



National Fire Plan

Managing the Impact of Wildfires on the Communities and the Environment



FY 2002 Programs in New Mexico



In August 2000, the President directed the Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior to develop a plan to respond to severe wildland fires, reduce their impacts on rural communities, and assure sufficient firefighting capacity in the future. The National Fire Plan (NFP) was developed and addresses 5 key points:

- Firefighting;
- Rehabilitation and Restoration;
- Hazardous Fuel Reduction;
- Community Assistance; and,
- Accountability.

The USDA Forest Service and Department of the Interior are in the second year of implementing the National Fire Plan, with allocations to New Mexico estimated at:

USDA Forest Service Allocations for FY 2002

Firefighting		Rehab and Restoration	Hazard Fuel Treatment	Research R&D JFSP	Forest Health Projects	Community Assistance			Total
Preparedness	Facilities					State Fire Assist	Volunteer Fire Assist	Economic Action Programs	
29,666,000	2,500,000	472,000	16,031,000	0	115,000	2,424,114	328,798	1,401,749	52,928,661

*Allocations for FY 2001 and 2002 may vary slightly over time due to adjustments in accounting systems.

Department of the Interior Allocations for FY 2002

Firefighting		Rehab and Restoration	Hazard Fuel Treatment	Research JFSP	Community Assistance Rural Fire Assist	Total
Preparedness	Facilities					
8,421,000	1,000,747	1,259,866	13,061,000	0	499,000	24,424,747

Program Highlights

- Cooperative project with a community, and local small mill operator to thin private property adjacent to National Forest land, protecting a major recreation area, while having the ability to salvage some of the small diameter material to be

used for shavings.

- The Bureau of Land Management's Pinos Altos fuels treatment project is planned for 1,900 acres in the next five years. Because there were no local contractors to perform the work, the BLM and the Forest Service solicited, trained and put new teams in the field to assist with new contractor development, and are giving prospective contractors the skills needed to determine work completion costs.
- Free use permits issued to land owners who have private land adjacent to the National Forest land. These permits allowed the landowners to thin a small strip of National Forest land adjacent to their property. They worked in conjunction with the Forest Service to remove or burn the remaining brush.

Fire Preparedness and Facilities

Maintain a cost effective level of preparedness in firefighting and prevention

- **Preparedness Resources**

- USDA Forest Service will have a total of 556 firefighting personnel, 40 engines and 5 helicopters.
- Department of the Interior will have a total of 415 firefighting personnel, 44 engines, 3 helicopters, 7 water/foam tenders, 1 dozer, and 3 airtankers.

- **Facilities**

- USDA Forest Service will be providing funding for Alamogordo air tanker base.
- Department of the Interior will provide funding for Las Cruces engine storage, Albuquerque engine storage, Southern Pueblos-Acoma lookout facility, Mescalero lookout towers, Jicarilla warehouse, Navajo warehouse and engine storage, Bandelier National Monument fire tower rehabilitation, and Voyagers cache.

Rehabilitation and Restoration

Rehabilitate fire damaged wildlands and restore ecosystem

- Rehabilitation and Restoration program consists of
 1. Immediate actions to reduce threats to public safety, property and natural and cultural resources, and
 2. Long-term actions to help restore healthy ecosystems and replace infrastructure damaged by fire.
- DOI funding will cover ecological stabilization, reforestation (seeding, cultural protection invasive species, contour tree felling, monitoring);
- USDA Forest Service funding will be used to improve overall watershed condition and restoring severely burned forests and rangelands. Projects include reforestation, watershed restoration, road and trail rehabilitation, fish and wildlife habitat restoration, planting and seeding and preventing invasive plants.

Hazardous Fuel Reduction

Invest in projects to reduce fire risk with focused effort in wildland urban interface areas.

- Approximately 150,555 acres are planned for Hazardous Fuels treatment by Federal agencies, an estimated 38,260 will be treated in the Wildland Urban Interface.

- An estimated \$29 million will be spent on hazardous fuels treatment work.
- Forest Health Management funding is estimated at \$115,000.

Community Assistance

Work with communities to reduce the risks of catastrophic fire

States are focusing funding on increasing wildland fire response capacity by enhancing their level of fire preparedness, training wildland firefighters, purchasing personal protective equipment, conducting fire education and prevention activities including Firewise projects; implementing hazard mitigation projects addressing fuel reduction and installation of dry hydrants, and fire planning projects assessing communities at risk.

- Rural Fire Assistance (DOI): Estimated funding - \$499,000.
 - 35 rural/volunteer fire departments will receive assistance.
- State Fire Assistance (FS): Estimated funding - \$2,414,114.
- Volunteer Fire Assistance Program (FS): Estimated funding - \$328,789.
- Economic Action Program (FS): Estimated funding - \$1,401,749.

Accountability

Establish and maintain a high level of accountability including oversight reviews, progress tracking and performance monitoring

- DOI and Forest Service are developing a uniform set of performance measures necessary to assess program effectiveness these measures will be tracked through a common electronic database by the end of the FY02.
- DOI and Forest Service have developed a uniform process and timeline to identify and complete planning on fuels treatment projects.
- A DOI and Forest Service contracting review has been completed and actions will be initiated to increase the level of contracts for fuels hazard reduction work.

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