

Division of Forests Procedure	
Subject Title: Wildland Fire Assignments	Date: January 29, 2025

PURPOSE and SCOPE

The purpose of this document is to affirm the commitment of Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation (FPR) to aiding in suppression efforts both within and outside the State of Vermont. We recognize the potential for wildland fires across North America and as a member of the Northeastern Forest Fire Protection Commission (Compact), FPR is obligated to assist in regional wildland fire suppression activities in accordance with [10 V.S.A. § 2501](#).

Moreover, FPR extends its support to the National Interagency Fire Center, responding to nationwide demands for wildland fire suppression as part of the Stafford Act Master Agreement according to the Master Cooperative Agreement. Supporting staff on interagency assignments through these agreements is part of a long-term strategy for increasing wildland fire readiness in Vermont.

As partners we receive federal funds through State Fire Assistance (SFA) grants each year. Through these grants, FPR has agreed to support suppression activities within and outside of Vermont. To accomplish this, we are dedicated to:

- Providing training to employees within the department to obtain and maintain qualifications at the standard set forth by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG). Including those who do not have primary responsibilities in wildland fire.
- Providing and maintaining equipment and PPE necessary for qualified staff to use for In-state, Compact and Interagency wildfire response.
- Tracking and holding training and certification documents necessary for qualified staff to participate in interagency responses
- Establish training plans for staff to continually maintain and enhance their qualifications.
- Provide NWCG qualified suppression staff and resources for in-state, Compact and Interagency response.
- Provide quarterly updates during fire season to Forestry Division Supervisors about overall fire situation, opportunities, and priorities during fire season.
- All travel, salary, overtime, and benefits will be covered during assignments.

To accomplish these goals, we encourage Forestry Division staff who are interested in this opportunity to obtain the necessary training and experience. Through these efforts, staff will gain experience and training to further assist with wildland fire response within the State of Vermont and to participate in prescribed burns. The purpose of these procedures is therefore to ensure that all qualified (red carded) staff within FPR have opportunities to participate in training and suppression activities. This commitment is balanced with their primary duties of accomplishing their FPR responsibilities, emphasizing the dual nature of their roles in both regional and in-state fire suppression efforts.

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RECORDS and METRICS

Records of individual training will be maintained in the State of Vermont Incident Management Qualification System (IQS). These records are verified by the Wildland Fire Specialist for Training and maintained by the IQS Manager.

All staff will have a yearly training meeting with the Wildland fire Program to establish goals and needed learning for the coming year. This meeting will produce a training plan and target positions, which will be maintained within the IQS System. The training plan and target positions should be reviewed by the employee and their supervisor prior to commitment. More details on this process can be found in the “Roles and Responsibilities” section below.

ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- [Wildland Fire SharePoint- Interagency Fire](#)
- [Title 10 Chapter 81 Northeastern Fire Protection Compact](#)

FIRE ASSIGNMENT DEFINITIONS

General Duration of an Assignment: A standard out of state assignment is 14 workdays (plus 2-4 travel days); in-state assignments may be several days.

In-State Assignment: These assignments, limited to within the State of Vermont, can be requested by the FPR Commissioner, Division Director, State Fire Supervisor, or Wildland Fire Duty Officer. Responding to these requests is the highest priority for qualified staff. In-State Assignments are typically 1-3 days in length.

Compact Assignment: These assignments are requested by members of the Northeast Compact and come directly to the Forest Fire Supervisor or designated Wildland Fire Duty Officer from the Northeast Interagency Fire Coordination Center. As a Compact member, it is recognized that it is the duty of the State to render all possible aid to the requesting agency [10 V.S.A. § 2508](#). Compact Assignments may be 2-14 days in length.

Interagency/Western Assignment: These assignments are requested nationally and staff must be listed as available through the Northeastern Interagency Coordination Center (NECC) in order to be considered for an assignment. Interagency / Western Assignments are typically 14 days, not including travel. 21-day extensions are rare but may be requested. Extensions require approval of the Forest Fire Supervisor or designee and employees’ direct supervisor.

