Federal Wildland Fire Management Briefing

June 17, 2014

Organizations

- DOI
  - Office of Wildland Fire
  - Bureau (BLM, NPS, FWS, BIA) programs
  - USGS science and research
- Forest Service
  - Fire and Aviation Management
  - Research/science
- Tribes, states, counties, rural/volunteer

Fire management & response requires interoperability - highly integrated policies and systems among Federal, Tribal, state, local, and non-governmental entities

Wildland Fire Management Activities

- Preparedness – getting ready
- Fuels Treatment/Vegetation Management – reducing risks
- Suppression – responding
- Post Fire Activities-Burned Area Rehabilitation
- Fire Science and Technology – in support

Current Program Issues

- Implementing the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy
- The "right fuels management" program
- Aviation Strategy
- Developing a budget strategy to address Cohesive Strategy, the rising costs of suppression, the 10-year average, and FLAME Act implementation
- Modernizing information technology – data centric, cloud based, platform neutral
- Increasing risks and public expectation

Preparedness Program

- All Activities necessary to be ready, such as:
  - Permanent and seasonal workforce
  - Equipment and supplies
  - Training
  - Information systems and technology
  - Aviation Assets
  - Facilities
  - Fire prevention and education programs

How We Respond to Fire

- Total mobility of resources—everything is interoperable and available (Federal, Tribal, state, local, contractor)
- Closest resources dispatched first
- Incident objectives, strategies, and tactics are defined by land use management plans and incident commander
- Three-tier dispatch/resource coordination system supports incident
- Approx. 95% of all fires suppressed during initial attack

Firefighter and public safety is paramount

Projected Combined Personnel Resources

Incident Management Teams	
Type 1 Incident Management Teams (IMTs)	16 National Teams 4 Full-Time National Incident Management Organization (NIMO) Teams
Type 2 IMTs	36 Interagency Teams
Firefighting Crews	
Type 1 Interagency Hotshot Crews (IHCs)	110 (67 USFS; 17 DOI—includes 3 Alaska IHCs)
Type 2 Crews	350 (Includes 6 IA and 69 EFF Alaska Crews)
Smokejumpers	463 (320 USFS; 143 DOI)
Firefighting Personnel	
Estimated Total	13,947 (10,500 USFS; 3,447 DOI)

Projected Combined Federal Resources

Aircraft[1]	
Single Engine Airtankers (SEATS)	69 (33 Exclusive Use--EU; 36 Call When Needed--CWN)
Large Airtankers (LATs)	22
MAFFS	8
Water Scoopers	3
Helicopters	
Type 1	89 (32 EU; 57 CWN)
Type 2	136 (40 EU; 96 CWN)
Type 3	267 (96 EU; 171 CWN)
Estimated Maximum Total	492
Heavy Equipment	
Engines	1,645 (900 USFS; 745 DOI)
Dozers, Water Tenders, etc.	416 (210 USFS; 206 DOI)

[1] Numbers exclude cooperator aviation resources available if needed

Aviation Support

- Mix of fixed wing and rotor wing; different size classes and capabilities
- Division of responsibility between DOI and Forest Service for leasing
  - FS: large helicopters and large airtankers (LATs)
  - DOI: Single Engine Air Tankers (SEATs)
  - Both: small/medium helicopters and fixed wing
- All aircraft available for use by each agency

