




**United States Department of the Interior  
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS  
NATIONAL INTERAGENCY FIRE CENTER  
3833 SOUTH DEVELOPMENT AVENUE  
BOISE, IDAHO 83705-5354**

June 26, 2008

Memorandum

To: All Regional Directors, All Regions  
Attention: Forestry/Fire Management

From: Acting Director, Branch of Wildland Fire Management 

Subject: Verification of Wildland Fire Use Statistics

Requests for agency-specific data for the Wildland Fire Use (WFU) program are becoming more frequent, and each of the Federal fire agencies is working to ensure its statistics are accurate and consistent among the multiple sources of this information. Our Wildland Fire Use program is small, but it is important that we strive for an accurate and reliable historical record of wildland fire use in Indian Country.

The Wildland Fire Use Statistics (attached) is current information that the Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Interagency Fire Center (BIA-NIFC) houses. BIA-NIFC has attempted to correct the available data and make it consistent between the three primary sources of wildland fire occurrence information—the National Situation Report maintained by the National Interagency Coordination Center, the National Fire Plan Operations and Reporting System (NFPORS), and the Wildland Fire Management Information system (WFMI). All wildland fire use incidents reported through any one of these sources for the past eleven years were examined to determine if the incident met the criteria for wildland fire use; namely, the fire was naturally-ignited, the hosting unit's Fire Management Plan allowed for wildland fire use, and the incident was managed under a Wildland Fire Implementation Plan (WFIP).

BIA-NIFC is requesting your region's assistance in further refining the accuracy of this information. Much of the information used to correct the data was obtained by making contact with reporting entities and eliminating fires that were miscoded as WFU, but the information may not be complete—specifically, there may be additional WFU incidents in Indian Country that do not appear in any of the information sources consulted.

Please distribute the attached document to your forestry and fire personnel with the request to send corrections/additions to Mary Taber, BIA-NIFC Fire Ecologist, at 208.387.5042 or [mary\\_taber@nifc.gov](mailto:mary_taber@nifc.gov) by July 11, 2008.



## Wildland Fire Use Statistics for Indian Country 1997-2007



**Date: June 10, 2008**

**Issue:** Requests for agency-specific data for the Wildland Fire Use (WFU) program are becoming more frequent. Searching the available sources for BIA wildland fire use statistics yields conflicting and often inaccurate results that are not supported by closer examination of the data source and direct contact with reporting entities.

### Existing Data

**Wildland Fire Use Fires and Acres for the BIA**

| Year | Data Source<br>Fires/Acres | NICC<br>(Sit Report) | NFPORS | WFMI   | Other  |
|------|----------------------------|----------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| 1997 |                            | --                   | --     | 1/1906 |        |
| 1998 |                            | 4/8                  | --     | 0/0    |        |
| 1999 |                            | 2/1                  | --     | 0/0    |        |
| 2000 |                            | 0/0                  | --     | 0/0    |        |
| 2001 |                            | 3/0                  | --     | 0/0    |        |
| 2002 |                            | 0/0                  | --     | 0/0    |        |
| 2003 |                            | 10/42                | --     | 1/1    |        |
| 2004 |                            | 0/0                  | 2/20   | 1/<1   |        |
| 2005 |                            | 1/3680               | 0/0    | 0/0    |        |
| 2006 |                            | 1/105                | 0/0    | 0/0    | 1/3047 |
| 2007 |                            | 1/330                | 0/0    | 0/0    |        |

*Detailed information on individual incidents is contained in Attachment A.*

### Corrected Data

As of May 16, 2008, the following information has been verified based on fact-checking with Coordination Centers, examination of fire reports in WFMI and/or direct contact with the reporting unit.

| Year | Verified WFU<br>Fires/Acres |
|------|-----------------------------|
| 1997 | 1/1906                      |
| 1998 | 0/0                         |
| 1999 | 0/0                         |
| 2000 | 0/0                         |
| 2001 | 0/0                         |
| 2002 | 0/0                         |
| 2003 | 0/0                         |
| 2004 | 0/0                         |
| 2005 | 1/3680                      |
| 2006 | 1/105                       |
| 2007 | 0/0                         |

*Sources used for verification of this information are listed in Attachment A.*

**Requested Information:** Much of the information used to correct the data was obtained by making contact with reporting entities and eliminating fires that were miscoded as WFU, but the information may not be complete—specifically, there may be additional WFU incidents in Indian Country that do not appear in any of the information sources consulted. Information concerning other WFU incidents in Indian Country should be directed to Mary Taber for follow-up.

