



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
NATIONAL INTERAGENCY FIRE CENTER
3833 South Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705-5354



February 23, 2011

Memorandum

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

From: Acting Director, Branch of Wildland Fire Management

Subject: Career Training Opportunities - Technical Fire Management
(TFM 27, 2010 – 2012) and other academic programs.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Interagency Fire Center (BIA-NIFC) is offering a training opportunity for fire management and natural resource management employees to attend Technical Fire Management sponsored by the Washington Institute and Humboldt State University. This educational opportunity is designed to improve the technical proficiency of fire or natural resource specialists beyond the level that may be attained through on-the-job experience. The curriculum is rigorous and includes subjects such as statistics, economics, fuels management, fire ecology, and fire management planning. In addition to TFM, applications for other academic programs may also be considered.

TARGET AUDIENCE - This training is for GS 6-11 career and career-conditional employees who intend to pursue a career in fire management and may currently be performing jobs such as assistant fire management officer, fuels management specialist, wildland fire operations specialist, engine foreman, hotshot superintendent, etc. (applicants holding other jobs will be considered). The full benefit of the program is realized by those who have specialized work experience in fire and fuels management. It is targeted to individuals who do not possess a 4-year biological sciences, agriculture, or natural resources management degree. However, college graduates may also be considered.

COMMITMENTS – As with any academic program, this experience is demanding and stressful. Please consider this before applying for the program. TFM is 18 months long, divided into five 2-week modules and a final project report. In order to satisfactorily complete the program, students can expect to devote extra time to the course work, outside normal working hours. The focus of the final project is agreed upon by the home unit manager, the student and the responsible Fire Management Officer, with concurrence from the agency TFM Steering Committee representative.

The final project is a written report culminating the learning process, and is often the most challenging part of the program. This project is accomplished by systematically describing, analyzing, and solving the problems/subject selected. The student is required to make an oral presentation before a panel of interagency representatives to defend the decision criteria used in the analysis and solving the problem. This project must be completed within the established time frames. There is an expectation that all BIA-sponsored students will successfully complete the entire program.

FUNDING - The tuition for the Technical Fire Management Program will be funded by the BIA-NIFC. Once students are selected for the program, the BIA-NIFC will provide for tuition, travel, and per diem costs for the duration of the program. The total cost for this program is approximately \$20,000 per student. The cancellation fee without replacement by July 30, 2011 is approximately \$2,500 and may be charged to the student who does not show up for the first module. All other costs associated with the course will be borne by the home unit or appropriate Region. It is expected that the applicant will discuss time requirements and funding sources with their supervisor prior to applying for this training opportunity. All employee base salary costs are the responsibility of the home unit. It will be understood that the BIA will not pay overtime for the student to attend the course or complete the final project.

Funding for academic programs other than TFM will also be considered. However, TFM students will receive priority during application evaluation.

PREREQUISITES - Candidates **MUST** have completed S-390, Introduction to Wildland Fire Behavior Calculations. In addition, the following skills are required: technical writing course or the equivalent, basic math and algebraic manipulation, basic personal computer skills (Windows Vista or 7 with Microsoft Office 2007 or later with Word, Powerpoint, or Excel), Internet Explorer 7.0 or later, FIREFAMILY+, and BEHAVE PLUS Version 4.0.

Candidates may also want to acquire the following skills or knowledge prior to beginning the program: knowledge of National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA), field sampling and measurement, use of CONSUME, Fire Planning Analysis, Forest Vegetation Simulation, KCFAST, WIMS, and knowledge of NFDRS processes.

PROGRAM INFORMATION - The dates of each TFM module are shown below:

Module I, Math Fundamentals	October 24 - 28, 2011
Module II, Numerical Analysis for Fire Managers	November 28 – December 9, 2011
Module III, Financial Forest Administration	January 9 – 20, 2012
Module IV, Fuels and Fire Behavior	February 28 - March 9, 2012
Module V, Fire Effects	April 30 - May11, 2012
Module VI, Fire and Land Management	October 1-12, 2012
Module VII, Final Projects	April 15-19, 2013

SERVICE PROGRAM AGREEMENT - Selected candidates will sign an agreement to complete this training, and will enclose this signed agreement with their application package

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(Attachment 3). Failure to complete and pass all training modules, including the final project, may require repayment by the employee of all the training costs expended on the employees' behalf. Both students and supervisors are reminded that this training requires a total commitment and dedicated time to satisfactorily complete the 18-month-long program.

PROGRAM CREDITS - It has been determined that successful completion of this program will qualify the candidate for 18 of the 24 academic hours required to qualify for the General Biological Science series (GS-401). Students will need to present a certificate from the Washington Institute to their Personnel Officer in order to obtain this credit. The certificate will only be issued after completion and presentation of the final project. The student must complete all modules and earn a passing score of 70 percent on the mid-term and final examination. The student has the option of buying college credits (three per module) through Humboldt State University. This cost is borne by the student; BIA will not pay for these credits. Humboldt State University credits do not need to be purchased in order for TFM credits to be applied toward qualification in the GS-401 series, provided the person completes TFM, including the final.

NUMBER OF CANDIDATES SELECTED – Depending on the status of the national budget, up to five (5) TFM student enrollments are available to the BIA for TFM-27. All persons with a professional interest in fire management are encouraged to apply.

SELECTION PROCESS - Applications will be rated and prioritized by Asst. Director - Training, BIA-NIFC.

