

COURSE: Prescribed Fire Planning and Implementation

TOPIC: Burn Day Activities (Unit 8)

I. Objectives

- A. Discuss the importance of the pre-burn briefing.
- B. Review all elements of a properly conducted pre-burn briefing.

II. Briefing of Burn Crew

The pre-burn briefing is very important because the burn boss and all the participants have the opportunity to explain tasks, ask questions, and know their role in the prescribed burn. This is best conducted in a quiet area with few distractions. It should be kept short (20 minutes or less) and involve overhead so that everyone understands the plan. It is advantageous to have a "mini briefing" as a final review on site to ensure assignments prior to ignition.

A. Map of Prescribed Burn Area

- 1. Aerial photo or vegetation map.
- 2. Denote adjacent areas to the burn/who owns them.
- 3. Show all critical areas and location of key features.

B. Objectives of the Burn

- 1. What is to be achieved by this burn?
- 2. Will achievements be measurable and when?

C. Burn Crew Assignments/Burn Crew Organization

- 1. Ignition crew location.
- 2. Holding crew location.
- 3. Contingency forces or arrangements.
- 4. Show a common burn crew organization chart.

D. Radios/Communication

- 1. Will everyone have a radio? If not, who will each individual contact in case of problems?
- 2. What frequency will burn crew be using?
- 3. Is the refuge office reachable from the burn area in case of an emergency?

E. Expected Fire Behavior

1. What is anticipated for burn day?
2. If the burn escapes, is fire behavior going to change in the adjacent fuels? Will spotting be a problem?
3. Any local agencies having problems burning lately?

F. Ignition Pattern

1. Draw map of burn area and show proposed burn pattern.
2. Describe timing and logistical problems (fuel caches).

G. Holding Forces

1. Show location of forces to begin burn.
2. Location of critical resources (water, engines, etc.).
3. Discuss mop-up standards/problems/duration.

H. Areas of Concern and Why

1. On-site concerns (historical sites, archeological areas, concentrated fuel areas, angry neighbor, etc.)
2. Off-site concerns (highways, Class I airsheds, large population centers, health problems, etc.)

I. Safety Considerations

1. Burn Crew: travel, personal protective gear, escape routes, safety zones, changes in fire behavior, etc.
2. General public (roadways, air quality, neighboring properties, business losses, etc.).
3. Notification of public utilizing media contacts.

J. De-briefing or After Action Review (AAR)

1. What went right on this project?
2. What went wrong on this project, and what can we do to prevent it in the future?
3. Document in writing the AAR in Burn files

III. Go/No-Go Checklist to Burn

If you find that you answer "NO" to any of the following, then "STOP" and remedy the situation before ignition begins.

- A. Are you within your fire prescription?
- B. Do you have all needed burn permits?
- C. Is the weather forecast favorable and within prescription?
- D. Can smoke management considerations be met?
- E. Do you have all necessary burn personnel on burn day?
- F. Have all personnel been briefed as to function/location?
- G. Has safety been adequately discussed?
- H. Is necessary equipment in position and in working order?
- I. Are contingency plans and resources adequate for a worst-case scenario?
- J. In your estimation, do you believe that the plan can be carried out and that it will meet burn objectives?

If you can honestly answer yes to all of the above questions, then the ignition of the burn can begin.

