



Forest  
Service

Bitterroot National Forest

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Route To:

Date: July 27, 2013

**Subject: Delegation of Authority for the Gold Pan Fire Complex and Leader's Intent**

**To: Diane Hutton, Incident Commander (NR Wildland Fire Management Team)**

We welcome you and your team to the Gold Pan Fire Complex Incident and wish you a safe and successful assignment.

I hereby delegate the authority for management of the Gold Pan Fire Complex Incident to you as the Incident Commander. This delegation carries the full responsibility for the management of all the assigned firefighting resources, aviation assets, equipment, costs and the rehabilitation of suppression impacts directly related to this wildfire as a result of your tactical actions

You will assume responsibility for managing the incident on July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2013 starting at 0600. I have attached my Leader's Intent and several other documents that will provide you with information to review with your team for this Incident. Other important contacts that you and your team need to work with will include: Shane Olpin, West Fork District FMO; Tod McKay, BRF Public Affairs Officer, Kayla Jaquith and Don Polanski, BRF LEOs; Charles Scripps, Yonder (Krueger) Ranch owner and Painted Rocks RFD Chief; Gary Kubat, West Fork RFD Chief, and Chris Hoffman, Ravalli County Sheriff.

To help keep us on track, I would like to schedule 'During Action Reviews' with you as often as we deem necessary. This is a time for us to meet face to face to assess progress and expectations for the next several days, to make any adjustments needed to maintain our alignment and performance, and to reaffirm the complexity analysis.

I may have trainees that I would like to assign to the incident so that they can complete tasks within their PTBs. Please coordinate their ordering with Hamilton Expanded Dispatch.

I look forward to working with you for the duration of this incident, and expect us to be active partners with you in terms of any strategic discussions and/or adjustments.

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David M. Campbell  
West Fork District Ranger  
Bitterroot National Forest

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Diane Hutton  
Incident Commander  
NR Wildland Fire IM Team

Enclosures: Leader's Intent, Incident In-briefing Package





**AGENCY ADMINISTRATOR'S INTENT**  
**For**  
**Gold Pan Fire Complex – Bitterroot National Forest**

**Objectives for the Team:**

- Make firefighter and public safety your highest priority by identifying known hazards and clearly communicating the acceptable level of risk.
- Develop and implement, as needed, a long term plan to manage existing wilderness trail closures; to manage the protection of outfitter/guide and Forest Service values; and to minimize damage to private property and private residences in the Nez Perce Creek drainage and West Fork valley. This plan may incorporate activities on both private and national forest lands to prevent additional impacts to the Bitterroot Valley. For this, it will be critical to maintain a close working relationship with the Painted Rocks and West Fork Rural Fire Chiefs. Depending on the circumstances, it may be prudent to utilize a Local Agency Response Incident Action Team (LARIAT). A plan that describes how LARIAT is to be deployed is attached. Please work closely with the Ravalli County Fire Warden, Brad Mohn (406-360-4379) to insure this plan is effectively implemented if the need should arise.
- The long term plan should focus on utilizing a point protection strategy to protect values the fire encounters as it move around until a season-ending event. However, in developing the long term plan, please explore the feasibility of slowing or stopping the fire's movement east, keeping it inside the wilderness boundary. Carefully weigh risk versus gain, probability of success, exposure, cost, and impacts to wilderness values in implementing any activities to accomplish this.
- Ensure timely and accurate information is distributed to interested parties. Keep me informed of public meetings and media contacts. Maintain contact with Forest Public Affairs Officer Tod McKay (406) 531-1130 to ensure you can build on existing relationships, contacts and key messages.
- Incorporate sustainable operations in all incident management activities to minimize environmental, social, and fiscal impacts without compromising firefighter and public safety or impeding incident operations.

**Expectations of the Team:**

- Safety is your number one priority and safety will be a foremost consideration in all decisions and actions. No resource is worth a human life.
  - Using LCES, ensure that all personnel comply with the Standard Fire Orders and mitigate the 18 Situations and incorporate this direction in all planning processes and suppression efforts. I would like this to be documented with the 215A.
  - Follow the policy for national work/rest guidelines for all incident personnel. Shift lengths shall conform to national policy, with exceptions documented with copies submitted to the IBA.
  - Closely monitor duty time and driving time limitations for all incident personnel.
  - I do not place any constraint on night tactical operations provided you follow the risk assessment process to manage the risk and weigh the benefits of conducting two operational periods per day.

