



Wildland Fire Decision Support System- WFSS Decision Document Examples

Overview

The intent of this document is to provide WFSS incident decision document content. Examples in this document are located in the WFSS Production System. Decision content will vary depending on the need to provide information to support a decision, there are no right answers and level of documentation can vary by fire complexity and duration. See the [WFSS Publishing a Decision](#) PDF on the WFSS Related Resources page for general guidelines on the types of information that may be considered in a decision document.

Consider creating a Filter List that includes these (or other examples) of decision content that you can refer to in the future. Instructions on creating filters can be found in the video [Using Filters \(8/23/2010\)](#) under the Related Resources link on the WFSS home page.

In this document the **Bold Underlined** words are places in WFSS where information can be added and represent the folders in the Decision Document or other tabs that can be clicked and then edited.

Use the chart below to help guide you through the examples provided. Remember these are just a few select examples used to illustrate some key points. There are many other examples available in WFSS and in no way should these examples be considered templates for how to enter information into a Decision Document. Hopefully these examples will give you some ideas of how to include different types of information depending on your fire situation.

	LONG DURATION/HIGH COMPLEXITY EXAMPLES			MODERATE DURATION/MODERATE COMPLEXITY EXAMPLES			SHORT DURATION/LOW COMPLEXITY EXAMPLES	
	HORSESHOE FIRE - Arizona - Coronado National Forest 2010	LITTLE BEAVER COMPLEX - Idaho - Boise National Forest 2010	BULL - Wyoming - Bridger-Teton National Forest 2010	COFFMAN FIRE - Virginia - George Washington and Jefferson National Forest 2010	WHITE FIRE - New Mexico - Lincoln National Forest/ State of New Mexico 2011	WRANGLER FIRE - Louisiana - Kisatchie National Forest 2010	CORNER - Arizona - Gila District BLM	BARBELL FIRE - New Mexico - El Malpais National Monument
Periodic Assessment	Pg. 2	Pg. 2	Pg. 2/3		Pg. 4			Pg. 5
Assessment	Pg. 2	Pg. 2		Pg. 3		Pg. 4		
Incident Information		Pg. 2		Pg. 3		Pg. 4		Pg. 5
Weather				Pg. 3				Pg. 5
Objectives	Pg. 2			Pg. 3				
Course of Action	Pg. 2	Pg. 2	Pg. 2/3	Pg. 3	Pg. 4	Pg. 4		
Validation		Pg. 2	Pg. 2/3	Pg. 3	Pg. 4	Pg. 4	Pg. 5	Pg. 5
Rationale		Pg. 2	Pg. 2/3	Pg. 3		Pg. 4	Pg. 5	Pg. 5
Stratified Cost Index		Pg. 2						
MAPs	Pg. 2	Pg. 2	Pg. 2/3					
Relative Risk							Pg. 5	

LONG DURATION/HIGH COMPLEXITY INCIDENTS

Some of these Decision Document examples incorporate information that was previously found in Wildland Fire Implementation Plans (WFIPs) and Long Term Implementation Plans (LTIPs). The intent of WFSS is that the information that used to be contained in those plans (seasonal assessments, Management Action Points, etc., risk assessment) can now be included in the Decision Document, eliminating the need to produce those plans outside of WFSS.

Horseshoe Fire - Arizona - Coronado National Forest (2010-AZCNF-010037): Discovery Date 5/26/10 Declared Out 7/19/10

- Type 2 Team assigned and later a Fire Management Team assigned. Two decisions published - 5/29/10 and 6/17/10
- **Periodic Assessment** (Viewed in the **Incident History List** – Left Menu). Consider the level of detail included in the Line Officers notes
- **Assessment** - Long Term Seasonal/Fire Behavior Assessment information is included in 6/17/10 Decision. This is the type of information that used to be included in a WFIP or LTIP. Narrative discussing fire behavior calibrations, outputs and implications for management.
- **Objectives** - Incident objectives/requirements tie to strategic objectives/requirements as outlined in Land and Resource Management Plan (LMRP) and Fire Management Plan (FMP).
- **Course of Action** – Management Action Point (MAPs) information included – Management Intent of each MAP is discussed and a map is displayed showing location

**LITTLE BEAVER COMPLEX – IDAHO – BOISE NATIONAL FOREST (2010-IDBOF-000499): DISCOVERY DATE
7/28/10 DECLARED OUT 10/24/10**

