



From the Fire Director



It all starts with planning.. whether its incident response, fuels treatment, workforce development, communications, fire management plans, or strategic workload assessment, planning is involved.

This issue of *Wildland Fire News* focuses on our national wildland fire planning efforts. I hope you will take a peek, see some old friends, learn something new, and think about **your** role in wildland fire. Are you planning for our future?

Bill Kaage



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Fire Director	1
FY2010 Spending	1
Proposed FY2011 Funding	1
Conditions Affect Budget	2
Analysis Systems	3
FPA	4
PDS	5
STARFire	5
FMP Template	6
2010 RFA Update	6
Honor Guard	7
READ Training	8
FAM Blogger	9
Program Planning Staff	9
Note from the Program Lead	9
Fire and Wilderness	10

Four Months Left to Spend FY2010 Wildland Fire Management Funds

Regions may return preparedness and hazardous fuels funds to the national office for redistribution until July 1, 2010. As the Department, OMB and Congress continue to scrutinize carry-over of funds in agency budgets, the national office is working to identify opportunities to use returned funds for additional fuels performance gains, supplemental preparedness resources, and pre-payment of future contract years. As the federal budget environment continues to tighten, limiting carry-over of current year funds will help NPS defend its future budget requests.

Contact: Jeff Scott
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Everglades National Park successfully executed the 2,200-acre Heck House prescribed burn in FY2010.

Three-Tiered System for Suppression Funding Proposed in 2011 President's Budget Request

The FY 2011 President's Budget Request for Wildland Fire Management proposes a three-tiered system for funding suppression. The first tier is the regular Wildland Fire Management Suppression Operations account, to be used for initial attack and predictable firefighting costs.

The second tier is the Federal Land Assistance, Management and Enhancement Act (FLAME) Wildfire Suppression Reserve Fund, established in 2010. FLAME funds are available to

the Secretary of the Interior for transfer into the Suppression Operations account when those funds are nearly exhausted, or when certain objective criteria are met as described in the FLAME Act. FLAME funds may be transferred upon a declaration by the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture. Declarations must be based on specific protocols and criteria or when the suppression account is nearly exhausted. As fires escape, risk assessments will
continued on page 2...

PRESIDENT'S BUDGET REQUEST, CONT...
be made that become part of the recommendation for the Secretary to issue a declaration. The Wildland Fire Decision Support System (WFDSS) will be used to provide real-time support to fire managers implementing risk-informed management.

The third tier in the system is the Presidential Wildland Fire Contingency Reserve. This contingency fund would be available to the Secretary of the Interior subject to the issuance of a Presidential finding when the suppression appropriation and FLAME funds, fully funded at the 10-year

suppression average, are exhausted. The Secretary also retains the authority to transfer funds from non-fire accounts to maintain ongoing suppression operations.

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Economic and Political Conditions Affect Wildland Fire Budgets

The FY2011 President's Budget Request for Wildland Fire Management includes reductions to the Preparedness and Hazardous Fuels accounts, as well as increases to the three Suppression accounts. The 2011 President's Budget Request for DOI wildland fire management proposes approximately a \$5 million reduction in Preparedness and a \$43 million reduction in Fuels. For NPS this amounts to a \$632,000 reduction in Preparedness and a \$7,030,500 reduction in Fuels.

In addition to these planned program reductions the President's Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has not funded personnel fixed cost increases within the budget request. Fixed costs cover expenses such as annual pay raises and increases in benefit costs. This is effectively another \$1.7 million reduction since these costs must be absorbed within current funding levels.

The total impact for NPS is approximately a \$9.4 million, or 14 percent, reduction in wildland fire management program funds from a total of approximately \$70 million in combined funding for Preparedness and Fuels. Furthermore, OMB has provided specific guidance that indicates 90 percent or more of all fuels funding should be focused in the wildland



urban interface (WUI) and up to 10 percent may be focused in areas directly adjacent to the WUI.

