achieve land use and resource objectives. Prescribed fires are implemented only with the Agency Administrator's approval of a formal prescribed fire plan. For federal agencies or on projects on which federal dollar are expended, NEPA analysis may be required; an ANICLA 810 statement regarding project effects on subsistence and/or concurrence from the State Historic Preservation Office that there are no adverse effect on historic properties may be appropriate. Air quality criteria are included in the prescribed fire plan.

When conducting prescribed burning, agencies follow the ADEC *2015 Enhanced Smoke Management Plan (ESMP)* available at http://dec.alaska.gov/air/anpms/rh/rhdoc2/Appendix%20III.K.8.pdf. The ESMP is an agreement and program plan developed and agreed upon by the AWFCG. The purposes of the ESMP is to mitigate health and safety hazards to smoke sensitive features; to prevent deterioration of air quality and Alaskan Ambient Air Quality Standard violations; and to reduce visibility impacts in

mandatory Class I Federal Areas in accordance with Regional Haze Rules. Prescribed burning requires an ADEC permit (http://dec.alaska.gov/air/ap/OpenBurn.htm) before starting the burn if the intent is to burn 40 acres or more or clear and burn the debris from 40 acres or more during a year. The ADEC regulations are available at http://dec.alaska.gov/commish/regulations/index.htm. Depending on the location of the project area, additional permits may be required from local government entities such as municipal fire departments or borough air quality offices.

The *Interagency Prescribed Fire Planning and Implementation Procedures Guide* is available at http://www.nwcg.gov/sites/default/files/products/pms484.pdf and may be supplemented by agency or administrative unit guidance. Interagency sharing of expertise, resources, and personnel for prescribed fire is encouraged.

3.5.1.2 MECHANICAL AND MANUAL TREATMENTS

Mechanical and manual treatments are implemented based on funding availability and under approved project plans. Projects on federal land or expending federal dollars may require site-specific analyses, including the appropriate NEPA documentation, an ANILCA 810 statement regarding project effects on subsistence and/or concurrence from the State Historic Preservation Office that there are no adverse effects on historic properties.

3.5.2 PUBLIC AND COMMUNITY PROJECTS

One of the goals of the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy is that, "Human populations and infrastructure can withstand a wildfire without loss of life and property." Proactive measures by individuals and communities can assist in reducing the risks of wildfire to homes, other structures and private property.

3.5.2.1 COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLANS (CWPP)

CWPPs are developed by local community members to address issues such as wildfire response, hazard mitigation, community preparedness, or structure protection. The process of developing a CWPP can help a community clarify and refine its priorities for the protection of life, property, and critical infrastructure in the wildland–urban interface. It also can lead community members through valuable discussions regarding management options and implications for the surrounding watershed. Federal and state agencies may assist, but are not responsible for development of CWPPs. For additional information and templates see https://www.forestsandrangelands.gov/communities/cwpp.shtml. A modified CWPP template for Alaska is posted at http://fire.ak.blm.gov/administration/awfcg.php; completed Alaska plans are posted at http://forestry.alaska.gov/fire/cwpp/.

3.5.2.2 FIREWISE AND FIREWISE COMMUNITIES

This is an educational program aimed at homeowners, land developers, zoning officials, and other groups with the goal of developing homes, subdivisions, and communities with the threat of wildfire taken into consideration. The goal is to have homes, subdivisions, and communities built that will survive wildfires in the future. A Firewise-Alaska brochure and other prevention materials are available at http://fire.ak.blm.gov/administration/awfcg.php

Firewise Communities is a unique opportunity available to fire prone communities. Its goal is to encourage and acknowledge action that minimizes home loss due to wildfire. Reference http://forestry.alaska.gov/fire/firewise.htm for information on becoming a recognized Firewise Community in Alaska.

3.6 Post-fire Response (BAER/ES/BAR/FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program)

Protecting Agencies are responsible for completing wildfire suppression activity damage repair per Jurisdictional Agency's written direction prior to demobilization.

Jurisdictional Agencies are responsible for post fire assessments and Emergency Stabilization and Burned Area Rehabilitation projects per agency policy and funding.

- For DOI agencies, additional information is found at http://www.fws.gov/fire/ifcc/Esr/home.htm
- For USFS direction is located at http://www.fs.fed.us/biology/watershed/burnareas/index.html.
- Funds may be available through BIA to do ESR work on Native Allotments.
- For State agencies direction is available from DNR Mining, Lands, and Water.
- ESR funds can only be spent on ANCSA Corporation lands when there is a "direct benefit" to federal lands as authorized by the Wyden Amendment, such as preventative measures on Native Corporation lands designed to prevent degradation of nearby federal lands. In very limited situations it might also be applied to hazard tree removal where significant federal land was involved or where a federal agency manages a right-of-way across ANCSA Corporation lands. Other options for funding these activities on ANCSA Corporation lands include:
    - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) funding programs including the Emergency Stabilization and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQUIP).
    - Emergency appropriation through the State of Alaska legislative process or a disaster declaration which could release low cost funds.

3.7 Prevention

Fire prevention programs are agency-specific; communication, collaboration and cooperation among the agencies are encouraged. The AWFCG Wildland Fire Prevention and Education Committee provides an interagency forum for addressing statewide prevention issues. Alaska prevention brochures including Alaska Firewise and other educational materials are available at http://fire.ak.blm.gov/administration/awfcg_committees.php.

3.8 Origin and Cause Determination:

Protecting Agency and all other first responders are required to preserve information and evidence pertaining to the origin and cause of all fires to the extent practical. Protection agencies are responsible to perform origin and cause determination findings on all fires. Jurisdictional agencies will be notified of all suspected human caused fires by the Protecting Agency.

3.9 Fire Investigation:

Investigations and all ensuing legal actions beyond origin and cause determination are the responsibility of the jurisdictional agency. Jurisdictional Agencies may request investigation support from the protecting agency subject to resource availability and appropriate regulations and agency limitations. When incidents impact multiple agencies lands, collections will be pursued jointly and cooperatively by each affected agency to the extent practical. BLM requires that fire investigations on BLM lands be performed by INVFs that are Federal employees, and that all criminal investigations are performed by Federal Law Enforcement Officers with INVF qualifications. Fire investigations will be performed by qualified Wildland Fire Investigators (INVF). Additional requirements may apply for some agencies.

3.10 Air Quality and Smoke Management

Wildland fire smoke in Alaska is inevitable. Public outreach efforts are essential to keep the public informed and provide ample opportunity for individuals to take action based on individual health factors. Land managers, the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC), and suppression providers share the task of providing pro-active and adequate public information on wildfire smoke before, during and after wildland fires occur.

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) is the regulatory agency responsible for air quality and smoke management. During the fire season, ADEC routinely issues air quality advisories addressing air quality levels and may recommend actions that individuals can take to protect their health. ADEC is represented on the AWFCG. The need for air resource advisors is increasing and additional technical expertise for addressing air quality and health related issues may be available through the DEC.

The *Alaska Enhanced Smoke Management Plan for Planned Fire* (*ESMP*) was developed by DEC in coordination with the AWFCG Air Quality Committee. The *ESMP* and its appendices are located at http://fire.ak.blm.gov/administration/awfcg_committees.php. The *ESMP* outlines the process and identifies issues that need to be addressed by DEC and federal and state agencies or private landowners/corporations to help ensure that prescribed fire activities minimize smoke and air quality problems. The *ESMP* Appendices provide additional assistance for interagency sharing of information, the applicability and availability of current smoke management techniques, monitoring protocol, public education strategies, and emission reduction techniques.

