

Departments of Interior and Agriculture Improve Wildland Fire Management  
03/28/2011

WASHINGTON – Today the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Department of the Interior (DOI) released two documents to address the wildland fire management challenges across America -- A National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy (Cohesive Strategy) and The Federal Land Assistance, Management and Enhancement Act of 2009 – Report to Congress. Together, these documents provide the framework for a three-phase, strategic effort to restore and maintain resilient landscapes, create fire-adapted communities, and respond to wildfires. The effort has been overseen by the Wildland Fire Leadership Council, an intergovernmental body of federal, state, tribal and municipal stakeholders.

The documents' creation and implementation is considered phase one and will serve as the foundation for the entire effort. Regional strategies will be developed in the next phase, and a national trade-off analysis will be conducted in the final phase. This phased approach will enhance the ability to plan for, respond to, and recover from wildland fire incidents.

The two documents address the wildfire challenges faced by fire and natural resource managers and the fire community at all levels, ranging from cost-effectiveness and risk to climate change.

"Wildland fire management is complex and involves a wide range of federal, state, local, tribal and non-governmental stakeholders," said Rhea Suh, DOI Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget. "A key to success for this effort is its inclusiveness. This cohesive strategy effort has applicability and relevance across all wildland fire management agencies and jurisdictions -- from rural fire departments to state forestry agencies and federal land management agencies."

Jay Jensen, USDA Deputy Undersecretary for Natural Resources and the Environment, also emphasized the importance of collaboration. "This effort is groundbreaking and involves full partnership among federal, state, local, tribal and non-governmental partners," said Jensen. "These partnerships will be invaluable and will enable us to stay ahead of wildland issues in a truly collaborative, all-lands approach to wildland fire management."

Implementation of the effort will require close coordination between the multiple partners, including the state, tribal and local groups. "State Foresters are engaged and ready to move forward to address wildland fire with a national, all-lands approach," said Jeff Jahnke, President of the National Association of State Foresters. "This effort will allow us to build upon the success of the recently completed statewide forest resource assessments."

The reports, The Federal Land Assistance, Management and Enhancement Act of 2009 – Report to Congress, and A National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy, along with continued updates on the cohesive strategy effort are publicly available at [www.forestsandangelands.gov](http://www.forestsandangelands.gov).

<http://www.doi.gov/news/pressreleases/Departments-of-Interior-and-Agriculture-Improve-Wildland-Fire-Management.cfm>