




THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
WASHINGTON

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Memorandum

TO: Assistant Secretary – Lands and Minerals Management
Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary – Policy, Management and Budget
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary – Fish and Wildlife and Parks
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary – Water and Science

FROM: Deputy Secretary 

SUBJECT: Governance Structure to Implement the Integrated Rangeland Fire Management Strategy

The May 2015 Integrated Rangeland Fire Strategy (Strategy) sets forth a number of actions to be implemented and accomplished in the coming months. These actions require coordination among a large number of organizations and program areas within the U.S. Department of the Interior, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service, and other Federal and state partner agencies. The Strategy's Crosscut Action #1 assigns responsibility to the Rangeland Fire Task Force (Task Force) to "develop interagency capability and functionality to provide ongoing coordination, oversight, and accountability to ensure timely and appropriate implementation of the Strategy and the supporting action items."

The Task Force discussed the appropriate approach to establishing overall management, coordination, and governance for implementation of the Strategy, including the action items. This memorandum outlines a framework for a governance structure, at the national and regional level, to ensure timely and effective implementation of the Strategy. This governance structure builds on structures already in place to maximize efficient use of resources, and adds a regional component to support field implementation.

National Organization

- The ***Rangeland Fire Task Force*** established in Secretarial Order 3336 will provide leadership for Strategy implementation, maintain priority attention on the action items set forth in the Strategy, and address national level requirements for resources necessary to implement the Strategy.
- A ***Senior Steering Committee*** established to support the Task Force with implementation tracking, coordination, and oversight. Membership in the Senior Steering Committee will

be comprised, at a minimum, of key officials from Policy Management and Budget (ASPMB), Land and Minerals Management (ASLM), U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

- **Secretarial Order Coordinators** will be appointed by each of the following bureaus or program areas to serve as a coordinator for Action Item lead or support activities as identified in the Strategy and to support the Senior Steering Committee and Strategy Implementation Manager: BLM, FWS, NPS, BIA, USGS, and PMB. Coordinators will have the responsibility to coordinate and track all responsibilities and interests of the bureau or program area through the Strategy Implementation Manager.
- **Strategy Implementation Manager** who is a senior level (GS 15 or SES) individual will provide day-to-day responsibility for status oversight and tracking, coordination, and facilitation among action areas, reporting and analysis of progress, identifying key issues, ensuring consistency of approach, resolving differences, and supporting the Task Force and Senior Steering Committee with meeting preparation and follow up.

Regional Organization

- Create two **Regional Leadership Coordination Committees** (West/Great Basin and East/Rocky Mountain Regions) to provide regional guidance, coordination, and prioritization to implement the Rangeland Fire Strategy and the Greater Sage-Grouse Land Use Plans, particularly related to conserving and restoring the sagebrush-steppe ecosystem. The committees will solicit input and scientific and technical support from the Great Basin Landscape Conservation Cooperative (LCC) and the Great Northern LCC on science priorities and key management questions. The committee will consist of executive representatives, led by BLM with core membership from USFWS, USGS, and appropriate state, tribal and Federal agencies that will be invited to participate on the committee, including the USDA (NRCS and U.S. Forest Service); optional members include BIA and NPS. Progress reporting and coordination with U.S. Department of the Interior leadership will occur through the Department's Strategy Implementation Manager.
- The **Regional Leadership Coordination Committees** will coordinate regional science activities with the **Great Basin LCC** (West/Great Basin Region) and the **Great Northern LCC** (East/Rocky Mountains Region), including through the Sage-Steppe Forum, to provide a mechanism for information sharing and lessons-learned, identify science needs, support research, assist in translating science into actionable management, and generally provide opportunities to coordinate among a wide-variety of partners on issues related to sagebrush-steppe conservation and restoration, including fuels management and post-fire restoration. Partners may include, but are not limited to: Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Great Basin Consortium, Great Basin Restoration Initiative, Great Basin Research and Management Partnership, Great Basin Fire Science Exchange, Range-wide Interagency Sage-grouse Conservation Team, Joint Fire Science Program, Southern Rockies LCC, Plains and Prairie Potholes LCC, Cooperative Research Units, academic and research institutions, tribes, tribal

organizations, non-governmental organizations, private landowners, and other regional partners.

To ensure clarity of roles, functions, and responsibilities, charters for the Senior Steering Committee and the two regional organizations will be developed for review and approval by the Task Force.

cc: Solicitor
Director, Bureau of Land Management
Director, National Park Service
Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs
Director, U.S. Geological Survey