The AWFCG-approved *Smoke Effects Mitigation and Public Health Protection Protocols* are available at http://fire.ak.blm.gov/administration/awfcg.php. For current smoke information and forecast, regulations, advisories, and educational materials, refer to the DEC website http://www.dec.state.ak.us/air/anpms/index.htm.

When convened, the AMAC addresses air quality and smoke management issues. During periods of extensive fire activity, the AMAC group in conjunction with ADEC may determine that new fire starts will be suppressed due to smoke and air quality concerns regardless of fire management options.

3.11 Data Sources, Reports and Systems

AICC maintains the Master Statewide Map Atlas. Areas, Zones, and Forests may maintain local map atlases in order to facilitate operations; however, they are responsible for ensuring the AICC Map Atlas

is updated with any changes made at the local level. Map Atlas datasets are updated annually or as needed and are available for view and download at http://fire.ak.blm.gov/predsvs/maps.php. The AICC Electronic Map Atlas is considered the official source for the following fire management datasets.

3.11.1 Fire Protection Area/Zone Boundaries

A statewide protection organization boundaries layer is also maintained by the Alaska Fire Service and is the official record that delineates fire protection organization zone/area boundaries.

Changes to the Protection Area boundaries may be made at the recommendation of the Jurisdictional or Protecting Agency staff. Documentation will include a description of the change, a map, and the justification for the change. The document will be signed by the Protecting Agency and Jurisdictional Agency(s) FMO(s). This document will be submitted to the affected Protecting Agency managers and affected regional fire management staffs for final approval. The final approval and other documentation will be forwarded to the AICC by February 15 to update their map atlas and coordinate the update of the electronic files. A copy of the documentation will be kept on file at AICC.

3.11.2 AIWFMP Fire Management Option Boundaries

The fire management options boundary layer is maintained by the Alaska Fire Service and is the official record that delineates fire management option boundaries.

3.11.3 Known Sites Database

A statewide Known Sites Database (KSD) is maintained by the Alaska Fire Service and is the official record for site protection designations. The KSD identifies infrastructure, and cultural and natural resource sites throughout Alaska that may be threatened by wildfire. The dataset provides locations, descriptions, and jurisdictions, as well as direction regarding site protection priorities (see **3.3 Site Protection Designations**).

The statewide Known Sites Database is updated annually and the data are made available to fire managers through a password protected website in order to support wildland fire planning and decision-making (see **Appendix F: Known Sites Update Procedures**). The KSD is not available publicly due to the sensitive information contained within it.

3.11.4 Fire Perimeters

GIS protocols have been established for uploading and displaying on-going fire perimeters to the AICC ArcIMS site. Once approved, these AICC perimeters should be considered the definitive perimeter source for an incident. IMTs, Protecting Agencies, and Jurisdictional Agencies must collaborate to ensure the integrity of perimeter data.

3.11.5 Ownership/ Land Status

The official records for federal land status are the Master Title Plats. The official records for state and private land status are available digitally on Alaska Mapper. A consolidated land status product produced by the AWFCG GIS committee is available for initial land status determinations.

4 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The current approved version of the Alaska interagency plan is posted on the AICC website at http://fire.ak.blm.gov/administration/awfcg.php. Regular review and revision of the Plan and its components is necessary in order to maintain currency and maintain the effectiveness of the interagency fire management program in Alaska.

4.1 AWFCG FIRE MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW/REVISION

- The *AIWFMP* will be annually reviewed by AWFCG. Amendments will be identified by the January AWFCG meeting and approved by the AWFCG chair by March 1. See **Appendix H**.
- Every five years, or as deemed necessary by a majority of *AIWFMP* voting members, a comprehensive review will be completed and approved by all AWFCG agencies by March 1.

4.2 FIRE MANAGEMENT OPTION AND KNOWN SITES REVIEWS

The flexibility to change fire management option boundaries and protection levels in response to changing conditions and objectives is an essential attribute of the fire planning effort in Alaska.

4.2.1 INTERNAL JURISDICTIONAL AGENCY REVIEWS

Jurisdictional agencies should annually review:

- Non-standard responses to fires within the jurisdiction
- Fire management option boundaries and protection levels within and surrounding their jurisdiction
- Known sites locations and site protection designations.

Jurisdictional reviews should consider:

- changes in ownership patterns
- changes in management objectives
- changes in the distribution of natural and cultural resources on the landscape

4.2.2 INTERNAL PROTECTING AGENCY REVIEWS

Protecting agencies should annually review:

- Non-standard responses within the Zone/Area/Forest
- Operational feasibility of fire management options within the Zone/Area/Forest
- Known sites data gaps within the Zone/Area/Forest

Reviews should identify:

- Successes and Opportunities for improvement
- Known sites data that have been collected by Zones and IMTs during the fire season that have not been posted to the official database.

4.2.3 Fall Fire After-Action Review

The AWFCG sponsors an annual interagency post-season review (usually the first week in October) to discuss issues and concerns and evaluate agencies' performance and achievements. AIWFMP elements that should be addressed include:

- A review of non-standard responses that occurred during the season.
- Initial Response Successes and opportunities for improvement
- A brief synopsis of any changes to fire management option boundaries and/or protection levels that are being proposed or considered.
- Known sites data gaps and updates

4.3 Fire Management Option Boundary and/or Protection Level Updates

It is the responsibility of jurisdictional agencies to ensure that fire management option boundaries and protection levels are appropriate for the lands that they manage; however, protecting agencies may also recommend updates based on operational concerns. If a need for a fire management option update is identified, the procedures identified in **Appendix D** may be initiated by either a jurisdictional or protecting agency.

4.4 Known Sites Updates

It is the responsibility of jurisdictional agencies to ensure that known sites within their jurisdiction are identified and assigned protection levels; however, protecting agencies may also recommend location updates based on operational concerns and data collected by Zones/Areas or IMTs during incidents. Jurisdictional agencies are the final authorities for determining what sites will be maintained in the database and for assigning protection levels. If a need for a known sites update is identified, the procedures identified in **Appendix F** will be followed.

4.5 Spring FMO/Agency Administrator Meeting Update Summary

The AWFCG sponsors an annual interagency pre-season meeting for FMOs and Agency Administrators (usually the first week in April) to discuss the outlook for the coming fire season and changes in processes and personnel. AIWFMP elements that should be addressed include:

- Fire management option boundary and/or protection level updates
- Known-sites updates
- AIWFMP updates

4.6 SCIENCE AND CLIMATE CHANGE

The earth, which has always experienced climate variation, is undergoing a period of rapid climate change that is enhanced by anthropogenic atmospheric carbon enrichment during the past 100 years (Inkley *et al* 2004). The climate change in boreal and arctic regions is well documented and warming rates of surface air temperature exceed those from other regions (Arctic Climate Impact Assessment 2005, Hinzman *et al* 2005, IPCC 2007, IPCC 2015). Mean annual air temperature in interior Alaska has increased by 2.5° F in the 20th century (Genet *et al* 2013) and is expected to increase another 5.4 – 12.6° F by the end of the 21st century (Chapin *et al* 2010). The snow-free period has increased, up to 10 days in some areas, largely due to earlier spring snowmelt (Hinzman *et al* 2005, Euskirchen *et al* 2006).

