

## **Periodic Fire Assessment (completed on assigned frequency).**

This step provides a process to evaluate the continued capability of the local unit to manage the fire for resource benefits, and to determine if the fire is escalating in complexity and operational needs. If the assessment shows inadequate capability to continue to manage the fire, an indication is given to proceed to development of a Wildland Fire Situation Analysis (WFSA). If complexity and operational needs are escalating, the assessment indicates the need to fully define an MMA, develop long-term fire behavior predictions, conduct long-term risk assessment procedures, and define detailed long-term implementation actions (WFIP-Stage III).

This assessment is completed as frequently as specified by the local unit (depending on fire activity and predicted weather conditions) but no longer than every 1-5 days in shrub/timber types and daily in grass fuel types

When multiple fires are being assessed daily, additive effects of all fires must be considered along with assessment of each individual fire. Management oversight during the Periodic Fire Assessment phase is maintained through dialog with SO and RO staff regarding resource availability and by forwarding copies of updated assessments and projections to the next higher level.

### **Decision Authority**

A Periodic Fire Assessment record is kept with each WFIP and is signed by the approving line officer or designee. The decision authority for the Periodic Fire Assessment lies with the Forest Supervisor. This responsibility may also be delegated in writing to an acting line officer, a deputy or assistant line officer, a primary staff individual with fire credentials, or fire use manager. If or when fire conditions or complexity levels escalate, Periodic Fire Assessment authority will automatically and immediately revert to the agency administrator who made the initial delegation of authority. Delegation of authority for Periodic Fire Assessment to an individual other than the line officer should be considered the exception rather than the rule. The delegation of authority letter will specifically state the validation criteria authority and when that authority will be re-delegated back to the line officer.

In the event that the MMA crosses administrative or jurisdictional boundaries, for efficiency of coordination, a single line officer or designee will be appointed as the responsible official for signing the Periodic Fire Assessment. This should be determined through consultation with all involved administrative units and/or agencies, and documented in the development of the WFIP.

The Periodic Fire Assessment consists of three components:

- Part 1: Re-Validation Checklist
- Part 2: Stage III Need Assessment Chart
- Part 3: Signature Table

### **Part 1: Re-Validation Checklist**

The Re-Validation Checklist consists of the same decision elements present in the Decision Criteria Checklist. At this point in the implementation process, it is necessary to periodically review management capability. In order to accomplish this, an additional decision element has been added, "Do expected management needs for this fire exceed known capabilities?"

For Part 1, local fire staff review and complete the assessment checklist. Once this checklist is completed, it does not have to be redone, but it must be reviewed and documented on the signature table. The local unit must note the valid dates and the frequency of the assessment on the form. The valid dates include those dates where the assessment remains valid, as indicated by the dated signature. When any decision elements change from a "No" to a "Yes", a new

checklist must be completed for documentation purposes. The assessment frequency is how often the assessment will be reviewed.

When completing Part 1 of the checklist, a "Yes" answer to one or more of the decision elements indicates inability to continue management of the fire within defined limits of the current response. This triggers preparation of the WFSA to guide selection of a different appropriate management response alternative.

## **Part 2: Stage III Need Assessment**

Part 2, the Stage III Need Assessment, is a process that validates the level of implementation actions. It must be completed periodically for all wildland fires managed for resource benefits where Stage III has not yet been completed. This portion of the Periodic Fire Assessment utilizes the Stage III Need Assessment Chart. If the chart indicates that WFIP Stage III is needed, it must be prepared within 24 hours.

## **Part 3: Signature Table**

Once completed, this assessment will be periodically reviewed for validity. The signature table provides documentation for this process.

### **Periodic Fire Assessment Instructions**

The Periodic Fire Assessment is a process to prevent the unchecked escalation of an individual fire situation or the total fire management situation without evaluation and adequate planning. Part 1 evaluates the capability to continue implementation of the appropriate management response to this fire for achieving resource benefits for a specified period following the assessment i.e., the next 24 hour period or longer, depending upon fire weather and fire behavior forecasts or other anticipated conditions. This assessment will be completed and periodically reviewed for validity. The "assessment frequency" box on page 1 specifies the frequency of assessing the particular fire. Assessment frequencies will be set by the local unit but are recommended to range from every day to every ten days depending upon the fuel type and geographic location of the fire. Recommendations for minimum assessment frequency include the following: grass fuel types = daily; shrub and timber types = every 1-5 days; Alaska = every 1-10 days.

The "valid date(s)" box is inclusive of those dates where the assessment remains valid, as indicated by the dated signature. When any decision elements change from "no" to "yes", a new checklist must be completed for documentation purposes. A "yes" response to any element of the Part 1 checklist indicates that the selected appropriate management response is not accomplishing or will not accomplish desired objectives and that a new strategic alternative should be developed immediately through the use of a Wildland Fire Situation Analysis (WFSA).

The Periodic Fire Assessment, Part 2 is a process that must be completed periodically for all wildland fires managed for resource benefits that do not have a completed WFIP Stage III. For isolated ignitions in fuel-limited situations, Part 2 does not have to be completed. When completing Part 2 of this checklist, if the chart indicates that WFIP Stage III is needed, it must be prepared within 24 hours.

When units establish monitoring and assessment frequency, it may be appropriate to develop a "step-up" system based on fire size or levels of fire activity. Then, as an individual fire gets larger or becomes more active, the monitoring and assessment frequency can correspondingly increase. Conversely, as fire activity lessens and fire size increases become less common, monitoring and assessment can "step-down" and become less frequent. Units must identify standards and rationale for establishing assessment frequency, especially "step-up" and "step-down" actions. If fire size is used as a determinant, then past burning rates should be used to formulate standards. If fire activity is used, then levels of burning (acres per day, ect.) must be definable and justifiable.





## Periodic Fire Assessment Part 2: Stage III Need Assessment

# Stage III Need Assessment Chart