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Recognized Benefits to the Department from Staff Participation in Fire Assignments: The FPR Forests Division benefits from staff participation in different types of fire assignment, as described below:

- Cost savings (salaries and benefits are paid for when staff are participating in an out of state assignment by receiving agency).
- With increasing fire potential in the northeast, increasing training and experience makes FPR better prepared for in-state response and suppression.
- Increased number of staff possessing qualifications for implementing prescribed burns.
- Assistance to Compact members and other agencies promotes relationships that are mutually beneficial.

ROLES and RESPONSIBILITIES

Wildland Fire Program Agrees to:

- Provide training to employees within the department to obtain and maintain qualifications at the standard set forth by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG). Including those who do not have primary responsibilities in wildland fire.
- Provide and maintain equipment and PPE necessary for qualified staff to use for In-state, Compact and Interagency wildfire response.
- Track and hold training and certification documents necessary for qualified staff to participate in interagency responses through the Incident Qualification System national database.
- Establish yearly training plans for staff to continually maintain and enhance their qualifications, for discussion and review between employees and supervisors.
- Provide regular updates to Forestry Division supervisors about overall fire situation, opportunities, and priorities during fire season.
- Notify supervisors when qualified staff are being requested and have been mobilized for in state fire suppression assistance, and provide weekly updates if mobilization is extended.

Staff Agree to:

- Obtain agreement from supervisor before you make yourself available¹ for a fire assignment via the listing process
- Include wildland fire prevention participation in annual performance plan.

¹ The term “available” means that considerable effort is made to participate in these activities and, barring exceptional circumstances, staff will make themselves available. It is understood that staff may not be able to participate in all activities every year.

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- Make a commitment to training and developing target qualifications supported by the wildland fire team. (Minimum: ICS 100, ICS 700, L-180, S-130, S-190, RT-130, and annual Work Capacity Test)
- Meet yearly with the Wildland Fire Training Officer to evaluate and develop a training plan for enhancement of qualifications to support agreed upon goals.
- Be available for In-State Assignments, which is the top priority for wildland fire response
- Keep contact information updated in the [FPR Emergency Response Availability Form](#)
- Participate in prescribed burns and Compact Assignments as schedule allows; it is understood that staff will not be able to participate in all activities every year
- Discuss availability to list for Interagency Assignments with their Supervisor, list as appropriate.
- Be prepared to pause or hand off projects to participate in assignments.

Supervisor Agrees to:

- Incorporate Wildland Fire training goals and expectations into annual work plan and evaluation of staff member; obtain feedback from wildland fire training officer on performance.
- Support staff in obtaining and maintaining qualifications.
- Review and approve each staff member's plan for availability on an interagency assignment.
- Review each staff member's training plan; a yearly training meeting should be held between the supervisor and relevant staff shortly before the staff member's annual performance evaluation if possible so that the training plan and target positions can be discussed between staff and their supervisors.
- Supervisor commits to making staff available to assist when qualified staff can meet a request for In-State, Compact or Interagency response.
- Coordinate with staff to plan for coverage of responsibilities while on assignments.
- when they allow their staff to participate that requests for instate response take precedent over their other important work.

Note on Preparedness Levels and Fire Assignments: Preparedness levels are determined by considering fire danger, number of fires, fuel moisture, and resources committed. If State, Regional or National Preparedness Levels reach elevated levels, the Forestry Division Director or FPR Commissioner may issue additional guidance or directives on staff readiness and availability. The Forestry Division Director or FPR Commissioner will try to inform program managers about these guidance or directives prior to issuing them, although the emergency / urgent nature of responding to elevated preparedness levels may prevent these conversations from taking place. If the Forestry Division Director or FPR Commissioner determines that elevated preparedness levels and/or an urgent wildland fire threat requires mandatory staff deployment in a manner that invalidates certain aspects of this procedure, the directive to staff will specifically mention what aspects of this procedure no longer apply.

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TOOLS, SPECIAL EQUIPMENT, TRAINING

All required training is established by, delivered through, and in accordance with standards established by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG).

Participating FPR staff are required to have Wildland Firefighting Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as specified in the [PPE Requirements for FPR Staff](#). Wildland Fire Program provides all required PPE including additional equipment for fire assignments.

MONITORING

This procedure will be evaluated at the end of each fire season (winter).

SIGNATURE

oliver Pierson

Print Name

Director, Division of Forests

Position

Signature

January 29, 2025

Date