Such changes can have numerous effects on vegetation, hydrology, and permafrost that could fundamentally change boreal forest and tundra ecosystems and, subsequently, wildfire occurrence. Modelling results suggest that the average area burned per decade in Alaska and Canada will double by 2041-2050 (Balshi *et al* 2009) and the incidence of tundra fires will increase as well (Hu *et al* 2015). Documented and potential changes that may be of concern to land and fire managers include:

- Melting permafrost, with associated changes in vegetation and surface hydrology (Jorgenson *et al* 2001, Nossov *et al* 2013);
- Melting sea ice, which may have implications for regional weather patterns (Hu *et al* 2010);
- Drying wetlands (Riordan *et al* 2006);
- Changing fire regimes(Kasischke *et al* 2010), including longer fire seasons and changes in the frequency and severity of fires;
- Shifts in distribution of plants and animals (Murphy *et al* 2010, Beck *et al* 2011);
- Increased likelihood for invasive plant establishment (Villano 2008); and
- Increased insect outbreaks and decreased forest health (Gauthier *et al* 2015).
- Feedbacks to climate patterns through emissions and changes in albedo (Euskirchen *et al* 2010)

Research and modeling efforts provide insight on potential future conditions, but specific guidance on addressing these changes is currently limited. Continued monitoring of fire effects and participation in research efforts will better inform management decisions in the face of climate change.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. FIRE MANAGEMENT OPTION OPERATIONAL DIRECTION A-1

APPENDIX B. FIRE NOTIFICATION CONTACTS B-1

APPENDIX C. FIRE NOTIFICATION LOG C-1

APPENDIX D. FIRE MANAGEMENT OPTION CHANGE PROCEDURES D-1

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APPENDIX G. HISTORY OF FIRE MANAGEMENT IN ALASKA G-1

APPENDIX H. ANNUAL REVIEW CERTIFICATION H-1

Appendix A. Fire Management Option Operational Direction

	Critical Option	Full Option	Modified Option (Pre-conversion)	Modified Option (Post-conversion)	Limited Option
Initial Resource Allocation Priority	Wildfires occurring in the Critical Management option or that threaten Critical Sites are assigned the highest priority for suppression actions and assignment of available firefighting resources.	Wildfires occurring in the Full Management option are assigned a high priority for suppression actions and assignment of available firefighting resources, but are below wildfires within or threatening a Critical Management option area or site.	Before the conversion date, fires occurring within Modified will receive priority for allocation of initial action forces after the protection of Critical and Full areas.	After the conversion date, the priority is low for the allocation of initial action forces and equal to Limited. **Exception:** When on-the-ground actions are warranted, the resource allocation priority is equivalent to the management option designation of the site being protected. For example, if an action on a fire within post-conversion Modified is an attempt to keep the fire from burning on to a Full site, the resource allocation priority should be equal to that given to Full.	Limited Management option fires are assigned the lowest resource allocation priority. **Exception:** When on-the-ground actions are warranted, the resource allocation priority is equivalent to the management option designation of the site being protected. For example, if an action on a fire within Limited is an attempt to keep the fire from burning on to a Full site, the resource allocation priority should be equal to that given to Full.
Detection	Critical Management option areas and sites are the highest priority for detection coverage when lightning activity or human use indicate a high potential for ignition, or at the request of a jurisdictional agency.	Full Management option areas and sites are the next priority after Critical for detection coverage when lightning activity or human use indicate a high potential for ignition, or at the request of a jurisdictional agency.	Detection coverage will be commensurate with fire conditions and availability of detection resources. Jurisdictional agencies may negotiate additional detection flights with protecting agencies.	Detection coverage will be commensurate with fire conditions and availability of detection resources. Jurisdictional agencies may negotiate additional detection flights with protecting agencies.	Detection coverage will be commensurate with fire conditions and availability of detection resources. Jurisdictional agencies may negotiate additional detection flights with protecting agencies.
Initial Notification Requirements	Immediately contact jurisdictional agencies whose lands may be impacted by the fire during the first two burning periods. Initial action should not be delayed if contacts cannot be made.	Immediately contact jurisdictional agencies whose lands may be impacted by the fire during the first two burning periods. Initial action should not be delayed if contacts cannot be made.	Immediately contact jurisdictional agencies whose lands may be impacted by the fire during the first two burning periods. Initial action should not be delayed if contacts cannot be made.	Immediately contact jurisdictional agencies whose lands may be impacted by the fire during the first two burning periods.	Immediately contact jurisdictional agencies whose lands may be impacted by the fire during the first two burning periods.
Default Initial Action (Standard Response)	Mobilize resources to protect the area and/or sites and suppress the fire without compromising public or firefighter safety.	Mobilize resources to protect the area and/or sites and suppress the fire without compromising public or firefighter safety.	Mobilize resources to protect the area and/or sites and suppress the fire without compromising public or firefighter safety.	Conduct surveillance, assessment, and site protection as warranted.	Conduct surveillance, assessment, and site protection as warranted.
Initial Action Priorities	1. Protect human life. 2. Protect qualifying sites and natural resources from damage by wildfire. 3. Contain fires at the smallest acreage reasonably possible in order to limit short and long-term threats to values.	1. Protect human life. 2. Protect qualifying sites and natural resources from damage by wildfire. 3. Contain fires at the smallest acreage reasonably possible in order to limit short and long-term threats to values.	1. Protect human life. 2. Protect qualifying sites and natural resources from damage by wildfire. 3. Contain fires in order to limit short and long-term threats to values.	1. Protect human life. 2. Protect qualifying sites and natural resources from damage by wildfire. 3. Allow fires to burn naturally to the extent possible in order to protect, maintain, and enhance natural and cultural resources and maintain natural fire regimes.	1. Protect human life. 2. Protect qualifying sites and natural resources from damage by wildfire. 3. Allow fires to burn naturally to the extent possible in order to protect, maintain, and enhance natural and cultural resources and maintain natural fire regimes.
Extended Action	Actions beyond initial response should be assessed situationally by the protecting agency and the affected jurisdictional agencies. If the pre-designated response is no longer appropriate or has a low probability of success, a decision support process including situational assessment and risk analysis will be used to develop incident-specific objectives, requirements, and courses of action; and document the rationale behind them. Contact additional jurisdictional agencies if their lands become threatened.	Actions beyond initial response should be assessed situationally by the protecting agency and the affected jurisdictional agencies. If the pre-designated response is no longer appropriate or has a low probability of success, a decision support process including situational assessment and risk analysis will be used to develop incident-specific objectives, requirements, and courses of action; and document the rationale behind them. Contact additional jurisdictional agencies if their lands become threatened.	Actions beyond initial response should be assessed situationally by the protecting agency and the affected jurisdictional agencies. If the pre-designated response is no longer appropriate or has a low probability of success, a decision support process including situational assessment and risk analysis will be used to develop incident-specific objectives, requirements, and courses of action; and document the rationale behind them. Contact additional jurisdictional agencies if their lands become threatened.	Periodic surveillance will continue for the duration of the fire to evaluate fire behavior and threats. Surveillance frequency will be determined by the protecting agency in coordination with the affected jurisdictional agencies. If the pre-designated surveillance response is no longer appropriate, a decision support process including situational assessment and risk analysis will be used to develop incident-specific objectives, requirements, and courses of action; and document the rationale behind them. Contact additional jurisdictional agencies if their lands become threatened.	Periodic surveillance will continue for the duration of the fire to evaluate fire behavior and threats. Surveillance frequency will be determined by the protecting agency in coordination with the affected jurisdictional agencies. If the pre-designated surveillance response is no longer appropriate, a decision support process including situational assessment and risk analysis will be used to develop incident-specific objectives, requirements, and courses of action; and document the rationale behind them. Contact additional jurisdictional agencies if their lands become threatened.
Resource Benefit Objectives	Only appropriate in extraordinary circumstances at the explicit documented direction of an affected jurisdictional agency. The course of action will be documented with a decision analysis and support process.	Only appropriate on rare occasions, based on site-specific circumstances (e.g. the initial size-up and response is delayed beyond 24 hours, or a fire is primarily burning into Limited). The course of action will be documented with a decision analysis and support process.	May be appropriate, based on site-specific circumstances and time of season (e.g. pre-conversion Modified ignition that as of the conversion date has little potential to threaten values). The course of action will be documented with a decision analysis and support process.	It is routinely appropriate to manage all or part of post-conversion Modified fires for resource benefit. A documented decision analysis and support process may be needed based on complexity or initiated at the discretion of an affected jurisdictional agency.	It is routinely appropriate to manage all or part of Limited fires for resource benefit. A documented decision analysis and support process may be needed based on complexity or initiated at the discretion of an affected jurisdictional agency.

