



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
Washington, DC 20240

APR 09 2018

IN REPLY REFER TO:

Memorandum

To: All Regional Directors
Attention: Forestry/Fire Management

From: Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs

Subject: Update to the National Fire Danger Rating System (NFDRS)

The attached memorandum, issued by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG), announces a major update to the National Fire Danger Rating System (NFDRS). NFDRS is an essential wildland fire management decision support tool for Indian Country and our interagency partners. This update, named NFDRS2016, significantly enhances our decision support capabilities by improving fire danger prediction and analysis and simplifying its processes and components (fuel models, applications, and algorithms).

NWCG recommends a two-year implementation period to allow all wildland fire programs an opportunity to update NFDRS-related products, plans, and analyses. The Bureau of Indian Affairs, (BIA) endorses this recommendation and supports Chapter 10 of the 2018 Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations, which states the intent for every field-level wildland fire program is to have and use valid Fire Danger Operating Plans (FDOP) and Fire Danger PocketCards.

The desired end-state for Indian Country is to have all field-level units with a wildland fire program using valid FDOPs and PocketCard(s), generated from the NFDRS2016 update, by May 2020. By leveraging interagency partnerships and developing awareness and expertise within our workforce, Indian Country can attain this goal.

The Branch of Wildland Fire Management recommends regional and field-level personnel attend Geographic Area workshops, starting in fall 2018, to learn about NFDRS2016 and to begin developing or updating their products, ideally as a partner to an interagency or multi-unit FDOP. Relevant field-level users, such as fire managers and dispatchers, should attend an annual NWCG's Intermediate NFDRS (S-491) course. Finally, to develop a cadre of experts capable of supporting BIA and interagency partners at the Region, Geographic Area and national levels, one or two subject matter experts from each region should attend the biennial national Advanced NFDRS course. While the workload for this effort is substantial, NFDRS2016 will provide a tool that improves our wildfire readiness, responses, and risk management for Indian Country and its neighbors.

The Branch of Wildland Fire Management is available to provide guidance and technical assistance. Contact Steven Larrabee (steven.larrabee@bia.gov, (208) 387-5586) to review your Region's current state of compliance and to develop an implementation strategy for NFDRS2016.

Attachment: NWCG Memorandum No. 18-001, National Fire Danger Rating System 2016 Release