Guide For Review of Prescribed Fire Plans

The following guidance is not intended to address every element of a prescribed fire plan. The elements addressed are considered to be important to the overall implementation of the plan. Previous experience has shown that problems may result when the listed items have not been clearly addressed. The guide is intended for use by the reviewer and prescribed fire plan developers.

Element

____ 1. Vicinity and unit maps clearly define project.

Is an overall map included showing the position of the unit in relation to the surrounding geographical area? Detailed maps must be provided which shows the project boundary and any areas outside the unit which could potentially be affected by an escaped fire, the unit=s topographic features, fuels inside and outside of the burn unit, potential hazards, areas of special concern, control line locations, escape routes and safety zones, water sources (be sure off-site sources are identified), and ignition patterns.

____ 2. Primary resource objectives for the unit, the objectives of the fire, and the acceptable range of results are appropriate.

The goals and objectives are stated for this specific burn. This section must include the reason for the burn (fuel reduction, maintenance, endangered species, etc.) and measurable objectives, such as percentage of plants killed, area burned, etc.

____ 3. Fuel Model(s) accurately reflect the vegetative type(s) that are present.

NFES or custom fuel model indicated reflects the fuels in the unit. The bottom line is the fuel model used must predict the expected fire behavior as accurately as possible.

____ 4. Complexity Analysis completed.

The complexity analysis form is completed and attached. Fuels and features inside and outside the unit are considered. The only entry required in this section of the plan is one which indicates the overall rating and refers to the attachment.

____ 5. Plan adequately addresses site preparation requirements.

The line to be built, equipment to be used to prep the site or to be prepositioned prior to ignition, features to be protected, warning signs to be placed, weather recording requirements, permits to be obtained, etc. must be included. Such things as signs to be made, equipment to be leased or purchased can and should be included, as well. Responsible individuals or functional groups and standards

are identified for each task.

____ 6. Weather information for all phases of the project and the means of obtaining it are listed.

Source(s) of weather information, who is responsible for obtaining it, and when it will be obtained have been included. Provisions have been made to secure a spot weather forecast. Depending on the fuels involved, have extended forecasts for the post-ignition period been considered? Methods and procedures for obtaining smoke dispersal forecasts, if required, are also listed. Web sites, telephone numbers, and person(s) to be contacted, if available, are identified.

____ 7. Acceptable range of values is reasonable and plan includes a prediction of expected fire behavior.

The general time period in which the burn will take place has been indicated. Have any periods during this time period when the burn can not take place been identified? Values are compatible with the objectives to be obtained and are reasonable and interdependent (moisture of extinction, 20' wind speed/midflame wind speed, etc.) Acceptable ranges of fire behavior and parameters of weather and fuel moisture content are indicated. A BEHAVE run with bracketed values or RXWINDOWS run is included.

____ 8. Cumulative effects of weather and drought on fire behavior are considered.

The burn unit and adjacent areas have been examined and a determination has been made that the effects of cumulative weather is or is not a factor in the decision to conduct the burn. This element must be addressed, either positively or negatively. If drought is a consideration, the burn plan should address what effects prolonged drought will have, how it will be determined that unusually dry conditions are present, and what will be done if conditions are dry. Drought indicators such as the Energy Release Component (ERC) , KBDI, or Palmer Drought Index are addressed, and the sources and methods for obtaining the information, including web sites, telephone numbers, and contacts are indicated.

____ 9. Prescribed Fire Organization adequately provides for anticipated needs.

The positions that will be utilized and the minimum qualifications needed are listed. Specific personnel are listed only if they are essential to conducting the burn. The number and types of crew personnel, equipment, and the supervisory structure that are needed are specified. (An Organization Chart is quite acceptable [and recommended]).

____ 10. Smoke management issues and mitigation needs adequately addressed.

Potential smoke sensitive areas are identified, management strategies to avoid them have been developed, and necessary conditions have been specified. Air

quality compliance steps which must be taken, what permits are required and who is to obtain them are addressed. If traffic control measures are needed, procedures have been thoroughly planned, including personnel and equipment needs, locations, procedures, communications, crew briefing, and safety considerations.

Except in special cases involving airports, hospitals, heavily traveled roads, etc., a smoke trajectory map is recommended but not required.

____ 11. Pre-burn coordination and contacts are listed.

If other agencies, the public, and local landowners should be contacted, a list should be included with the name of the person or agency, telephone numbers or other means of contact, time/date notified, and a place to document unsuccessful attempts. Has the person responsible for making the notifications been identified and when the contacts are to be made indicated?

____ 12. Crew Briefing Outline attached.

Has a short, concise list of things to be covered during the crew briefing before the fire is started been included? This can be in body of plan but an attachment which can be used in the field is preferred. The standard Region 6 Prescribed Fire Briefing Outline can be used.

____ 13. Ignition plan adequately addresses methods and sequence. Ignition sequencing map attached. A test fire is planned.

Does the plan describe in detail the methods and procedures to be used during the firing and how the fire is to be held? This section should include the number and types of personnel, equipment, and assignments. Are there provisions for an adequate test fire in representative fuel type(s)?

The plan has been developed with a preferred wind direction. If more than one vector can be used, is this indicated? Additional maps and ignition descriptions may be included.

____ 14. Safety issues and escape routes and safety zones are identified.

Does the plan adequately describe safety and emergency procedures? Does this section specify that all personnel will have the required personal protective equipment, including fire shelter? Does the plan identify and adequately address safety hazards to fire personnel and the public, methods to be taken to reduce the hazards, escape routes and safety zones? Designated escape routes and safety zones should be identified on the project map when of a specific nature.

____ 15. Go-No-Go Checklist attached.
Use established Go-No-Go checklist as an example.

____ 16. Critical control problems identified and mitigated.

Self-explanatory.

____ 17. Water resupply needs are covered.

Are water resupply needs addressed? Have sources been identified on the project map, if possible? If off site or out of the area, the locations should be clearly described and/or a map included. Have they included specific information concerning dump stations (Special fittings, payment required, etc.)? The use of tenders and portable tanks and pumps should also be addressed, as appropriate.

____ 18. An adequate continency plan in an event of an escaped fire is included.

The acceptable prescription and contingency plan considers predicted fire behavior in fuels within a reasonable proximity outside of the burn unit should an escape occur.

Procedures to be followed and actions to be taken if the fire exceeds the abilities of the holding crew to keep it within prescribed boundaries or Maximum Manageable Area (if any) are fully addressed. What contingency actions constitute a significant departure from what was planned or expected, the trigger points that will be used to reclassify the burn as a wildland fire, and the person responsible for making the decision are clearly defined. What notifications need to occur?

The person who will serve as incident commander must be identified. Forces which are to take initial attack action, and strategies and tactics to be used must be identified. The number and type of contingency forces needed and limits to their availability (e.g. constraints due to regional and national fire activity, hours of the day [RVFD=s], etc.) should be identified. List the means of verifying their availability on burn day, how to contact them when needed, and have place to document the contacts. Indicate radio frequency(ies) to be used for suppression efforts.

____ 19. Mop up and rehabilitation standards are established.

Are mop up and rehab standards expressed in quantifiable terms? (e.g., When all smokes are extinguished, water bars placed in highly erodible areas, etc.). A mop up organization chart with numbers, types, and assignments of resources should be included if warranted.

____ 20. Medical and Communications plan completed and attached?

Region 6 Communications and Medical Plans with specific details and procedures should be attached.