Alaska Statewide Management Requirements

Jurisdictional agencies have identified the following general constraints and guidelines; additional constraints applicable to specific incidents are at the discretion of the jurisdictional agency and are documented in the jurisdictional agency's fire management plans, the incident's decision record and/or the Delegation of Authority.

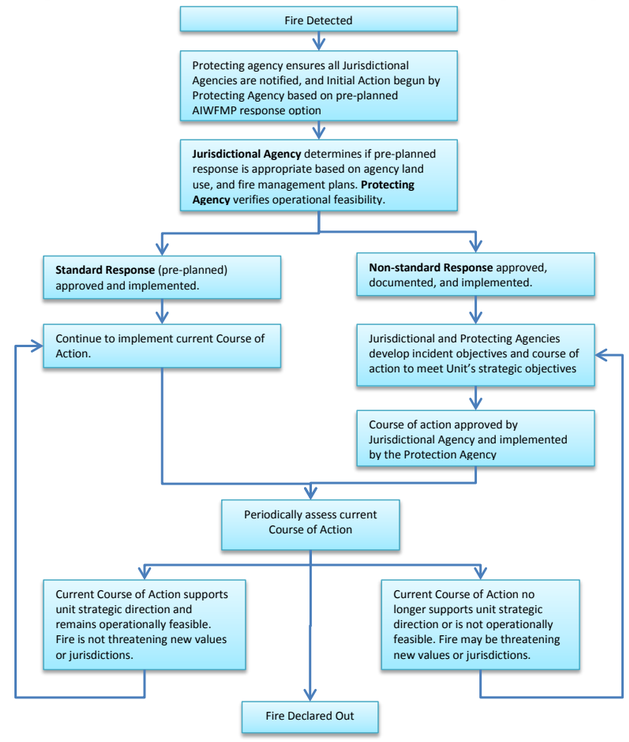
- Weigh the cost and environmental impacts of suppression actions against the value of resources warranting protection. Consider risk to firefighters and the public in all fire management decisions.
- To the extent possible, minimum impact suppression tactics should be used. Firelines will be constructed in a manner that minimizes erosion and will follow natural contours wherever possible. Indirect attack will be used to the extent practical. A suppression repair plan for wildfire suppression activity damage, as approved by the jurisdictional agency(s), must be completed before the final demobilization occurs.
- Jurisdictional agencies will be made aware of all support areas such as camps, staging areas, and helispots located on their lands.
- If a game animal is killed in defense of life or property (DLP) on an incident, an ADF&G DLP report will be filed and jurisdictional agencies will be notified.
- Base camps, spike camps, helispots and other support areas should be located in natural clearings if possible. The construction of helispots should be minimized. Any opening created for support areas will be cut with an irregular perimeter. Such areas will be kept clean so as not to attract animals and will be cleaned up before departure of the last suppression personnel.
- Support areas on private lands or Native Allotments require a land-use agreement. No resources (e.g. firewood) will be removed from private lands or Native Allotments without an approved agreement. Agreements involving Native Allotments must be prepared by the BIA or the local BIA service provider.
- The use of tracked or off-road vehicles requires approval by the jurisdictional agency(s) prior to use.
- If heavy equipment is used, comply with the non-anadromous water crossing stipulations in the ADF&G statewide Fish Habitat Permit FH14-SW-0001 Amendment No. 1.
- Comply with the water withdrawal and reporting stipulations in the ADF&G statewide Fish Habitat Permit FH14-SW-0002 Amendment No. 1, including ADF&G notification within 24 hours of initial use of portable pumps, scooper aircraft, or aerial buckets.
- Take measures to prevent the introduction and spread of terrestrial and aquatic invasive plant species during fire operations. Waterbodies that are known to harbor invasive species will not be used as dip sites. Communicate concerns, questions, and needs regarding invasive species to jurisdictional resource advisors in a timely manner.
- Application of aerial fire retardant near lakes, wetlands, streams, rivers, and sources of human water consumption or areas adjacent to water sources should be avoided. A minimum of 300 feet is identified in the Red Book. Individual jurisdictional agencies may have more restrictive retardant use guidelines.
- Suppression activities including flight patterns on or near cultural sites or those designated as "Avoid" must be coordinated with the jurisdictional agency.
- Jurisdictional agencies should be consulted concerning any operational restrictions in designated wilderness areas.
- Wildland firefighters are neither equipped nor trained to fight structure fires. Furthermore, agency policies do not allow it. Structural fire suppression within defined service areas is the responsibility of volunteer, city or borough fire department; there are areas outside defined service areas where there are currently no structural fire-fighting forces. Wildland firefighting efforts will be limited to areas where the fire has spread onto agency protected lands.
- Wildland firefighters will not take direct suppression action on vehicle or dump fires or in areas where hazmat or unexploded ordnance has been identified. Should firefighters encounter hazmat, unexploded ordnance, burning vehicles, or dump fires during the performance of their normal wildland fire suppression duties, firefighting efforts will be limited to areas where the fire has spread onto agency protected lands.

