

# WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT

Briefing for the Tribal/Interior Budget Council



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# OFFICE OF WILDLAND FIRE

- **Mission:** Coordinate wildland fire management programs within the Department and with other Federal and non-Federal partners.
- **Principal Functions:**
  - National Program Oversight
  - National Policy and Strategy Development
  - Strategic Program Planning and Priority Setting
  - Budget formulation, Allocation to Bureaus, and Oversight
  - Information Technology Enterprise Services
  - Coordination and Collaboration
  - Advice and Counsel to Secretary and Senior DOI Leadership

# BUREAUS AND BUREAU FIRE PROGRAMS

- **Mission:** Implementing and executing fire management programs, policies, actions and activities.
- **Principal Functions:**
  - National, regional, local-level execution of fire program and policies
  - Making allocation decisions for units and tribes
  - Implementing actions and activities that may have direct impacts to tribes, tribal interests, and/or tribal values
  - Unit-level fire response

# FY 2016 BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

- **Note:** Current Continuing Resolution (CR), which funds Wildland Fire Management (WFM) at 2015 enacted rate, expires on December 11, 2015
- FY 2016 Discretionary budget is requested at \$805.5 million

Activity	Funding Level
Preparedness	\$323.7 million
Suppression Operations	\$268.6 million
Fuels Management	\$148.3 million
Resilient Landscapes	\$30.0 million
Burned Area Rehabilitation	\$19.0 million
Fire Facilities	\$10.0 million
Joint Fire Science	\$6.0 million

# FY 2016 BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

## BUDGET CAP ADJUSTMENT

- FY 2016 President's Budget also proposes a \$200 million "Cap Adjustment" to cover unpredictable fire suppression costs
- Goal is to provide stable funding for suppression while minimizing the adverse impacts of fire transfers on the budgets of other fire and non-fire programs
- Also allows for increased investments in fire prevention programs

# FY 2015 FUNDING – ACTUALS

- The DOI Wildland Fire program obligated a total of \$924.3 million in appropriated funds and \$38.7 million in reimbursable and State assistance collections for a total of \$963.0 million. This is a total increase of \$121.9 million over FY 2014 obligations.
- In FY 2015, a total of \$105 million was transferred from FLAME to Suppression Operations in three installments. The total Suppression Operations obligations were \$417.5 million. This was an increase of \$91.4 million over the FY 2014 total obligations of \$326.2 million.

# EMERGENCY STABILIZATION (ES)

- ES authority is capped at 10 percent of the ten-year rolling suppression expenditure average.
- The distribution of the DOI ES authority is based on the rolling ten-year average percentage of acres burned by bureau nationally, excluding Alaska.
- In the event one or more bureaus will exceed their ES authority, OWF, in collaboration with Interior Fire Directors, will coordinate and approve the redistribution ES authority between bureaus as warranted.
- Any recommended cap increases to the DOI ES cap is subject to approval by the Director of OWF in collaboration with the Interior Fire Directors.

# BURNED AREA REHABILITATION (BAR)

- BAR program funding is provided to initiate longer-term actions to repair damages caused by catastrophic wildfire.
- Rehabilitation treatments are designed to repair or improve lands unlikely to recover naturally from severe wildfire damage.
- Rehabilitation treatments funded by this program may build upon ES measures.
- BAR is just a bridge program. Longer-term restoration needs must be funded by bureaus' resource management programs.
- New Policy: Beginning in FY 2016, all BAR funds will be distributed at the beginning of the fiscal year based on the 5-year rolling average of acres burned by bureau.



# WILDLAND FIRE RESILIENT LANDSCAPES (WFRL)

- Place-based approach; not organization-based.
- Integration and coordination between fire bureaus and their natural resource counterparts.
- Leverage multiple funding sources.
- Landscape scale and long-term results
- Initially implemented as a “pilot” in 2015 with a total appropriation of \$10 million.
- In 2015, OWF received 29 proposals for review. The Department selected 10 proposals for funding.

## WFRL (CONTINUED)

- Approved proposals received funding at a scale to provide results over 5 to 10 years that will significantly contribute to long-term outcomes.
- BIA is the lead on one of the 2015 selected collaboratives (the Santa Clara Pueblo in New Mexico).
- OWF will use results of tribal consultations and a program review to inform and improve development of permanent program guidelines and procedures for FY 2016 and beyond.

# COHESIVE STRATEGY

- The FLAME Act of 2009 directed DOI and USDA to submit to Congress a report that contains a cohesive wildfire management.
- The Departments collaborated with many stakeholders to initiate a National Cohesive WFM Strategy.
- The Cohesive Strategy collectively establishes a national vision for wildland fire management, defines three national goals, describes the wildland fire challenges, identifies opportunities to reduce wildfire risks, and establishes national priorities focused on achieving the goals.

# COHESIVE STRATEGY

- Three primary national goals identified as necessary to achieving the vision:
  - **Restore and maintain landscapes:** Landscapes across all jurisdictions are resilient to fire-related disturbances in accordance with management objectives.
  - **Fire-adapted communities:** Human populations and infrastructure can withstand wildfire without loss of life and property.
  - **Wildfire response:** All jurisdictions participate in making and implementing safe, effective, efficient risk-based wildfire management decisions.

# IMPLEMENTING THE CS – WFLC PRIORITIES

- Promote landscape-scale land management activities to create and maintain resilient landscapes.
- Support stakeholders and the public to actively plan, create, and maintain fire-adapted communities and landscapes.
- Assist local jurisdictions to reduce risk to communities from wildfire.
- Maximize the collective synergy of Federal, tribal, state, local, and private response resources.

# TRIBAL CONSULTATION AND COLLABORATION

- The Wildland Fire Management program is committed to effective collaboration with American Indians and Alaska Native treaty and non-treaty tribes to inform Federal decision-makers.
- In September 2014, OWF issued Policy Memorandum, "Tribal Consultation and Coordination for the DOI's WFM Program".
- Consultation includes formal government to government consultation and informal discussions and exchanges
- Consultation on program and policy issues at the national level – responsibility of OWF.
- Consultation on implementation at the regional/local level – responsibility of each bureau.

# TRIBAL CONSULTATION (CONTINUED)

- Since the 2014 release of its Policy Memorandum, OWF has strengthened our information exchange, for example:
  - Created a webpage dedicated to Tribal C&C
  - Conducted two formal consultations in FY 2015 regarding RBWFM, QFR, SO 3336, and RBWFM.
  - OWF Director issued annual letter to Tribal leaders outlining OWF Commitments and Priorities.
  - OWF Director participates in quarterly sub-committee meetings of the ITTC.
  - OWF continues to provide training designed to enhance understanding of cultural perspectives and administrative requirements.

# CHALLENGES - FUTURE

- The 2014 Quadrennial Fire Review (QFR) was released May 2015
- Developed with engagement of more than 2,000 participants, including Tribes; subject of Tribal Consultation Sessions
- A strategic evaluation designed to help identify influences, trends, needs, and circumstances that will affect wildland fire management 10-20 years in the future, and to help inform long-term program direction



# QFR REPORT: THREE MAIN COMPONENTS

1. Baseline Assessment of key factors (changing climatic conditions, workforce, risk management, and operations capabilities)
2. Futures Assessment, describing four possible futures for wildland fire management that are representative of key long-term trends and illustrative of possible variations in future circumstances
3. Conclusions and Actions for Consideration

## QFR (CONTINUED)

- QFR's four plausible alternative futures:
  1. Hot, Dry, and Out of Control
  2. Suppression Centric
  3. Resilient Landscapes
  4. Radical Change

# QUESTIONS