The likelihood that the President's Budget Request will pass through Congress without adjustment is unknown. Given the current political climate and upcoming election, it is difficult to predict the level at which Congress will fund the wildland fire management program. Due to it being an election year, it is unlikely we will have an appropriation passed prior to the beginning of the fiscal year and it is likely an appropriation will not be passed until after the new Congress has been convened. This means that for FY2011 all budget planning strategies need to be made using the President's Budget Request as the basis for allocating funds, so the Fire Management Leadership Board (FMLB) is developing contingency plans to address the potential issues the NPS would face if the President's Budget passes through Congress unchanged.

The result is expenditures in wildland fire must be reduced across the Service. These reductions may include staffing, travel, equipment, and other operational expenses. We in NPS must become more efficient in how we manage our program and look for more cost-effective ways to accomplish our mission.

Although the final appropriation may look very different than the current request, economic and political conditions are not conducive to these funding reductions being restored. In the longer term constrained budgets are likely. Guidance for preparation of the 2012 budget request indicates, "[t]he Department anticipates a very constrained Wildland Fire Management budget for the foreseeable future, making additional investments in Preparedness or Hazardous Fuels Reduction funding unlikely. As a result, the Department should ensure that our limited Preparedness and Fuels dollars are invested wisely to maximize their effectiveness in preventing and mitigating catastrophic wildfires." Our goal is to minimize the impacts of these funding reductions through strategic workforce management and maximizing efficiency in all areas of our program.

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Which Wildland Fire Analysis System Rules?

The Wildland Fire Management program has become a veritable alphabet soup of planning analysis systems - FPA, PDS, HFPAS, and STARFire. The question is how do these systems interrelate and when should they be used? This article clarifies the purpose of these planning systems, their relationship to each other, and general guidance on when they are used.



FIRE PROGRAM ANALYSIS (FPA) is a high level, strategic, interagency fire planning and budget analysis system. FPA is used by the five federal fire agencies to analyze and compare strategic trade-offs on an interagency basis between initial response capability and fuels management practices in their ability to maximize outputs for seven performance measures:

1. suppression costs
2. number of WUI acres burned
3. number of Highly Valued Resource (HVR) acres burned
4. number of fires contained in initial attack
5. number of acres treated in fuels management
6. number of acres that burn above a damaging threshold
7. number of acres that burned below a damaging threshold.

FPA is used to evaluate trade-offs between different budget scenarios and will be used to justify a proposed budget in the national budget formulation process. The results of FPA will influence which areas of the country are prioritized for funding and how resources may be shifted between units to maximize efficient use of limited wildland fire program funds amongst the five federal fire management agencies and different parts of the country.

PLANNING DATA SYSTEM (PDS) is an internal NPS fire planning analysis tool and database system (see article on page 5 of this newsletter). PDS is more tactical in nature than FPA and will

assist NPS in developing on-the-ground, holistic organizations with consideration given to all program aspects including Leadership, Operations, Fuels Management, Fire Science, Support, and Administration. PDS will assist units in developing the correct organization to be analyzed within FPA as well as provide guidance as to how funds may be allocated and organizations funded based on budgets that are formulated at the strategic level using FPA. FPA allows analysis of any configuration of an organization that might be input at a certain budget level. PDS will provide units guidance on the proper type of organizational configuration that should be used in their FPA analysis and for use of funds received in the final budget appropriation.

HAZARDOUS FUELS PRIORITIZATION AND ALLOCATION SYSTEM (HFPAS)

is a fuels prioritization and allocation system. Like PDS, HFPAS is somewhat more tactical in nature than FPA and is the complement to PDS in that it is oriented toward the fuels portion of the program. FPA focuses on considering tradeoffs between fire planning units and parts of the country, looking at the effect of fuels treatments and the influence it may have on our ability to contain fires and maximize benefits of the seven FPA performance measures. HFPAS on the other hand examines and prioritizes individual fuels projects based on their ability to address specific criteria such as fire potential and potential for negative impacts from fire, including threats to WUI, critical infrastructure, and smoke