Non-standard Responses

Non-standard determination will be based on initial response – regardless of intent.
The following are considered **non-standard responses**:

- Critical, Full, or Pre-conversion Modified Management Option fires that receive no initial response beyond surveillance/monitoring (no IA suppression resources on fire within 12 hours of the initial report for Critical and Full fires; or within 24 hours for Pre-conversion Modified fires). Justifications include (but are not limited to):
  - Lack of available resources or higher priorities
  - Safety/weather concerns
  - Re-evaluation of threat potential, risks, benefits (e.g., natural barriers preclude escape, extended forecast for wet weather, or others)
- Post-conversion Modified or Limited Management Option fires that receive an initial response beyond surveillance/monitoring and site protection within 24 hours of the initial report. Justifications include (but are not limited to):
  - Re-evaluation of threat potential (e.g., site specific conditions warrant containment effort, proximity of values requiring protection)
  - Initial site protection most efficiently achieved by containing the fire.
  - Partial Containment/confinement

Operational Decision Chart for All Wildfire Management Options



Appendix B. Fire Notification Contacts

Jurisdiction	Unit Description	Notification Contact(s)
ANCSA Regional or Village Corporation	In AFS Protection	Appropriate Native Corporation Contact
	In DOF Protection (TAS, DOF, FAS)	Appropriate Native Corporation Contact + AFS Military Zone FMO (Fiscal Authority and Jurisdictional Representative)
	In DOF Protection (SWS, MSS, KKS, CRS)	Appropriate Native Corporation Contact + AFS South Zone FMO (Fiscal Authority and Jurisdictional Representative)
Tribal Lands	In AFS Protection	Appropriate Tribal Contact
	In DOF Protection (TAS, DOF, FAS)	Appropriate Tribal Contact + AFS Military Zone FMO (Fiscal Authority and Jurisdictional Representative)
	In DOF Protection (SWS, MSS, KKS, CRS)	Appropriate Tribal Contact + AFS South Zone FMO (Fiscal Authority and Jurisdictional Representative)
BIA (Native Allotments, Reservations, and other Trust lands)	In AFS Protection	BIA Regional Fire Management Officer
	In DOF Protection (TAS, DOF, FAS)	BIA Regional Fire Management Officer + AFS Military Zone FMO (Fiscal Authority)
	In DOF Protection (SWS, MSS, KKS, CRS)	BIA Regional Fire Management Officer + AFS South Zone FMO (Fiscal Authority)
BLM	BLM Anchorage District Field Offices	BLM-AFS South Zone FMO
	BLM Fairbanks District Field Offices	BLM Fairbanks District FMO
NPS[1]	Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve	NPS Eastern Parks FMO
	Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve	
	Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve (Tok Protection Area)	NPS Eastern Parks FMO + AFS Military Zone FMO (Fiscal Authority)
	Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve (Copper River Protection Area)	NPS Eastern Parks FMO + AFS South Zone FMO (Fiscal Authority)
	Kobuk Valley National Park	NPS Western Parks FMO
	Noatak National Preserve	
	Bering Land Bridge National Preserve	
	Cape Krusenstern National Monument	
	Denali National Park and Preserve (Tanana Protection Zone)	
	Denali National Park and Preserve (Fairbanks Protection Area)	NPS Western Parks FMO + AFS Military Zone FMO (Fiscal Authority)
	Denali National Park and Preserve (Mat-Su Protection Area)	NPS Western Parks FMO + AFS South Zone FMO (Fiscal Authority)
	Lake Clark National Park and Preserve	
	Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve	NPS Regional Fire Management Officer + appropriate Park staff + AFS South Zone FMO (Fiscal Authority)
	Katmai National Park and Preserve	
	Kenai Fjords National Park	
	Klondike Gold Rush National Historic Park	
	Sitka National Historic Park	
	Alagnak Wild River	
	Aniakchak National Monument and Preserve	

[1]When a wildfire occurs on in-holdings (Native and State Selected lands, Native allotments, Native corporation lands, and private lands) within the boundaries of a National Park or Wildlife Refuge, the appropriate park or refuge fire staff will be notified.

Fire Notification Contacts (Continued)		
Jurisdiction	**Unit Description**	**Notification Contact(s)**
USFWS[1]	Arctic National Wildlife Refuge	FWS Eastern Interior FMO
	Kanuti National Wildlife Refuge	
	Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge	
	Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuge	
	Kenai National Wildlife Refuge	FWS Southern FMO + AFS South Zone FMO (Fiscal Authority)
	Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge	
	Togiak National Wildlife Refuge	
	Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge	
	Innoko National Wildlife Refuge	FWS Western Interior FMO + AFS South Zone FMO (Fiscal Authority)
	Koyukuk National Wildlife Refuge	FWS Western Interior FMO
	Nowitna National Wildlife Refuge	
	Selawik National Wildlife Refuge	
	Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge	FWS Regional Fire Management Coordinator + AFS South Zone FMO (Fiscal Authority)
	Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge	
	Becharof National Wildlife Refuge	
	Izembek National Wildlife Refuge	
USFS	Chugach National Forest	USFS Chugach NF FMO
	Admiralty Island National Monument	USFS Tongass NF FMO
	Tongass National Forest	
	Misty Fiords National Monument	
Dept. of Defense	Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER)	Chugach NF FMO + Mat-Su Area Forester + Appropriate USAF Fire Chief
	U.S. Army-Alaska	AFS Military Zone FMO, who will notify the appropriate Army Fire Chief, Natural Resource Specialist and Installation Range Manager
	Clear Air Force Station & Eielson Air Force Base	Appropriate USAF Fire Chief
	Other Department of Defense lands	Area/Zone FMO is responsible for determining the appropriate contacts
Other Federal	including (but not limited to): U.S. Postal Service, U.S. Coast Guard, Federal Aviation Administration, General Services Administration, U.S. Public Health Service, National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration	Area/Zone FMO is responsible for determining the appropriate contacts
State of Alaska	State & Private lands (except within USFS Chugach NF Protection Area)	DNR Regional Forester
	Borough and Municipal Lands (except within USFS Chugach NF Protection Area)	DNR Regional Forester + appropriate Borough/Municipal contact
	State & Private lands in USFS Chugach NF Protection Area	DNR Kenai-Kodiak Area Forester
	Borough and Municipal Lands in USFS Chugach NF Protection Area	DNR Kenai-Kodiak Area Forester + appropriate Borough/Municipal contact
[1]When a wildfire occurs on in-holdings (Native and State Selected lands, Native allotments, Native corporation lands, and private lands) within the boundaries of a National Park or Wildlife Refuge, the appropriate park or refuge fire staff will be notified.		

Appendix C. FIRE NOTIFICATION LOG

Protecting Agencies are responsible for informing Jurisdictional Agencies when wildfires occur on their lands or when their lands may be threatened within two burning periods. Zones/Areas/Forests must maintain logs documenting notification attempts. Completed notification logs will be included with the final fire report package. Appropriate notification contacts are described in **Appendix B**. (Reference *Exhibit B* of the *Master Agreement* for current contact names and phone numbers)

Consider sharing the following during the notification process; however, do not delay notification due to incomplete information.

- Incident Location (Coordinates/ geographic description)
- Incident #
- Incident Name
- Cause
- Date/Time Reported
- Fire Management Option at Origin
- Ownership at Origin
- Jurisdictional agencies potentially threatened within 48 hours
- Identified values threatened
- Fuels, topography, weather, & fire behavior
- Resources on site/en-route/on order
- Management Actions in progress
- Management action recommendations (standard/non-standard response)
- Issues/Concerns (e.g. I A forces Available, risk to public safety, risk to firefighters, smoke, native allotments, structures, probability of initial action success):

Fire Number:_____ **Fire Name:**_____

Contact Date/Time:_____ Contact by: _____

Contact Name/Title:_____ Contact Agency:_____

Contacted at (phone #/email address): _____

Contact Method: ☐Telephone ☐Text ☐Email ☐In-person ☐Other _____

Contact Confirmed: ☐Yes ☐No

Contact Notes:

Contact Date/Time:_____ Contact by: _____

Contact Name/Title:_____ Contact Agency:_____

Contacted at (phone #/email address): _____

Contact Method: ☐Telephone ☐Text ☐Email ☐In-person ☐Other _____

Contact Confirmed: ☐Yes ☐No

Contact Notes:

Keep copy of Alaska Fire Notification Log with Fire Report Folder

Appendix D. Fire Management Option Change Procedures

General guidelines for fire management option review and updates are addressed in **Chapter 4.2** of the AIWFMP. The following procedures are designed to ensure adequate and consistent documentation of management option changes. Collaboration between all affected protecting and jurisdictional agencies is essential in the management option review/change process.