HOW TO APPLY - Applicants must submit the following documents.

- SF-171, OF-612, or Resume. Include a copy of any college transcripts.
- Copy of IQCS Master Record printout.
- Application Statement, Recommendation and Approval form (Attachment 1) through your appropriate Fire Management Officer.
- Response to the Selection Criteria (Attachment 2), not to exceed three pages for all criteria.
- A signed TFM Program Agreement (Attachment 3) is attached with your application.

WHERE TO SEND APPLICATION PACKAGES - all materials must be RECEIVED by June 01, 2011. Extensions will not be given for those missing the deadline.

Send application packages to:

Dave Koch
Attention: Technical Fire Management
Bureau of Indian Affairs
National Interagency Fire Center
3833 South Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705-5354

If you have questions, please contact Dave Koch, Assistant Director, Training, at 208.387.5577.

Attachments:

- 1 - Applicant Statement, Recommendation and Approval
- 2 - Selection Criteria
- 3 - TFM Program Agreement 2010-2012

bcc: BIA231:Surname:BIA231Chrono:BureauRF:Hold
BIA231:Dkoch:2.23.2011:TFM27Announcement2010-2012.doc:208.387.5577

**TECHNICAL FIRE MANAGEMENT
APPLICANT STATEMENT, RECOMMENDATIONS AND APPROVAL**

STUDENT: Discuss why you wish to attend TFM, and include how this program will help you achieve your short and long term career goals.

IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR RECOMMENDATIONS: I approve the candidate's attendance at TFM, and I will ensure necessary dedicated time and support are available to the student to successfully complete this program.
Comments:

Signature – Immediate Supervisor

Date

REGIONAL FIRE MANAGEMENT OFFICER RECOMMENDATION: I approve the candidate's attendance at TFM, and will ensure necessary support is available to the student to successfully complete this program. Coordination has occurred between the Agency/Tribe and this office regarding the appropriateness of this candidate and time availability.
Comments:

Signature - Regional Fire Management Officer

Date

TECHNICAL FIRE MANAGEMENT SELECTION CRITERIA

Please submit a narrative statement addressing your knowledge, skills, and abilities related to the following criteria when applying to attend the Technical Fire Management Program. Be sure to address all listed items specifically, and limit your total response to these questions to no more than a total of three pages, single-spaced.

1. How have you been able to demonstrate, during your career to date, your ability to communicate both orally and in writing?
2. Describe your knowledge of fire management program planning, including the following specific items:
 - Management Planning Documents
 - Budgeting
 - Preparedness
 - Prevention
 - Severity
3. Describe your knowledge of fire-related effects and how that knowledge was gained, including the following specific subject areas:
 - General ecology
 - Forest, range, or woodland management
 - Mechanical fuels treatments
 - Prescribed fire fuels treatments
 - Smoke management
4. What is your level of ability with regard to the use of computer hardware and software? Describe your experience and skill level using the following programs or other applications related to fire management and hazardous fuels reduction programs:
 - BEHAVE PLUS, CONSUME
 - NFDERS, KCFEAST, WIMS
 - FPA (Fire Planning Analysis)
 - FVS (Forest Vegetation Simulator)
 - Word Processing (e.g., Microsoft Word)
 - Microsoft PowerPoint
 - Database/Spreadsheet (e.g., Excel, Access)
 - Operating Systems (e.g., Windows 2000 or better)
5. What is your assessment of your math and statistics skills? Have you received instruction in advanced algebra and/or statistics since graduating from high school? If so, attach documentation such as transcripts, certificates of completion, etc.
6. Briefly describe your knowledge and experience in fire operations, including fireline experience, Incident Management Team qualifications, and hands-on experience in fire program management on a daily basis.

**TECHNICAL FIRE MANAGEMENT
PROGRAM AGREEMENT 2010-2012**

1. As a requirement of this program, training must be completed within 12 months following the scheduled date of the final project presentation (Module VII, Final Projects).
2. Class attendance will occur during the person's normal duty hours. However, there will be study time required after hours, and the student is expected to meet this requirement. Due to the nature of this educational opportunity and the significant cost to the government, the student will not be compensated for time spent on the program after hours. Time spent on the final project will require work time at the home unit and after hours, and must be agreed upon between the supervisor and the student. It is the home unit's responsibility to assist the student in meeting the project needs.
3. Studies must be completed with a 70 percent overall score to meet the credit requirements. If the student does not maintain a 70 percent, then the student will need to show effort was made to maintain a passing grade and was the result of unforeseen circumstances. ***Due to the nature of this educational opportunity, a student who does not successfully complete the course, including the final project report, may be required to repay the government for the total amount expended. Costs incurred to re-take a module because the student received a failing grade will be the expense of the student, not the government.***
4. An SF-182 Request Authorization, Agreement and Certificate of Training will be completed by the Branch of Fire Management. Tuition, travel, and per diem will be funded by the National Office. The student will be required to send copies of completed travel vouchers to the National Office for accounting purposes. Salary costs are the responsibility of the local unit. No overtime is to be charged to the National Office. Any additional expenses (i.e. supplies) incurred related to this program will be funded by either the local unit or the students Regional Office.

Signatures:

_____	_____
Applicant	Date
_____	_____
Supervisor	Date
_____	_____
Regional Fire Management Officer	Date
_____	_____
National TFM Program Manager	Date

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