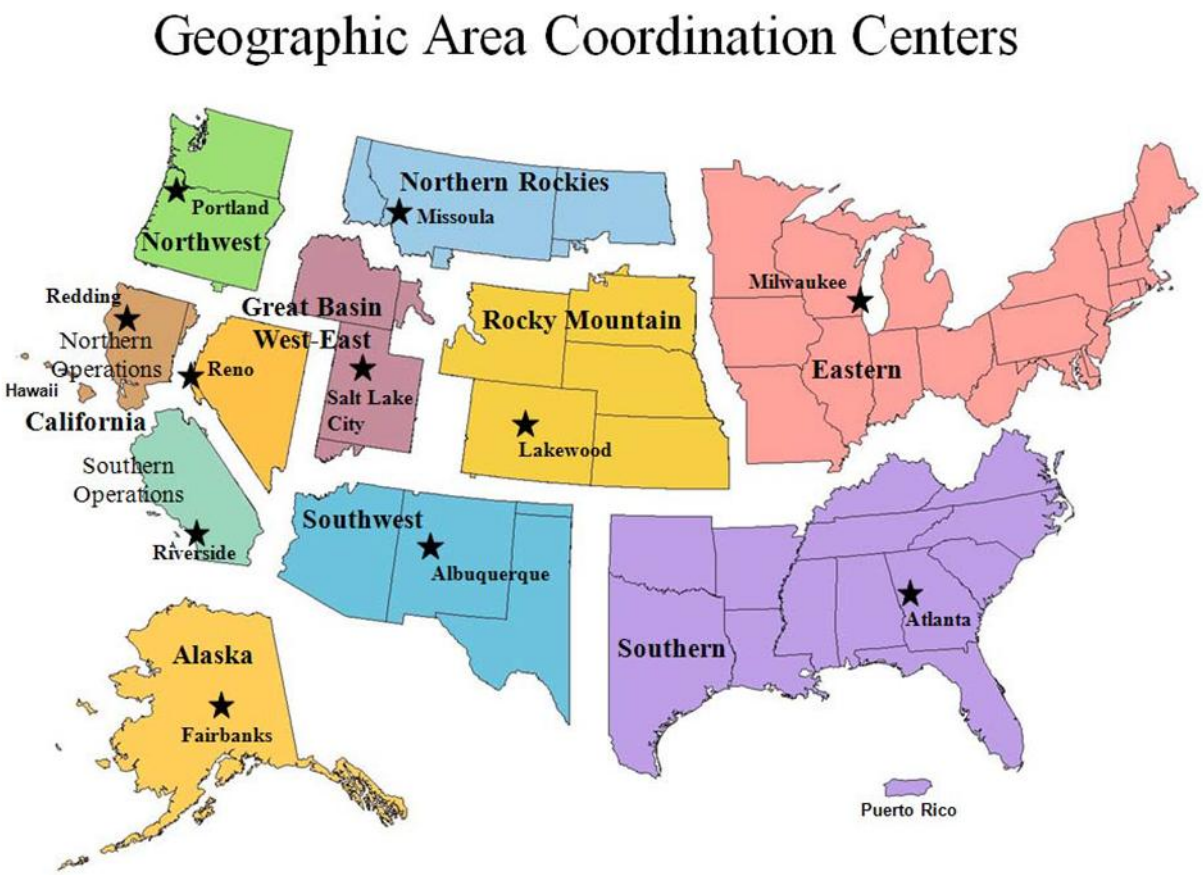
Aviation Challenges

- Aging airtanker fleet; Congressional interest
- Inadequate long range strategy to address appropriate mix of assets, training, personnel
- Coordination with Forest Service on planning and priorities
- Expertise focused on operations; minimal expertise and capability on strategic policy and planning
- Unmanned aerial systems long-range strategy (purpose and use, management/support)

Coordination and Mobilization

- Local decision making on fire strategies and tactics and dispatch of resources
- Regional (Geographic Area) coordination and support
- National level coordination and information management at the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) located in Boise Idaho
- NIFC is a place, not an organization
  - National level management organizations for federal wildland fire agencies and some partner agencies.
  - The National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC) – Predictive Services, Situation Reporting, National-level Resources (large airtankers, etc.)
  - National Multi Agency Coordinating Group (NMAC) sets national priorities and allocates scarce resources
  - Cache (warehouse) and supporting facilities, including radio equipment and remote weather stations
- National leadership provides overall policy and oversight

Geographic Areas



Fuels Management Program

- Objective: Remove or modify vegetation to…
  - Restore and maintain healthy, diverse ecosystems
  - Reduce wildfire risks to communities and their values
  - Reduce risk of severe, potentially dangerous wildfire behavior
  - Lessen post-wildfire damage
  - Limit spread of invasive species and detrimental pathogens
- Principal activities
  - Treatments (prescribed fire, mechanical)
  - Education/Community Assistance
  - Planning and evaluation
  - Decision support tools

Fuels Program of the Future

- Principles:
  - Directly tie to the three goals of the Cohesive Strategy (landscapes, communities, response)
  - Reduce the "overhead" expenses and increase projects
  - Align and integrate with other resource management activities
  - Address maintenance of prior treatments
  - Highest priority projects in high priority areas
- Challenges
  - Absorbing reductions in short time
  - Articulating/measuring/documenting effectiveness and results
  - Inter-relationship of the Preparedness and Fuels workforces
  - Designing a sustainable program

Preparedness Program Gaps

- Weather data collection and management
- Human Factors in decision making
- Staying in tune with the variety of technological advances that can be applied to all facets of preparedness and fuels
- Interoperability
- Common understanding and use of "Risk Management Processes

Response/Suppression Program

- All activities during a response to a fire (over and above Preparedness):
  - Initial Response/Initial Attack
  - Managing a fire for multiple objectives
  - Extended Attack and Large Fires
  - Complex Incident Management
  - Decision Support Tools

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Response Program Gaps

- Common operating picture and situational awareness for responders and decision makers (Human Factors)
- Smoke and health exposure
- Interoperability
- Workforce development and sustainability

Post Fire Programs

- Emergency Stabilization – from Suppression
  - Immediate actions to address erosion (wind/water), landslides, invasive species
  - Public safety nexus
- Burned Area Rehabilitation
  - Separate funding line
  - Project funding for up to three years
  - Repair/improve lands unlikely to recover naturally
  - Seeding, slope/watershed stabilization

Post Fire Program Gaps

- Treatment Effectiveness
- Various modeling needs from precipitation and flooding to likelihood of success on specific treatment strategies

Questions