Review Process

1. Protecting FMOs will annually provide written reminders of fire management option review/change responsibilities to jurisdictional agencies within the Zone/Area.
2. Protecting and Jurisdictional Agencies will conduct internal and interagency reviews of fire management option boundaries and/or protection levels.
3. Non-standard responses will be reviewed annually by Protecting and Jurisdictional Agencies in order to validate fire management option boundaries and protection levels in that.

Change Process

1. Management option boundary and/or protection level changes are typically initiated by jurisdictional agencies, but may be initiated by protecting agencies or other cooperators. The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is considered the jurisdictional agency for native allotments and may negotiate management option changes on allotments with allottees.
2. Approved and verified management option change packages will be submitted by Protecting FMOs to Chief, Division of Information Systems by the date identified in *Clause 18, Table 4* of the *Alaska Statewide Annual Operating Plan*.
3. The interagency fire management option database and statewide map atlas will be updated by the effective date of change identified in *Clause 18, Table 4* of the *Alaska Statewide Annual Operating Plan*.
4. If any participant in the review/change process believes that the change process has been circumvented, unfairly implemented, or unduly delayed they will notify their AWFCG representative. The AWFCG is the final arbitrator for resolving procedural issues associated with the fire management option review/change process.

Change Initiator Responsibilities

1. Ensure all affected jurisdictional and protecting agencies are aware of and have the opportunity to participate in the change process.
2. Prepare a written description of proposed changes and the rationale behind them.
3. Prepare GIS and map products (including shapefile or geodatabase, and display map) to support the proposed changes.
4. Complete, sign, and date the *Management Option Change Initiator* portion of the Fire Management Option Change Approval Form (**Appendix E**).
5. Obtain dated approval signatures from all affected Jurisdictional Agencies in the Jurisdictional Agenc(ies) Responsibilities portion of the Fire Management Option Change Approval Form (**Appendix E**).
6. Submit a complete change package to the appropriate Protecting FMO for final review and certification by the date identified in *Clause 18, Table 4* of the *Alaska Statewide Annual Operating Plan*.

Jurisdictional Agency Responsibilities

1. Provide values data as needed to support the proposed change and communicate jurisdictional concerns regarding proposed changes.
2. Assist with change package preparation.
3. Jurisdictional agencies must approve all management option boundary and/or protection level changes within their jurisdiction by signing and dating within the Jurisdictional Agenc(ies) Responsibilities portion of the Fire Management Option Change Approval Form (**Appendix E**).

Protecting Agency Responsibilities

1. All management option boundaries and/or protection level changes will be reviewed by affected Protecting FMO(s) to determine whether they are operationally feasible. Protecting FMOs may propose modifications to the change proposal if feasibility concerns are identified. Ideally Protecting FMOs are provided an opportunity to provide feedback early in the change process.
2. If the proposed change involves more than one Protecting Area/Forest/Zone, one Protecting FMO will be identified to coordinate the process.
3. Upon receiving a completed Change Package, the Protecting FMO coordinating the process will issue a transaction name and number (for filing purposes) e.g. TAD/NPS-2016-001-Denali.

4. The Protecting FMO signs and dates the Fire Management Option Change Approval Form (**Appendix E**) after verifying that:
    a. The submitted fire management option boundary and/or protection level changes are operationally feasible.
    b. The required notifications have been completed.
    c. The Fire Management Option Change Approval Form (Appendix D) has been completed and all required signatures have been obtained.
    d. All required GIS data and map products are included with the change package.
5. The Protecting FMO submits the completed change package to:

    Assistant Manager, Business and Technology Management Branch
    BLM-Alaska Fire Service
    P.O. Box 35005
    Ft. Wainwright, AK 99703

6. Once notified by the Assistant Manager, Business and Technology Management Branch that the approved changes have been incorporated into the interagency fire management option database, the Protecting FMO will notify all affected agencies that the changes have taken effect.
7. The Protecting FMO will ensure the local Area/Forest/Zone map atlas is updated with the approved changes.

BLM-Alaska Fire Service and AICC Responsibilities

1. The AFS Assistant Manager, Business and Technology Management Branch is responsible for ensuring that approved changes are incorporated into the AICC electronic map atlas in a timely manner, and for ensuring that change packages are properly archived and readily available to interagency partners upon request.
2. Changes to the electronic map atlas will be processed by the Alaska Fire Service GIS shop. Electronic archives of historical fire management option data will be maintained. Questions about spatial data will be referred to the data preparer identified on the Fire Management Option Change Approval Form (**Appendix E**).
3. The AICC Initial Attack Coordinator will update the statewide paper map atlas and archive the management option change package.
4. The Assistant Manager, Business and Technology Management Branch will ensure that the appropriate Protecting FMO is notified when approved changes have been incorporated into the map atlas.

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Appendix E. Fire Management Option Change Approval Form

Send completed change package to:

Assistant Manager, Business and Technology Management Branch
BLM-Alaska Fire Service
P.O. Box 35005
Ft. Wainwright, AK 99703

Management Option Change Initiator

Change Description and Rationale (Describe changes geographically and jurisdictionally. Explain the rationale for the change (use additional sheets if necessary):

Changes initiated by:

Name _____ Title_____

Email _____ Phone Number_____

Attachments:

☐GIS Spatial Data files (geodatabase or zipped shapefile):_____

☐Option Change Display Maps (pdf format):_____

☐Other:

GIS/ map product prepared by:

Name _____ Title_____

Email _____ Phone Number_____

Jurisdictional Agency Administrator(s)

The following land manager(s)/owner(s) have approved these fire management option change(s) for the lands that they manage/own.

_____ _____
Agency Administrator or Land Manager/Owner Date

_____ _____
Agency Administrator or Land Manager/Owner Date

_____ _____
Agency Administrator or Land Manager/Owner Date

_____ _____
Agency Administrator or Land Manager/Owner Date

_____ _____
Agency Administrator or Land Manager/Owner Date

_____ _____
Agency Administrator or Land Manager/Owner Date

Protecting FMO

Transaction Number _____ Descriptive Name: _____

I certify that:

☐ The submitted fire management option boundary or management level change(s) are operationally feasible.

☐ The required notifications have been completed.

☐ The required signatures have been obtained.

☐ GIS data and pdf map products are included with this approval sheet.

_____ _____
Protecting FMO Date

AFS Business and Technology Management Branch

☐ The Fire Management Option changes identified and approved above have been made to the official electronic Map Atlas and the AICC Paper Atlas; and the change package has been archived.