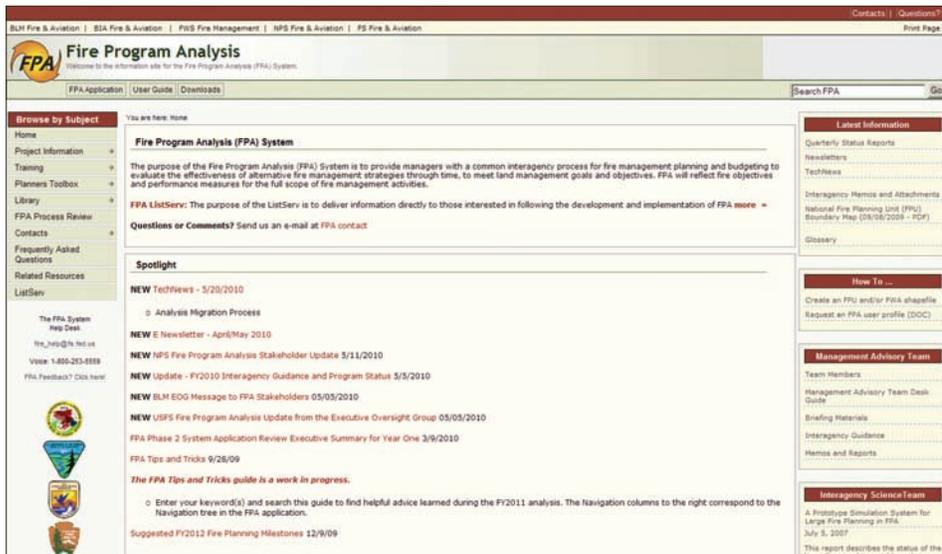
impacts. It also examines ecological impacts and negative consequences of fire in areas, including impacts of non-native species. In addition to these criteria, other management considerations such as collaboration, biomass market potential, human health concerns, and local capacity may influence final project prioritization. Similar to PDS, HFPAS will provide more specific information for allocating appropriated dollars that were derived from a budget formulated using FPA.

STARFIRE is a strategic risk and fuels treatment analysis (see article on page 5 of this newsletter). STARFire is a GIS-based analysis that allows managers to evaluate the relative benefit and risks of managing unplanned ignitions in specific locations based on locally defined values, benefits, and impacts of fires occurring on a landscape. The actual analysis can be done pre-season, prior to an unplanned ignition occurring, but the analysis outputs may be viewed during the individual decision process for an unplanned ignition when determining what response action should be taken for a specific fire. An added benefit of the analysis is its ability to identify areas where fuels treatments may be appropriate to improve ecological condition or reduce risks of managing unplanned ignitions.

There is not a single wildland fire analysis system that meets all our planning needs. The various analysis and planning tools we have are not conflicting, but complimentary to each other. The range of analysis tools allows managers to evaluate our program at a high strategic level to provide general program vision and direction while other analysis provide more unit- and project-specific analysis for efficient implementation of our budgets and program objectives.

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Fire Program Analysis (FPA) – System Status and the Way Forward



The Fire Program Analysis website is located at <http://www.fpa.nifc.gov/>.

FPA is a common interagency analysis for wildland fire planning and budgeting for the five federal fire management agencies (the USDA Forest Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service and US Fish and Wildlife Service). FPA is used to analyze and compare strategic trade-offs between initial response capability and fuels management practices in their ability to maximize outputs for seven performance measures. These seven performance measure are:

1. suppression costs
2. number of WUI acres burned
3. number of Highly Valued Resource (HVR) acres burned
4. number of fires contained in initial attack
5. number of acres treated in fuels management
6. number of acres that burn above a damaging threshold
7. number of acres that burned below a damaging threshold.

The first phase of FPA began in 2002

and culminated in the 2004 release of the FPA Preparedness Module. In 2004 a project review was conducted which ultimately resulted in a significant change in approach for FPA. Between 2005 and 2008 a second version of the analysis was developed and deployed in FY2009. The FY2009 analysis year was considered a "learning year" and was used as a means to identify areas where the model logic and analysis inputs could be improved to develop more reliable model outputs.

All 137 interagency Fire Planning Units (FPU) completed the FPA analysis in FY2009 and FY2010. The analysis was run in FY2010 with the intent that model outputs would be used to inform the FY2012 budget formulation process. However, some significant technical issues were identified during the FY2010 analysis process and still remain to be resolved before the analysis outputs will be reliable enough for formal budget formulation and allocation purposes. The Departments'

and agencies' fire program managers will examine the FY2010 analysis data to determine if there is useful information that may be used to inform decisions to improve the fire program's efficiency.

