"Our organization and our methods must never be frozen, but always subject to change."

Gifford Pinchot
# Contents

1. **Introduction**..................................................................................................................1  
   1.1 Scope.........................................................................................................................2  
   1.2 How This Document Will be Used...........................................................................2  
   1.3 The Structure of This Document..............................................................................3  
2. **The Changing Environment**..............................................................................................4  
   2.1 Adjusting the Business Model................................................................................4  
   2.2 Integration within The Business Model.................................................................5  
   2.3 Recognizing Change and the Unexpected...............................................................6  
3. **Guiding Principles**.............................................................................................................7  
4. **Fire and Aviation Workforce and Development Strategic Framework**  
   4.1 FAM Vision, Beliefs, Mission................................................................................9  
   4.2 Focus Areas, Goals, Objectives, Progress Indicators..............................................10  
      4.2.1 Protect Resources..............................................................................................11  
      4.2.2 Restore Landscapes.........................................................................................13  
      4.2.3 Prepare Communities.....................................................................................15  
   4.3 Capacity Areas..........................................................................................................17  
      4.3.1 Enhance Technology......................................................................................17  
      4.3.2 Build Leadership............................................................................................19  
      4.3.3 Develop Workforce.......................................................................................22  
5. **Acknowledgements**...........................................................................................................25  
   5.1 Firefighter Workforce and Succession Planning Strategic Team..........................25  
   5.2 Reviewers...................................................................................................................25  

Appendix A – Fire and Aviation Management Workforce and Development Strategic Framework Statements..........................................................................................26  
   Focus Areas..................................................................................................................26  
   Capacity Areas.............................................................................................................26  
National Fire and Aviation Management Strategic Plan..................................................28  

Appendix B – Firefighting Business Model............................................................................45  
   Business Model Description..........................................................................................45  
   Workforce Plan............................................................................................................46  
   Succession Plan.............................................................................................................47  
      Gap Analysis............................................................................................................47  
      Identifying Talent Pools............................................................................................48  
   Succession Strategies for Recruitment, Retention, Development...............................48  
   Implementation Plan of Succession Strategies.............................................................48  
   Monitoring and Evaluation............................................................................................48  

Appendix C – Additional Supporting Information...............................................................49
1. Introduction

The Forest Service mission is to sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the Nation’s forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations. Maintaining an organization with the appropriate skills and leadership abilities is a critical element for the success of the mission.

The Forest Service has recognized a need to develop and implement an agency-wide workforce and succession plan. The agency, as well as the entire civilian federal government workforce, is faced with a challenge to ensure the future of organizations can remain viable and productive due to the impending retirements of over half of the workforce.

The establishment of the Human Resources Workforce Planning and Program Analysis Branch signals a change in the Forest Service and the need to focus for the future. The Office of Inspector General agrees with this focus as found in their 2009 audit of whether the Forest Service had adequately planned for the timely replacement of its critical fire management staff as retirements increase and fewer of the staff volunteer for fire-related assignments.

Even though this audit and the recommendations are specific to Fire and Aviation Management, the impact of the audit affects the entire agency. This framework articulates the Fire and Aviation Management’s (FAM) vision that supports the agency mission with the development of a new firefighting model to move the agency forward for the next decade and beyond.
1.1 Scope

The scope of the FAM Workforce and Development Strategic Framework encompasses activities agency-wide and not just within fire and aviation. It includes identifying the primary workforce needed for fire and aviation activities, as well as a supplemental workforce to assist with the agency’s fire and all hazard incident response.

Guidance from the Human Resources Workforce Planning and Program Analysis Branch, the recent national wildland firefighter workforce study, the National Wildfire Coordinating Group’s Incident Management Organization Succession Planning initiative and the OIG audit recommendations have all been taken into consideration in developing this framework.

The scope of this framework provides guidance to the varying levels within the organization on how to plan, establish, implement, and monitor their unit’s firefighting resource assets and at the same time assisting the agency with meeting its national workforce goals.