Electronic Map Atlas Update Completed By: _____ Date: _____

Paper Atlas Update/ Change Archiving Completed By: _____ Date: _____

Appendix F. KNOWN SITES UPDATE PROCEDURES

The Known Sites Database (KSD) identifies infrastructure, and cultural and natural resource sites throughout Alaska that may be threatened by wildfire (See **3.11.3 Known Sites Database**). The dataset provides locations, descriptions, and jurisdictions, as well as direction regarding site protection priorities. The data are made available to fire managers through a password protected website in order to support wildland fire planning and decision-making. There are two primary sources of site information included in the KSD:

- Jurisdictional Agency inventory and assessments may be directly submitted to the AFS KSD Steward for immediate incorporation into the KSD.
- Data collected by IMTs will be submitted to the local dispatch office for the incident along with the final fire package. The dispatch office will then provide that information to the AFS KSD Steward and the appropriate Jurisdictional Agency(s) through the known sites clearinghouse. Data in the clearinghouse are preliminary, and subject to approval by Jurisdictional Agency administrative units on which sites reside.
    - Preliminary datasets will not be incorporated into the KSD until they have been verified by the Jurisdictional Agency.
    - Preliminary datasets will be viewable on the ArcIMS known sites map. The KSD will be updated on a semi-annual basis: November 1 and March 15.

Each time the dataset is updated, and upon request, the KSD Steward will provide metadata, summarizing changes, to all entities (Protecting and Jurisdictional Agencies' FMOs as well as pertinent Native partners). The metadata will contain a list of Global Unique Identifiers with the action taken on the site (i.e., added, deleted, changed geographically, and changed attributes).

Usernames and passwords to access the KSD can be requested through the AFS KSD Steward.

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Appendix G. History of Fire Management in Alaska

Fire Management Roles and Responsibilities

The history of fire management within Alaska dates back to 1939 when the Alaskan Fire Control Service was established under the General Land Office. Headquartered in Anchorage, it was given responsibility for fire suppression on an estimated 225 million fire-prone acres of public domain lands in Alaska. When the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) was formed in 1946, it received the management authority for most of Alaska's federal lands and also absorbed the Alaska Fire Control Service. The BLM fire organization was based in Fairbanks and Anchorage and the two offices worked cooperatively but separately. The BLM also kept a Division of Fire Management at the State Office.

In 1959, the first of three big divestures of land managed by BLM-Alaska began and, with the changes in land management authority, issues regarding wildland fire suppression responsibilities arose.

- Under the Statehood Act 1959, the State was granted 104 million acres of land.
- Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971 (ANCSA) established Native corporations and an entitlement of 44 million acres for those corporations.
- The Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980 (ANILCA) transferred approximately 100 million acres from BLM administration to the National Park Service and Fish and Wildlife Service.

Under ANCSA, the federal government was directed to continue to provide wildland fire suppression on lands conveyed to Native regional and village corporations. In response to ANILCA, Secretarial Order #3077, dated March 17, 1982, creating "a fire line organization with headquarters in Fairbanks" was issued. BLM, Alaska Fire Service (AFS) was formed and, in Department of Interior Manual 620, AFS was assigned the fire suppression responsibility for all Department of Interior-administered lands in Alaska and Native Corporation land conveyed under ANCSA. Department of Interior-administered lands include land managed by the BLM, the National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Although AFS implements fire suppression for DOI agencies, individual agencies remain accountable for following agency-specific mandates and policies for resource and wildland fire management.

The State of Alaska established a wildland fire suppression organization in the Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry (DOF), and, in the mid-1970s, began to gradually assume suppression responsibilities beginning in the Haines area. A reciprocal fire protection agreement was signed by the BLM-AFS, the USFS, and DOF to cooperatively provide fire suppression operations in fire-prone areas. Under the agreement, AFS assumed suppression responsibility for wildland fires in the northern half of the Alaska, regardless of ownership. By 1985 had DOF assumed suppression responsibility for wildland fires in Southcentral and most of Southwestern Alaska, as well as in portions of the Central Interior adjacent to the road-system. The Forest Service assumed suppression responsibility for State, Federal, and Native lands within the boundaries of Chugach and Tongass National Forests.

In 2010 the reciprocal fire protection agreements between the protecting agencies (DNR, BLM-AFS and USFS) and the individual memorandum of agreement between land management agencies (FWS, NPS, BIA) were consolidated into the *2015 Alaska Master Cooperative Wildland Fire Management and Stafford Act Agreement (Alaska Master Agreement)*. The Alaska Master Agreement and its exhibits (including the Alaska Statewide Annual Operating Plan and this AIWFMP) currently define the roles and responsibilities of the jurisdictional and protecting agencies as well as operating procedures for fire management in Alaska.

Fire Management Planning

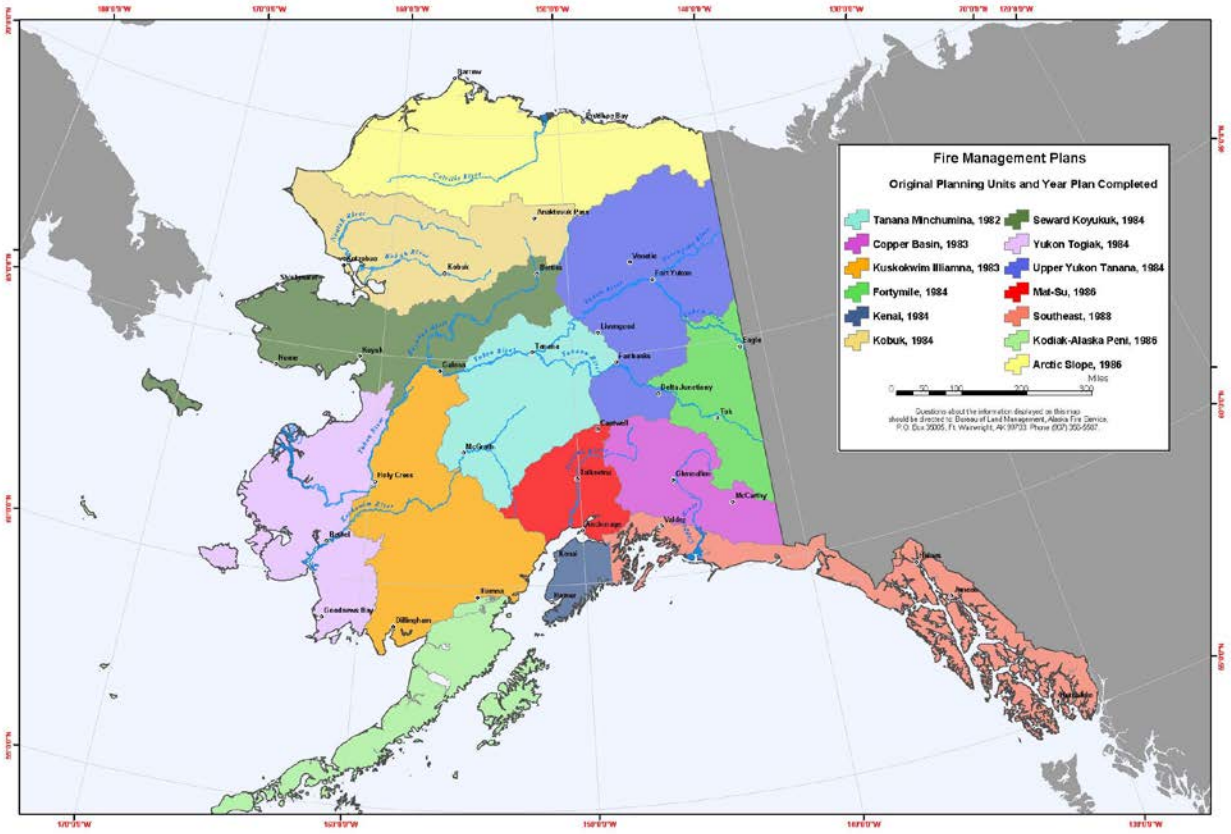
The Alaska Land Use Council was created under the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act 1980 (ANILCA). This Council was directed "to serve as a forum for managers of public lands within Alaska and for governmental decision makers with differing perspectives and varying mandates with respect to land management of Alaska's land resources." (Alaska Land Use Council Annual Report 1982) The Council advocated multi-jurisdictional planning efforts and created the Fire Control Project Group to establish definitions and criteria for categories of fire protection and response as well as a schedule, organization, and process for completing interagency fire plans. (Alaska Interagency Fire Planning Guidelines revised 1984). The Fire Control Project Group became the Alaska Interagency Fire Management Council which evolved into the Alaska Wildland Fire Coordinating Group (AWFCG).