Due to the problems identified in the FY2010 analysis process, the FY2010 analysis will be used as a basis to make upgrades to the analysis logic prior to re-engaging the field units. This means that the year three analysis, in FY2011, will require less work and input from the field. The field will fully re-engage in the FPA analysis in the year four analysis in FY2012. At that time the model logic and analysis processes should be improved, new LANDFIRE data will be available, and fire program units will make updates to their input data.

In addition to fixing issues with the model, the FPA program will be coming under new program governance and oversight. This new governance structure is designed to garner greater agency ownership by including agency fire directors, fire planning staffs, budget managers, and line officers in the governance structure. This will help ensure that the agencies that are using and implementing FPA will have greater influence in the analysis design and process development.

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Planning Data System, the Future of NPS Wildland Fire Organizational and Budget Planning

Planning Data System (PDS) is a wildland fire management analysis, planning and budget database system being developed by the Fire Management Program Center. The PDS system consists of a series of modules that will be used to collect and analyze data for the National Park Service wildland fire management program budget formulation and allocation process. There are two main components included in PDS, the database function and the analysis function.

The database portion is an online tool where parks can enter staffing and other components of their budget requests. Regions then utilize the PDS as a centralized database to review and recommend park budgets for approval in the formulation process. The PDS budget request system replaces the tedious spreadsheet driven process that

has been used in recent years. To date, three of the Budget request modules have been completed and are active: Staffing, Line Item, and Fuels. For FY2011, park and regional users have until June 4, 2010 to complete data entries and approvals for use by the Fire Management Leadership Board (FMLB).

The second main portion of PDS is the Analysis Module. The PDS Analysis Module is an “expert opinion” driven workload analysis that will help answer a multitude of questions about the type and size of our fire organizations. The main outputs for PDS Analysis Module are the amount of funding and staff (FTE) required to manage the workload at various operational levels (park / cluster / region). Workload is measured by using historical fire records found within the Wildland Fire Management Information (WFMI) system and

the National Fire Plan Operations Reporting System (NFPORS). Analysis quality is dependent upon good data, therefore it is important to ensure that park datasets in both systems are clean and updated. This analysis will provide a common analytical tool using data gathered, in part, at the Fire and Aviation Management Workshop in February 2010 to help FMLB make difficult funding decisions. The workload analysis module is being developed by a group of seven individuals chartered by FMLB and includes representation from the park, regional, and national levels. The PDS Analysis module is currently in beta test mode and will be released next year for use in the 2012 budget exercise.

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STARFire, Strategic Risk and Fuels Assessment

The NPS has been working with Colorado State University (CSU) to develop and refine a wildland fire strategic risk and fuels analysis over the past three years. The project has included five NPS prototype parks and financial support from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). STARFire is a prototype analysis process that uses GIS to:

- Analyze risk and benefit for use in managing unplanned ignitions, and
- Identify priority fuel treatment areas based on unit-defined values and risk.

STARFire is intended to help decision makers quantitatively evaluate risk and benefit relative to park values for

unplanned ignitions. Through the examination of the outputs, the intent is to reduce the level of uncertainty and risk-aversion sometimes encountered when determining how to respond to a fire. Analysis outputs can also be a powerful communication tool to explain decisions to a variety of stakeholders. Outputs are spatial (GIS) and designed to integrate with the Wildland Fire Decision Support System (WFDSS) as well as be available for display in other applications such as Google Earth.

The analysis also identifies areas of the park that could benefit from fuels treatments based on park-defined values. The analysis is adaptable to the needs of field units with different fire



management objectives, fire regimes, and concerns.

The analysis is intended to be conducted on a voluntary basis during *continued on page 7...*

Fire Management Plan Template Updated

The Fire Management Leadership Board (FMLB) recently approved an updated template for fire management plans (FMPs). The impetus for the revision was the 2009 updates to the guidance for implementation of federal wildland fire policy. In addition, the revised template incorporates updates to the minimum FMP requirements and format changes found in the Interagency Fire Management Template approved by all five Wildland Fire Directors in April 2009.