1.2 How This Document Will Be Used

As a strategic framework, this document looks to the future and establishes a course for arriving at the desired destination. It is intentionally broad as the primary focus of meeting workforce and succession planning touches all levels of the organization ultimately meeting the national goals. This framework is designed to assist the regions and forests in their development of employees that possess the needed technical and leadership skills to be successful within Fire and Aviation Management, operations and emergency response, while being mindful of natural resource management objectives.

The FAM Workforce and Development Strategic Framework lays out a set of objectives that are short-term and long-term in nature, including implementation strategies, and monitoring in order to assess if the projected workforce needs are being met and what adjustments might be necessary if they are not.

The integration of this framework into all Forest Service planning activities is considered necessary in order to successfully meet the needs of emergency response. Many employees within other disciplines of the Forest Service support accomplishment of that part of our mission.

The FAM Strategic Framework is a living document which can be affected by changes in the scope of the wildland fire challenge, policy, budget and the ability for others from outside the agency to provide assistance. Therefore, regular review and updates with continued involvement of Human Resources and the field will be required.
1.3 The Structure of This Document

This document has four primary parts: first the introduction, which explains the basis for the framework being developed; second an explanation of large-scale events and trends within wildland fire and changes that have taken place within policy that influence fire management activities and workforce implications; third are guiding principles that were foundational to the development of this document; and fourth is the FAM Workforce and Development Strategic Framework.

The FAM strategic plan (the plan), was developed in support of the Forest Service’s Strategic Plan. The FAM plan includes a workforce development goal of recruiting, developing and retaining a highly skilled fire and aviation workforce and support force of Forest Service employees in other disciplines. The understanding of the inter-relationships these have to the implementation of the framework is critical for its success.

Determining the appropriate numbers and skill mix of employees to meet the needs of Fire and Aviation Management and how we get there, is part of the framework and guidance included in the fourth part of this document.

The complete Fire and Aviation Strategic Plan can be found in Appendix A and provides the reader with the overall philosophy and the desired future of fire and aviation in the Forest Service.

As you work through this framework, some components of the fourth part are driven by other studies, as well as how to develop a workforce for the future that in the end state provides protection to the people, the communities near National Forest System lands, natural resources and also makes the Forest Service an employer of choice.
2. Changing Environment

Land management practices over the past century on National Forest Systems (NFS) lands in large measure have created the landscape and management issues facing the USDA Forest Service (Forest Service) today. One important issue is wildland fire management.

Over the past decade, FAM budget allocations, interest and oversight have continued to increase dramatically as has the extent of the wildland fire problem in scope, extent and impact. However, the agency recognizes that current workforce and employee development practices have not kept pace with the changing role and nature of wildland fire management. One symptom is reflected in the fact that despite growth in the FAM program, numbers of qualified responders continues to dwindle.

Today, FAM currently receives nearly 50% of the agency budget and its full-time workforce represents approximately 41% of agency personnel. Conversely, many of the agency’s other programs have experienced a corresponding reduction in available funding for program activities and staffing. Despite past changes in policies and increases in fire suppression expenditures, the trend continues toward more extensive wildfires, displaying uncontrollable fire behavior and uncharacteristically severe effects (NIFC 2008).

The public, our partners, Congress, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Government Accounting Office (GAO) and the Department (including OIG) continue to press the agency to address many concerns related to the current fire management business model and to address other challenges facing the agency today.

Policy and workforce issues are at the forefront of these considerations and pressures. Passage of the FLAME Act in 2009, implementation of the Cohesive Strategy, emerging tools, approaches to risk management and the USDA Forest Service National Strategic Human Resources and Diversity Plan and the Forest Service 2009 Workforce Analysis and 2010-2014 Workforce Plan provide avenues to alleviate some of these concerns.

2.1 Adjusting the Business Model

The current fire management business model for organizing and responding to fire, both planned and unplanned, reflects organizing to respond to past conditions not necessarily to the current and future ecological, social and economic realities. In addition, the current Fire and Aviation Management business model does not adequately address workforce and succession considerations. Updating the agency business model to meet tomorrow’s challenges will be vital if the Forest Service is to retain its management capability in redeeming its multifaceted mandate. Success will also ensure retention of the distinction of being recognized as the ‘premier world class wildland fire management agency.’
For these reasons the agency has recognized the importance of addressing our current and future workforce and the development of a National Workforce and Development Strategic Framework.