- Two decisions published, initial decision on 8/5 with input from local SOPL,
- Second decision on 8/14 with input from Local SOPL and Type 2 team to expand on initial decision and add MAP's, supporting Fire Behavior Analysis, fire history/progression maps, photos and seasonal climate assessment information. (This is information that would have been incorporated in a WFIP or LTIP in the past)
 - See **Incident Information** for fire history/progression maps
 - **Assessment** some seasonal assessment information included here
 - See **Course of Action** - Use of **Stratified Cost Index**, comparison on FSPro Outputs (Fire Spread Probability Model) used to support choice by Agency Administrators to contain fire on one flank and permit the remainder of the fire to burn into the wilderness ****NOTE*: this could also be included in the rationale or validation sections of the document***
 - Extensive use of **Management Action Points (MAPs)** – these were developed as both geographical and situational (public safety, smoke mitigation)
 - See **Validation** – History shows the status of the fire, Team being ordered and new planning area being developed. FSPro Run results used to assist with enlarging the planning area beyond original scope
 - See **Rationale** for discussion and supporting documentation of development of Course of Action. Includes Region 4 Forest Service Risk Assessment Framework documentation
 - See thorough **Periodic Assessment (Incident History List)** log by Agency Administrator for duration of Incident
 - Decision published on 8/14 remained valid through the duration of the incident

**BULL – WYOMING – BRIDGER-TETON NATIONAL FOREST (2010-WYBTF-000022): DISCOVERY DATE
7/23/10 CONTAINED 10/27/10**

- Four decisions published (7/24, 7/27, 8/23, 9/24) – new decisions published to build upon previous decisions with additional information and changes in weather and fire situation. Proposed course of action remained valid through duration of incident
- **Course of Action** - For all four Published Decisions - Effective use of **Management Action Points (MAPs)**. Annotation for each MAP allows reader to keep track of status and documents events that may have required a new course of action to be considered. Each Decision builds upon the other with additional supporting information.
- Thorough **Rationale** sections in Decisions on 7/24, 7/27, 8/23 – discusses resource benefit objective, smoke management and risk (includes Region 4 Forest Service Risk Assessment Framework) and complexity analysis checklist
 - **Rationale** in Decision on 9/24 includes new information on total fire cost and threshold for Forest Supervisor approval
- **Periodic Assessment (viewed in Incident History List – Left Menu)** - Thorough documentation of fire progression follows the chronology of the fire and documents key events in between published decisions. Discusses transitions between incident management organizations as season progresses

MODERATE DURATION/MODERATE COMPLEXITY INCIDENTS

COFFMAN FIRE – VIRGINIA – GEORGE WASHINGTON AND JEFFERSON NATIONAL FOREST (2011-VAVAF-000026): DISCOVERY DATE 2/19/11 DECLARED OUT 3/8/11

- Type 1 Short Team assigned - Two Decisions published 2/21 and 2/27
- Decision Published 2/21
 - **Weather** – uploaded spot weather forecast in addition to default Fire Weather Zone Forecast
 - **Assessment** – Regional ERC map uploaded, Smoke Dispersion Forecast uploaded
 - ****NOTE**** - consider some text to tie this information to the Decision, why these are included and what they indicate to the decision maker
 - **Course of Action** – Course of Action information is clear and remains at the strategic level and avoids individual tactics. The average cost spreadsheet for 5 year period was uploaded to support cost estimation method.
 - **Validation** – Southern Area Wildfire Risk Assessment maps uploaded to support comments in Relative Risk Rating (values, hazards, probability)
 - **Rationale** –Delegation of Authority letter included to illustrate that the Coffman fire was being managed as part of a complex. Some reference to the Team IC being responsible for reviewing course of action/incident objectives on a daily basis. Hand drawn Organizational Needs Assessment uploaded showing recommendation for Short Type 1 Team. Narrative (at the very bottom of the page) discusses drought conditions, bug killed fuels and need for indirect containment methods.
 - ****NOTE**** – the digital version of the Organizational Needs Assessment will be included in the next release of WFDSS 3.14 and will work much like the Relative Risk charts
- Decision Published 2/27
 - **Incident Information** – updated maps showing other fires in the complex in relation to Coffman Fire
 - **Assessment** – map image showing location of values - powerlines through fire area and other gas lines
 - **Objectives** – Incident objectives updated in new decision
 - **Course of Action** – Course of Action update to reflect new Incident Objectives
 - **Rationale** – addition of 5 day fire behavior projection (Near Term Analysis) to support Course of Action

WHITE FIRE – NEW MEXICO – LINCOLN NATIONAL FOREST/STATE OF NEW MEXICO (2011-NMN5S – 000187): DISCOVERY DATE 4/3/11 CONTAINED 4/11 (EXACT DATE TBD AS FIRE IS STILL ONGOING)