Significant changes in the revised FMP template reflect modified federal fire policy implementation, provide increased clarity to park response to unplanned ignitions, and incorporate the use of adaptive management principles.

It is important to note that the release of the updated NPS template does not require the immediate revision of all fire management plans. Parks that have identified the need for a major revision, either through the annual review or five-

year review process, should utilize the new NPS FMP template.

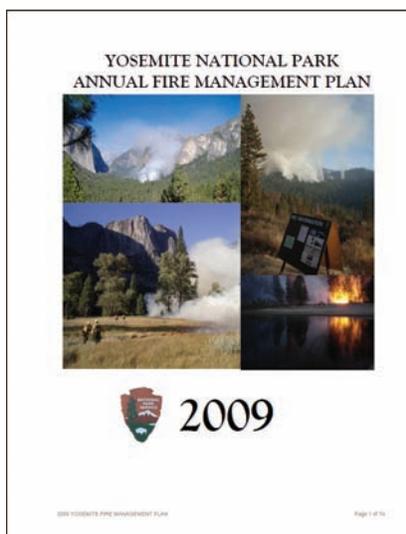
Parks that have previously initiated an FMP revision and made substantial progress toward completion may continue to use the January 1, 2008 version of the template. However those parks should review the updated template for content and determine the

potential advantages of incorporating the updates regarding modified fire policy implementation and future planning requirements.

Parks are reminded that they are required to assess (and update as necessary) their current FMP relative to modified fire policy implementation and terminology, including decision support processes and related requirements. Instructions for the assessment were contained in the May 11, 2009 memo with the subject line "Annual Review Process for Fire Management Plans".

If you have questions on the application of the updated Fire Management Plan template, contact your regional fire management plan coordinator, or the national fire management plan coordinator Jeff Manley.

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2010 Rural Fire Assistance (RFA) Update



In FY2009, the National Park Service, through Fort Laramie National Historic Site, Wyoming provided \$3,765 in rural fire assistance funding to the Fort Laramie Volunteer Fire Department.

Rural Fire Assistance (RFA) grant funds were funded in the FY2010 appropriation and the RFA grant request process started in March. Suggestions from the field were incorporated into the FY2010 prioritization spreadsheet in an attempt to streamline the process at the local, regional, and national levels. Continued cooperation between the bureaus and NASF are enabling plans to make future processes more efficient and timely.

The administrative timelines for submission of State Prioritization lists to the national office were extended to

May 14, 2010. This was a hard deadline and any submissions after that date were not accepted. The National RFA Group began consolidation of these lists on May 17, 2010 to determine distribution based on criteria outlined in the FY2010 RFA memo. Grant recipients will be notified by the end of June.

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STARFIRE, CONT...

the pre-season planning cycle or as-needed for strategic planning. The results may be applied at various phases of the fire management planning process including;

- *Strategic multi-year planning* – Develop and assess the outcomes of various fuels and wildfire strategies for development of fire management plans and support of related NEPA analysis.
- *Strategic annual planning* – Identify high priority areas to examine for development of fuels projects, as well as anticipate response strategies for unplanned ignitions in the upcoming fire season.
- *Tactical decision support* – Outputs are intended to be used as part of the overall decision-making process

when considering the management of a particular ignition. The outputs may be used stand-alone, or in conjunction with the WFDSS process.

Initial results at prototype park units indicate that the analysis may have wider application outside the NPS. Plans for FY2010 include:

- continuing to refine analysis logic and code.
- continuing work with five prototype parks (Sequoia & Kings Canyon, Grand Canyon, Yellowstone, Rocky Mountain, and Big Cypress) to evaluate analysis outputs and utility.
- developing an analysis across an interagency landscape (Grand Canyon National Park and the Kaibab National Forest).

- continuing exploration of integration with California BLM Fire Management and Planning System (FMAPS) pilot project.
- continuing discussions with the Joint Fire Science Interagency Fuels Treatment Decision Support System (IFT-DSS) project to determine potential utility relative to fuels planning.

For more information on the project visit the website at:

<http://warnercnr.colostate.edu/starfire-home/>.

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NEWS FROM OTHER PROGRAMS!

