

WYOMING WILDFIRE MANAGEMENT MENTORING PROGRAM FOR FIELD MANAGERS

I. Introduction:

During Wildfire Incidents Field Managers must be prepared to make critical and informed wildfire management decisions related to land and resources under their span of authority. Classroom training is the most common form of experience that a fire Field Manager receives. Classroom training is a great beginning; however, many Agency Administrators lack experience in the practical application of that classroom training on a real wildfire incident. The proposed mentoring program provides Wyoming BLM Field Managers lacking fire experience the opportunity to observe how to apply classroom training to an actual large wildfire incident. This exposure will better equip the trainee to more efficiently and effectively handle a similar event in the future when they return to their duty station.

II. Objectives:

- A. The objective of this program is to give Field Managers and potential “Actings” responsible for wildfire management programs an appreciation for and understanding of how large wildfire incidents are managed. This is achieved by the trainee observing and working with an experienced Field Manager responsible for a major wildfire incident.
- B. Develop and maintain a list of Field Manager Mentors that are willing to teach inexperienced Field Managers about the complexity of managing large wildfire incidents.

III. Strategy:

- A. Inexperienced Field Manager Mentoree’s will be given a “Shadow Assignment” with an experienced Field Manager (Mentor). During a training cycle Mentors will be selected by the State Office Fire and Aviation Team based on information obtained from the participating Field Offices. Each participating Field Office will determine which employees from within their ranks are available to serve as Mentors during any given year.

Criteria for individuals serving as Mentors are as follows:

1. Must presently be serving as an Field Manager with recent experience administering a Type I and/or Type II Incidents and/or served as a Type I or Type II Incident Commander.
2. Is willing and able to serve as a Mentor.

B. Mentorees assigned to the program will be assigned to a wildfire incident at the request of a Mentor through the Wyoming State Office. All Mentorees will be identified as a Field Manager trainee in the ROSS Resource Ordering System. It will be incumbent upon each participating Field Manager to make sure that participating Mentorees are entered into the appropriate dispatching center database prior to fire season. It is anticipated that Mentorees will be on-site for a period NTE 5 days (duration to be determined by the Agency Administrator being mentored). Criteria to be Mentorees include:

1. An individual currently serving as a BLM Field Manager or potential acting with fire management responsibilities;

Is seeking to enhance their knowledge and responsibilities as an Field Manager or acting responsible for fire management in a practical application setting and;

Is willing to make themselves available during the fire season and report to an incident on a very short notice.

2. The person also must have become eligible for the program in accordance with Section V. below.

IV. Definitions:

A Field Manager is the highest ranking agency line officer with direct responsibility for the personnel involved in a wildfire incident.

A Mentor is an individual from Wyoming BLM that meets the criteria identified in Section III and is approved by the Wyoming State Office. Final selection of Mentors will normally be done by the Wyoming State Office Fire Management Team prior to fire season.

A Mentoree is a person that works with a Mentor in the program and meets the criteria in Section III above.

A Shadow Assignment is where an approved Mentoree is assigned to an approved Mentor during an actual wildfire incident to study how the Mentor administers a wildfire incident.

The State Fire Management Office Team is composed of the State Fire Management Officer and Assistant State Fire Management Officer serving at the pleasure of the DSD, Support Services and State Director. The roles and responsibilities of this group are as follows:

- Create a statewide network for mentoring and coaching Field Managers with the objective of improving Field Manager fire management capabilities.

- Work to maintain and enhance relationships, specifically in the area of fire management.
- Support the development and maintenance of strategies for optimizing resource availability.
- Provide a forum to raise fire and aviation management issues to Field Managers.
- Increase Field Manager understanding of varying agency missions, mandates, roles and responsibilities.
- Be a conduit for communicating to the Field Managers, and other personnel within Wyoming. Let them know that this team is available to assist.