- Type 2 fire, Two Decisions published (4/4/11 and 4/8/11)
- Decision Published on 4/4/11
 - **Course of Action** - Consider how each Action Item is listed individually so they could be deactivated as the situation changes and new course of action is developed
 - ****NOTE****: Try to always tie course of action items to **Strategic Objectives/Management Requirements**
 - **Validation** - Use of photos of evacuations/fire behavior and proximity to communities. Also display of ERC graph showing conditions above 90th percentile.
 - ****NOTE****: Although very informative, consider adding some text to tie these images to specific parts of the decision (objectives, course of action etc.)
 - **Periodic Assessment (Incident History List)**– comments on justification of ordering Type 2 team, concerns with smoke management, cost containment and continued evaluation of Risk Management
- Second Decision Published 4/8/11 due to transitioning from Type 2 team to Type 3 organization – see **Incident History List** for validation comments on this transition

- **Course of Action** – additional entries made
 - ***NOTE***: some of this information may have been included in the **Rationale** of the Published Decision or **Validation** after Decision is published. The Course of Action Items list should be reserved for strategic or defined actions on the fire

WRANGLER FIRE – LOUISIANA – KISATCHIE NATIONAL FOREST (2010-LAKIF – 003098): DISCOVERY DATE 10/13/10 CONTAINED 10/29/10

- Two decisions published: 10/15 and 10/25
- First decision (10/15) published with baseline information, Type 3 team assigned, proposed course of action unable to meet objectives and Type 2 team ordered
 - **Incident Information** – map showing Wilderness boundary and fire location
 - **Rationale** – ERC/1000 hour fuels information to support indirect attack strategy
- Second decision (10/25) published
 - Additional Incident objectives/requirements included to address Strategic Objectives/Management Requirements from management plans
 - **Incident Information** – Discussion of transition b/w Type 3 and Type 2 organization, fire progression map
 - **Assessment** - Text added to Values inventory to describe features that are just outside of the planning area
 - **Course of Action** - Items tie to individual incident objectives/management requirements
 - **Validation** – images uploaded with text to illustrate smoke management concerns

SHORT DURATION/LOW COMPLEXITY INCIDENTS

The fires listed below illustrate how relatively short, simple Decision Documents can be developed to support either short duration or low complexity incidents. These types of decisions can document the information necessary to support a small fire in the initial stages that is being considered for resource benefit objectives or a short duration Type 3 fire that requires some basic information to support the proposed course of action. In many cases information may only be added to some of the folders in the Decision Document and can often be completed in under an hour. For these lower complexity or smaller fires, a simple initial Decision Document can establish the foundational information needed as a fire escalates in complexity or is managed through the season.

CORNER – ARIZONA - GILA DISTRICT BLM (2011-AZSAD-011024): DISCOVERY DATE 3/28/11 CONTAINED ON 3/31/11

- Two Short decisions published on 300 acre fire that was contained in 3 days
 - First Decision initiated on 3/29 – published the next morning 3/30
 - Following pre-planned response
 - Second Decision created 3/30 at 1200 – published by 1300 (1 hour turn around since unit was just expanding their decision with additional documentation)
 - Thorough **Relative Risk** notes entered, these notes automatically populate the **Validation** folder when the Decision is created
 - A quick **Rationale** entry discussing high relative risk rating and concern with smoke impacts.
 - States that course of action and incident objectives follow management plans intent

BARBELL FIRE – NEW MEXICO – EL MALPAIS NATIONAL MONUMENT (2010-NMEMP-000301): DISCOVERY DATE 7/20/10 DECLARED OUT 8/6/10

- Low complexity fire – only 2-5 acres, but 3 decisions published to address Agency Administrator concerns and potential long duration fire managed for resource benefit

- See **Periodic Assessment (Incident History List)** for Agency Administrator request for further info and new decisions
 - Initial Decision (7/21) published since fire occurred in an area that could be managed for resource benefit
 - 2nd Decision (7/22) published to add additional information on seasonal climate information and presence of UXO
 - 3rd Decision (7/23) published after UXO was neutralized
- Initial Decision (7/21) **Incident Information** included pictures of fuels, terrain and fire behavior, some maps of fire proximity to private land and structures
 - **Validation** - Relative Risk notes indicate low relative risk which help in justifying potential for management for resource benefit
- Third Decision (7/23)
 - **Weather** content includes ERC graph showing drop in value below average due to forecasted rain supporting resource benefit objectives and course of action
 - **Rationale** includes updated information on UXO removal, no fire growth (still 2.5 acres). Basic and short term fire behavior analysis included to illustrate potential fire spread vs. actual spread