**Contact:** Mary Taber, BIA-NIFC Fire Ecologist, (208) 387-5042, [mary\\_taber@nifc.gov](mailto:mary_taber@nifc.gov)

**Attachment A**  
*Individual Incident Information and Sources of Information*

**Wildland Fire Use Fires and Acres for the BIA**

| <b>Data Source</b> | <b>NICC</b>               | <b>NFPORS</b>       | <b>WFMI</b>         | <b>Other</b>         | <b>Verified</b> |
|--------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Year</b>        | <b>Fires/Acres</b>        | <b>(Sit Report)</b> |                     | <b>Incidents</b>     |                 |
| 1997               | --                        | --                  | 1/1906 <sup>1</sup> |                      | <b>1/1906</b>   |
| 1998               | 4/8 <sup>2</sup>          | --                  | 0/0                 |                      | 0/0             |
| 1999               | 2/1 <sup>3</sup>          | --                  | 0/0                 |                      | 0/0             |
| 2000               | 0/0                       | --                  | 0/0                 |                      | 0/0             |
| 2001               | 3/0 <sup>4</sup>          | --                  | 0/0                 |                      | 0/0             |
| 2002               | 0/0                       | --                  | 0/0                 |                      | 0/0             |
| 2003               | 10/42 <sup>5</sup>        | --                  | 1/1 <sup>6</sup>    |                      | 0/0             |
| 2004               | 0/0                       | 2/20 <sup>7</sup>   | 1/<1 <sup>6</sup>   |                      | 0/0             |
| 2005               | <b>1/3680<sup>8</sup></b> | 0/0                 | 0/0                 |                      | <b>1/3680</b>   |
| 2006               | <b>1/105<sup>9</sup></b>  | 0/0                 | 0/0                 | 1/3047 <sup>10</sup> | <b>1/105</b>    |
| 2007               | 1/330 <sup>11</sup>       | 0/0                 | 0/0                 |                      | 0/0             |

**Verified WFU incidents in bold**

<sup>1</sup> San Carlos Apache Reservation—Green Fire

<sup>2</sup> 3 fires from NWCC (2 from Yakama, 1 from Warm Springs)—not authorized for wildland fire use; 1 from RMCC (miscoded).

<sup>3</sup> 1 fire from RMCC (miscoded); 1 fire from WGBC (miscoded).

<sup>4</sup> 2 fires from RMCC (miscoded); 1 fire from WGBC (miscoded).

<sup>5</sup> 2 fires from OSCC [S. California] (miscoded); 8 fires from NRCC (Northern Cheyenne) (miscoded).

<sup>6</sup> Tohono O'Odham Reservation: Debris burning miscoded (based on WFMI Fire Report)

<sup>7</sup> 1 fire from Seminole; Seminole not authorized for wildland fire use. 1 fire from Mescalero; Mescalero not authorized for wildland fire use.

<sup>8</sup> San Carlos Apache Reservation—Rocky Tank Fire: Managed under a Stage II WFIP; rain event put the fire out prior to obtaining the agency administrator's signature on the WFIP.

<sup>9</sup> Uintah & Ouray Reservation—Saleratus Fire (acreage has been variously reported between 105-135 acres)

<sup>10</sup> Flathead Reservation: The Ashley Lake Fire was managed under a WFSA due to lack of a required signature on the new fire management plan authorizing WFU; strategy and tactics were based on objectives for resource benefit and safety considerations in steep terrain. A Fire Use Management Team was ordered but not filled due to higher priorities. Has been reported as a WFU incident in some publications.

<sup>11</sup> Crow Agency (Rx fire miscoded by dispatch center)

**Information Sources:**

NICC—Website: <[http://www.nifc.gov/fire\\_info/wfu\\_fires.htm](http://www.nifc.gov/fire_info/wfu_fires.htm)> Accessed 6/18/07.

RMCC—Marco Perrier in consultation with Southern Ute and Ute Mountain Agency personnel.

NRCC—Colleen Finneman and Gary Boyd in consultation with Billings Dispatch Center.

NWCC—Pat Houghton

WGBC—Randy Dzialo

OSCC—Ralph Satterberg

SWCC—Jay Ellington (corrected 2007 data—miscoded fires from Hualapai Reservation; correction has been made in national sit report and no longer appears).

Mescalero—Hal Luedtke, SWRO Fuels Specialist

Seminole—Tony Recker, Eastern Region FMO

Yakama & Warm Springs—Cory Winnie, NWRO FMO

San Carlos Apache Reservation—Bil Grauel, Fire Use & Fuels Specialist

Flathead Reservation—Tony Harwood, CS&KT FMO

UNITED STATES  
 DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
 BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

NIFC OFFICE ROUTE SLIP

| SUBJECT: WFU Statistics Memorandum  |          |                       |  |
|---|----------|-----------------------|--|
| FROM (NAME AND OFFICE)<br>BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS-NATIONAL INTERAGENCY FIRE CENTER |          | PHONE<br>208/387-5696 | DATE ROUTED<br>June 26, 2008   |
| ROUTE TO CODE   | RELEASED |                       | COMMENTS   |
|   | INITIAL  | DATE                  |  |
| Administration  |          |                       | Teresa Ann Wesley, Administrative Assistant                            |
| Administration  |          |                       | Administrative Officer<br>SURNAME                                      |
| Administration  |          |                       | Deputy Director<br>SURNAME   |
| Chief   |          |                       | SIGNATURE - Director, Branch of Wildland Fire Management<br>SURNAME    |
| Administration  |          |                       | Teresa Ann Wesley, Administrative Assistant<br>Distribution and Filing |
| ADDITIONAL COMMENTS   |          |                       |  |