V. Program Initiation:

- A. Field Managers willing to be mentored will submit their respective names to the Assistant State Fire Management Officer during the spring of each year. Concurrently a list of Incident Commanders and experienced Field Managers that are willing to serve as Mentors and meet the criteria identified in Section III will be gathered by the Assistant State Fire Management Officer. The Assistant State Fire Management Officer will be responsible for prompting Field Managers each year to provide this information. Once the information is received by the Assistant State Fire Management Officer, he/she will develop the current year's Mentor and Mentoree list for participation in the program.
- B. Once a list of participants is decided upon for the current year's program, the list will be sent from the assigned Field Manager to the State Assistant Fire Management Officer to provide general oversight over the current year's program. This person will also be responsible for maintaining an updated list of all Field Managers in the State for Wyoming BLM.
- C. Prior to fire season all Mentors participating in the program will be given a Mentoree List from the Wyoming State Office. The Mentor will be responsible for initiating a resource order for a Mentoree when a worthy incident occurs under the Mentor's span of authority.
- D. Field Managers in need of a "shadow assignment" will be notified by the Assistant State Fire Management Officer of their acceptance into the current year's program. The Assistant State Fire Management Officer will work with Field Managers selected for the program to assure that they notify their appropriate unit Dispatch Office of their availability. The local Dispatch Office will status the individual as an "Agency Administrator Trainee" in the ROSS.
- E. The Local FMO and Assistant State Fire Management Officer will aid in reminding Mentors when they become engaged in an incident to refer to the Mentoree list, draw upon individuals on the list and have them ordered to the fire.

If the Mentor can manage more than one Mentoree then additional orders should be placed.

VI. Eligibility

- A. The Wyoming Field Manager Mentoring Program is available to any Field Manager or acting as defined in Sections III , IV and V of this document.

VII. Costs

- A. For fires under Wyoming BLM control, travel, per-diem, base 8 salary and any overtime will be charged to the wildfire incident.

VIII. Reporting Requirements

- A. Field Managers that participate in the mentoring program will record this training accomplishment in their employee training records. The Wyoming State Director and DSD, Support Services will be provided with a one page report from the Assistant State Fire Management Officer after the Lessons Learned session is completed.

IX. Lessons Learned Evaluation

- A. An Annual Lessons Learned Evaluation will be conducted by the Assistant State Fire Management Officer Team at the end of fire season (fall meeting). The team will include participants from the current year's program in the evaluation.

X. Measures of Success

- A. The methods used to measure success will be two-fold:
 1. The number of missed opportunities. A missed opportunity is when a Mentor has a worthy incident but a Mentoree was not assigned to it (hopefully this will be low).
 2. The number of Mentorees trained (Hopefully this will be high).

XI. Conclusion:

In summary, the Wyoming BLM Mentoring Program has been developed to offer valuable, on the job training experience to inexperienced Field Managers and potential acting responsible for wildfire programs through working with a peer on a major wildfire incident.

CALANDER OF EVENTS AND SUMMARY OF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- (February)** The Assistant State Fire Management Officer calls for Mentors and Mentorees within Wyoming BLM.
- (March)** **DSD, Support Services, SFMO, ASFMO** meets to develop current years multi-agency Mentor and Mentoree training list.
- (April)** **DSD, Support Services** submits list to State Director.
- (April)** Mentors and Mentoree's are notified by the **Assistant State Fire Management Officer** and makes sure Field Managers listed on the Mentoree's name into the appropriate Dispatch Office as an "Agency Administrator Trainee" so they can be ordered through ROSS if selected.
- (May)** **Assistant State Fire Management Officer** provides a list of participating Mentorees to all Mentors.
- (June-September)** During fire season Assistant State Fire Management Officer encourages Mentors to draw from Mentoree list.
- (June-September)** **Mentors** will use the ROSS to order Mentorees into the training environment.
- (October-November)** **Assistant State Fire Management Officer** holds Lessons Learned Session at post season meeting
- (November-January)** **DSD, Resources, SFMO, ASFMO** makes adjustments to the program if needed and prepares a short report (one page) to State Director.