Wildland Fire Honor Guard Trains Together for First Time



Bottom Row left to right: Forrest Ford, DENA, Jerry Tuzon, ROMO, Drew Page, GRSM; Top Row left to right: Sonia Bechtel, ROMO, Mike Reid, ZION, Justin DeForest, CACO, Micah Bell, INDU, Jim Shultz, FMPC. Not Pictured: Rodney Monk, BITH. NPS photo.

During the week of May 10th, the Wildland Fire Honor Guard met for the first time to train on Honor Guard maneuvers and procedures. The Wildland Fire Honor Guard was established to respond to Line of Duty Deaths that occur within the Division of Fire and Aviation Management. This response includes activation in support of other agencies' line of duty deaths. The two trainers from the NPS Ranger Honor Guard and nine firefighters practiced marching, flag posting, and funeral procedures. In addition, Tom Nichols, Division Chief for Fire and Aviation Management, addressed the group regarding the history of the Wildland Fire Honor Guard's

continued on page 8...

HONOR GUARD, CONT...

establishment and the importance of their mission. The team was also addressed by two members of Daniel Holmes' family about the importance of the Honor Guard mission to family members who have lost a loved one as the result of a line of duty death. Daniel Holmes was a member of the Arrowhead Hotshots, who was killed by a snag in Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks in October 2004.

The training culminated with the honor guard participating in the annual Wildland Firefighter Foundation's Family Weekend where they worked with the United States Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and California Department of Forestry's Honor Guard teams in a colors presentation and family escort procession.

The Wildland Fire Honor Guard is currently available in support of Line

of Duty Death funeral and memorial services. Contact Tom Nichols, Division Chief, Fire and Aviation Management at 208.387.5216 or Jim Shultz, Wildland Fire Honor Guard Team Leader at 208.387.5215 with any questions. In addition, there are still two positions to fill on the Honor Guard, an announcement for recruitment of these positions will come out mid-June.

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Fire Management Works With the Natural Resources Community

The fire management community has been working with the natural resource community to bring the two together during wildfire incidents. For all of us to be successful while managing fire for multiple objectives including fire for resource benefits, we must work directly with the experts from local natural resource staffs. To accomplish this goal, several regionally-based Resource Advisor (READ) classes have been conducted throughout the country.

The Resource Advisor works with Incident Management Teams and fireline personnel to bring the impacts of fire, fire management activities, and post-fire conditions to natural and cultural resources into the picture. READs are also critical as the starting point for identifying needs related



READ class at Joshua Tree National Park in early May 2010.

to the repair of fire suppression impacts, Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER), and Burned Area Rehabilitation (BAR). Particular emphasis is given to the diverse roles and responsibilities of the READ, conveyed through a unique scenario-

based training format.

Four classes were conducted in 2010:

- Yosemite NP, March 23-24
- Rocky Mountain NP, April 6-7
- Prescribed Fire Training Center, Tallahassee, Florida, April 27-29
- Joshua Tree NP, May 4-6

Nearly 150 students will have attended these courses by the time this year's efforts are complete. They will then be available to serve on the fireline or in an incident command post. The credit for this effort goes to Nelson Siefkin, of the NPS Pacific West Regional Office and Jun Kinoshita from Yosemite National Park.

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Name that Firefighter

The first person to contact tina_boehle@nps.gov with the correct answer, will win a prize (*national office staff ineligible for prizes*).



Did You Know?

A lightning strike ignites a fire in Bering Land Bridge National Reserve. The fire burns for a week and then rain puts it out. In about 7 years, a visitor could walk on the burned site having no idea there once was a fire under his or her feet. This speedy site re-vegetation is typical of tundra fire adapted ecosystems.

“Jun the Jumper” Becomes Inaugural NPS Fire & Aviation Blogger



Jun Kinoshita on a fire assignment as a Resource Advisor (READ).

National Park Service Fire and Aviation Management (FAM) has recently launched a new external blog site for NPS FAM staff to be able to post programmatic articles of interest to the public, as well as provide a conduit to detailers in the NPS Fire Detailer

Program to log their experiences of the detail and lessons learned.