- Work in coordination with the two local rural fire district chiefs and Montana Department of Natural Resources to prepare evacuation plans if needed; develop cost share agreements/decisions; and in the development of operational plans where private lands may be involved.
- Work closely with the assigned Resource Advisors Mary Williams, Forest Archeologist (406) 363-7183, Ed Snook, Forest Hydrologist (406) 363-7103, Andrea Shortsleeve, S. Zone Biologist (406) 777-7426, Marty Almquist (406) 821-1222, wilderness outfitter permit administrator, and Mike Jakober, S. Zone Fisheries (406) 777-7425, to ensure fire suppression impacts to natural and cultural resources are kept to a minimum (a primary Resource Advisor will be assigned to work with your team for the duration.). This includes retardant avoidance areas, noxious weed best management practices and potential impacts of aquatic invasive species on threatened and endangered fish.
- The Bitterroot National Forest has an Environmental Policy and Environmental Management System (EMS) system in place to reduce the impacts of potential weed invasion and spread in burned areas. The two necessary procedures and responsibilities required of your IMT are outlined in the briefing packet you received.
- Within the wilderness, Minimum Impact Management Tactics (MIMT) will be used as much as possible to reduce suppression impacts. All questions concerning potential resource impacts related to strategic or tactical operation will be handled through the assigned Resource Advisor. Please review the attached letter from the Forest Supervisor authorizing the use of mechanical equipment in the wilderness.
- Work closely with PIO Tod McKay to disseminate information to internal staff, external partners, and interested public in the following communities:
  - The Nez Perce Road and lower West Fork Road residences
- Develop a public information plan for the incident within 24 hours.
- **Cost Management:** Work closely with the IBA to monitor incident costs and evaluate during Periodic Assessments; and evaluate all management actions on a cost-vs-benefit basis.
- **WFDSS:** The key tool used in development and tracking of both incident and operational objectives is the Wildland Fire Decision Support System. I expect you to work with me to document any key decisions within the WFDSS program that would have significant impacts to cost, socio-political ramifications, or require out of the ordinary resources to accomplish. I expect any changes to the strategic direction for this fire to be relayed to me so this direction can be documented within the WFDSS program.
- **Structure Protection:** I want to re-iterate the Northern Rockies direction (2008 Northern Rockies Coordination Group Community and Structure Fire Protection Guidelines attached) that your primary responsibility and objective for structure protection **is to prevent the wildfire from reaching private land and structures, and to assist local fire agencies in protecting communities and structures from the advancing wildfire.** This will involve the use of standard wildland protection tactics, control methods, and equipment, including fire control lines and the extinguishment of spot fires near or on the structures. I expect you to ensure that safe,

appropriate, cost effective, and reasonable tactical actions for which wildland fire fighters are trained and equipped are taken. Decisions to invest in protecting property and landscapes must weigh an estimate of values at risk, probability of occurrence, and probability of protection against the cost of implementing the protection strategy. Use of tactics such as gelling, wrapping, extensive hazardous fuels modification, setting up sprinkler systems around individual homes, and utilization of specialized structure firefighting resources are expected to be rare exceptions, and I expect to be consulted prior to implementation.

- **Utilization of Aviation Resources:** Prior to using aviation resources, make sure that a specific, achievable objective has been identified for their use and that they are being effective.
- **Unified Command:** While the fire stays contained to National Forest lands, I expect you to keep the local fire agencies informed of progress being made on the wildfire. I encourage you to order up liaison(s) from these local agencies as part of your team in order to keep them effectively informed of progress made on the wildfire and to utilize their local knowledge and experience with wildfires in this area. As needed, work with them to develop structure protection and population protection plans that focus primarily on preventing the wildfire from reaching private land and structures. Should the wildfire pose an eminent threat to private property and/or structures, I expect you to enter into Unified Command with the local fire agency's chief or their representative, in order to coordinate structure protection/suppression activities. Once the eminent threat no longer exists, disengage from unified command and continue to work through the liaisons as needed.
- **Initial Attack Responsibility:** The Bitterroot National Forest will maintain control of all Forest IA operations until such time as the IMT can provide effective initial attack within the TFR. Until then, your operations folks will need to work with Hamilton Dispatch to establish operating protocols so that Forest IA activities do not conflict with your operations.

#### **End State:**

The Gold Pan Fire Complex Incident will have been safely, efficiently and mindfully managed until all of the incident objectives were successfully obtained. Exposure to firefighters and the public was minor, with identified values at risk successfully protected by using the appropriate resources to implement tactics in locations with reasonable probabilities for success. After the incident management team leaves, there will have been no serious accidents or injuries, there will have been favorable results to the land and natural resources, relationships with all of our partners will have been maintained or improved, and we will have made a wise investment of taxpayer assets.

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DAVID M. CAMPBELL  
West Fork District Ranger  
Bitterroot National Forest

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DIANE HUTTON  
Incident Commander  
NR Wildfire IM Team