The basis for interagency wildland fire management in Alaska is found in the 13 Interagency Fire Management Plans (IFMP) completed between 1982 and 1988 at the direction of Alaska Land Use Council. Four fire management options (Critical, Full, Modified and Limited) that set the resource assignment priorities and describe the standard response to a wildfire within the option boundaries were defined. Values-at-risk, ecological considerations and suppression costs were factors used to develop the management option criteria. The first Alaska IFMP for the Tanana-Minchumina Planning Area was completed and approved in 1982. Using that plan as a model and reference, 12 more plans were completed through the collaborative efforts of interagency, interdisciplinary teams. Public input was solicited throughout the planning process.

1980s Interagency Fire Management Plans

These plans were developed through the collaborative efforts of interagency, interdisciplinary teams and applied on a statewide, interagency, multi-jurisdictional, landscape scale. They provided land managers with wildland fire strategy choices and provided operational direction to the suppression agencies. *Alaska Interagency Fire Planning Guidelines* were published in 1984 to assist planning group in expediting the completion of the plans. The following thirteen plans provided "an opportunity for land managers within the planning area to accomplish their land use objectives through cooperative fire management" (*Alaska Interagency Fire Management Plan, Tanana/Minchumina Planning Area)* and standardized management options statewide.

Figure 3: Alaska Interagency Fire Management Plans, Original Planning Units and Year Plan Completed



1982 Alaska Interagency Fire Management Plan, Tanana/Minchumina Planning Area and Amendment 1984
1983 Alaska Interagency Fire Management Plan, Copper Basin Planning Area
1983 Alaska Interagency Fire Management Plan, Kuskokwim/Illiamna Planning Area
1983 Alaska Interagency Fire Management Plan, Upper Yukon/Tanana Planning Area
1984 Alaska Interagency Fire Management Plan, Fortymile Planning Area
1984 Alaska Interagency Fire Management Plan, Kenai Planning Area
1984 Alaska Interagency Fire Management Plan, Kobuk Planning Area
1984 Alaska Interagency Fire Management Plan, Seward/Koyukuk Planning Area
1984 Alaska Interagency Fire Management Plan, Yukon/Togiak Planning Area
1986 Alaska Interagency Fire Management Plan, Arctic Slope Planning Area
1986 Alaska Interagency Fire Management Plan, Kodiak/Alaska Peninsula Planning Area
1986 Alaska Interagency Fire Management Plan, Matanuska/Susitna Planning Area
1988 Alaska Interagency Fire Management Plan, Southeast Planning Area

By 1988 the interagency fire management plans had been implemented statewide on an interagency, multi-jurisdictional, landscape scale. Each plan contains a description of the local environmental and socioeconomic conditions, natural and cultural resources, fire history and behavior, and local subsistence activities. The plans provided a coordinated, cost effective, landscape scale approach to fire management, a consistent interagency approach to operational procedures and a systematic method for the identification and prioritization of values-to-be-protected. The initial response to a wildfire was determined by the management option designation and the likely consequences of the fire on firefighter and public safety.

1998 Alaska Interagency Wildland Fire Management Plan, as amended 1998

At the direction of the AWFCG the common elements in the IFMPs were consolidated during the 1990s. The 1998 Alaska Interagency Wildland Fire Management Plan consolidates the common elements in original 13 plans above. It provided the land managers and fire suppression organizations a single reference for interagency fire management operational information. The plan clarified and streamlined existing fire management planning documents and also incorporates operational changes that had occurred since the 1980s statewide fire management planning effort.

2010 Alaska Interagency Wildland Fire Management Plan

This plan updated and superseded the *Alaska Interagency Wildland Fire Management Plan, as amended 1998*. The update was completed in response to public requests for more information regarding Alaskan fire management practices, to clarify interagency guidelines, policies and operational direction for responses to wildland fires, and to bring terminology up to date. This plan affirms that firefighter and public safety is the first priority in all fire management activities for all agencies. It also reaffirms the concepts presented in 1998 plan and previous Alaskan interagency fire planning efforts. The stated purpose of the 2010 plan is to promote a cooperative, consistent, cost-effective, interagency approach to wildland fire management and to be the interagency reference for wildland fire operational direction.

2016 Alaska Interagency Wildland Fire Management Plan

This plan updates and supersedes the *2010 Alaska Interagency Wildland Fire Management Plan*. It updates terminology and management criteria to reflect changes in policy and interagency agreements. It continues to provide a framework of common standards, terminology and expectations in order to facilitate effective cooperation and collaboration between the federal, state and Alaska Natives entities to achieve both wildland fire protection and ecological goals in a safe, efficient, and cost-effective manner.

Significant changes between the 2010 and 2016 plans include:

- Reorganization of chapters within the Plan to better align with DOI FMP guidance
- Reduced duplication by referencing *Master Agreement* and *Alaska AOP* direction where possible.
- Additional emphasis on the role of Jurisdictional Unit FMPs/RMPs where they exist.
- Clarified definition of Non-standard Response
- Revised fire notification requirements:
    - Jurisdictions should be notified immediately for fires occurring in all Management Options.
    - Jurisdictions whose lands may be threatened within 2 burning periods should be notified
- Clarified the fire management roles and responsibilities related to different types of Native organizations and referenced more detailed information in the *AOP*.

- Consolidated Alaska Fire Management and Planning History into Appendix G.
- Clarified distinction between Statewide Goals and Planning Objectives and Default Initial Response Actions and Priorities.
    - Revised Operational Decision Chart to reflect updated WFDSS decision support direction.
- Recognizes that population Management Option selection should consider population density as opposed to the presence or absence of human life and inhabited property.
- Corrected conflicting direction regarding Plan review requirements.
- Fire Occurrence statistics have been removed from the Plan. Statistics have not historically been updated annually in this document and quickly became stale.

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Appendix H. ANNUAL REVIEW CERTIFICATION

The *AIWFMP* will be annually reviewed by AWFCG. Amendments will be identified by the January AWFCG meeting and approved by the AWFCG chair by March 1. Every five years, or as deemed necessary by a majority of AWFCG voting members, a comprehensive review will be completed and approved by all AWFCG agencies by March 1.

The *Alaska Interagency Wildland Fire Management Plan 2016* has been reviewed by the Alaska Wildland Fire Coordinating Group as of _____.

The updates and revisions described above have been approved and will be incorporated into an amended version of the *AIWFMP* document. These changes do not compromise the original intent of the Plan but serve to clarify direction or update terminology, processes, and policy references; and therefore, do not require approval at the agency line officer level.

_____ _____

Chair- Alaska Wildland Fire Coordinating Group Date

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