The first blogger from the NPS Fire Detailer Program that will be blogging for NPS Fire and Aviation is Jun Kinoshita from Yosemite National Park. Kinoshita, a fire archeologist, applied and was accepted as a rookie smokejumper for the U.S. Forest Service Missoula Smokejumping Base. Jun began keeping a journal in March 2010 when he was accepted for the smokejumper program, and well before he actually arrived in Missoula for the season. Jun had many reasons why he wanted to experience a season as a smokejumper and the benefits it could provide him, as well as his home park, Yosemite. But, in order to find those out, you’ll have to read all about it at <http://npsfam.blogspot.com/>.

The blog will be moderated by FAM staff, commenters will be required to register on the site, and use real names, rather than aliases. Those interested in writing a blog article for the new NPS Fire and Aviation Blog may contact the email address nifc_nps_famblog@nps.gov for consideration by the Division of Fire and Aviation. Blog posts will also be subject to review by FAM staff.

We hope you will take a few minutes to check it out at [http://npsfam.blogspot.com/!](http://npsfam.blogspot.com/)

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A Note from the Program Lead

People often comment, “How did you end up in planning and budget? I could never do that”. I started out as a firefighter and worked my way up

through Fire Management Officer. Through this journey I found that coupled with the ability to hire the best available employees, it was the professional skills of planning and budget management that provided

the strategic vision and the financial wherewithal to create a successful program. Using the planning and budgeting skills that I developed as an FMO, I moved into planning
continued on page 10...

Fire and Wilderness Discussion Group Now Available through Wilderness Social Networking Site

Wilderness.net has announced access availability of its first professional/social networking site, <http://connect.wilderness.net>, to National Park Service employees through the partnership of the Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center, Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute, and the University of Montana Wilderness Institute.

The goal of this professional/social network, is to connect federal wilderness managers; related state, and local government agency employees, academics, researchers, and K-12 educators; and, position-holding members of wilderness related non-governmental organizations around the



topic of wilderness management and stewardship. Currently, it is the only professional/social network specifically connecting wilderness professionals, managers, and educators.

Connect.wilderness.net is designed to facilitate conversations about pressing

wilderness issues among federal wilderness managers and their partners.

Within Connect, there is an active discussion on various issues related to fire in wilderness. It's a great way to interact with other fire and wilderness professionals. Check it out and become a member of Connect and the *Fire and Wilderness Group*. For additional information about this members only professional/social networking site and information on how to obtain membership, go to <http://connect.wilderness.net>.

Contact: *Tim Devine*
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NOTE, CONT...

and budget as a full-time position at a regional and then national level. More than ever, I see planning and budget management as a way to influence the future direction of the fire program and an opportunity to sell our vision and expertise to the Department's leadership, Congressional Representatives, and the President's budget office, Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

One of the best ways to sustain our program through the political budget process is through objective and professional planning. In addition, we need to be able to use our planning analysis, and the data we derive from the process, as a way to persuade the political representatives to support our

values and priorities. I am fortunate to have an excellent staff of fire planners, management analysts, and budget analysts that support this endeavor. Those of you in the field that complete fire reports, enter data in NFPORS, complete FPA analysis, prepare WFDSS documents, and write our fire management plans are key to this effort as well.

We at the national office are dependent on the quality of the data you submit and the strength of the message you allow us to deliver. Although the current economic and political climate are not conducive toward what we would consider a fully funded budget, I believe the quality of our planning and budget formulation process has allowed us to fare better than many programs. I hope

this issue of *Wildland Fire News* will give you added insight to the planning process and engage you to provide the best available data and efforts in your planning efforts, since they are a major foundation for our program funding.

I also hope that this issue might spark in you a desire to pursue planning and budget as a career path. Although it may not have the immediate lure of smoke and flames, it truly is a career path that can influence the program's future direction and success. I encourage you to pursue training and mentoring opportunities in this arena and the added benefit is that it will help you to become a better fire program manager.

Jeff Scott
Program Lead, Strategic Planning and Budget

Wildland Fire News is published periodically throughout the year. Tell us what you like and give us suggestions for improvement. We would also like to hear your story ideas of what you would like to see in this newsletter. You can send all feedback to NIFC NPS Fire Director (nifc_nps_firedirector@nps.gov). We look forward to hearing from you!