It is incumbent upon the agency to address the fundamental issues surrounding the threats and benefits to fire and to organize to efficiently and effectively redeem this aspect of the overall agency mission. This is best accomplished through a continuation of some of the most useful approaches of the past while simultaneously developing new approaches which compliment and facilitate the changes in agency practice and culture. These refocused processes will manifest in changed behavior and outcomes.

The refocused processes also support the vision found in the Cohesive Strategy to safely and effectively extinguish fire, when needed; use fire where allowable; manage our natural resources; and as a Nation, live with wildland fire.

Three primary factors identified within the Cohesive Strategy also build into the need to adjust the business model. Restoring and maintaining resilient landscapes, creating fire-adapted communities, and responding to wildfires which must recognize the differences in missions among local, state, tribal, and Federal agencies.

2.2 Integration within the Business Model

Wildland fire affects all lands managed by the agency and the Forest Service is a fire management organization. Since fire management is a fundamental agency activity, it is only fitting that all employees contribute either directly or indirectly to the execution of the mission. Expanding Forest Service workforce involvement in response to fire has a myriad of attendant benefits, restoring some of the lost ability and flexibility.

Response to fire is a mindset, a paradigm recognizing both the benefit and threat that wildland fire poses. Response to fire continues to evolve. This evolution is predicated on past perspectives, actions and outcomes. Today, we recognize that fire is an integral part of the ecosystems we manage. We also recognize that fire must play a more natural role on the landscape. There are inherent risks which can be managed and minimized to a large extent. Fire is a fundamental ecological disturbance agent on the vast majority of NFS lands. Ecosystems which are not fire adapted are fire affected due to invasive species, encroachment of human settlement and potentially through continued climate change. FAM has worked to incorporate natural resource considerations into some of the organization’s key positions by requiring a positive natural resources education component to many of the positions qualification standards. Incorporating these natural resource management skills with emergency management skills in our workforce will integrate the new business model with the overarching agency mission.
The agency manages 193 million acres of these landscapes and provides protection on 210 million acres. This fiduciary land management responsibility requires integration with other resource programs and also considers application of fire as a legitimate land management tool both through natural and managed ignition. How the agency organizes and executes its programs, be they distinctly stand-alone or integrated, is the key defining consideration. In addition, the agency also has a significant role as partner with our neighbors on the larger national scale.

The future direction of managing landscapes incorporates the Cohesive Strategy, application of doctrine, and risk management. How wildland fire is viewed, the abilities of communities to adapt to fire, and the subsequent response to both applied and unwanted wildland fire and to what extent we employ fire as a management tool will dictate how we choose to organize our workforce, activities and accomplishments in the management of lands.

2.3 Recognizing Change and the Unexpected

Developing and implementing any strategic framework must incorporate a methodology for adjustment at any given phase of the implementation. Within the agency, such challenges will be brought about through our own changes in doctrine rules, regulations and policies, as well as those established by others, both internally and externally.

The budget process will also play a critical role in the implementation of the workforce framework. We must not lose sight of the need to be able to adjust fairly rapidly based on changes in the budget. Given the current economic situation as this framework is initially developed, building a phased approach for reaching the ultimate workforce goals only makes good business sense. This document includes those elements for the regions, forests and districts to use as they work towards developing their organization for the future.
3. Guiding Principles

The FAM National Workforce and Development Strategic Framework incorporates the guiding principles (3.1-3.10) that were developed and are included within the Fire and Aviation Management’s Strategic Plan. These guiding principles are guidelines that set the foundation for how Fire and Aviation Management will operate. The guiding principles identified include those committed to by the Fire and Aviation Management leaders and complement guiding principles of the Forest Service.

3.1 RISK MANAGEMENT
No resource or facility is worth the loss of human life. Risk management is the deliberate identification and subsequent mitigation of hazardous conditions to promote human health and safety. We are committed to risk management at every level of FAM operations.

3.2 LEADERSHIP
Leaders will express clear, concise intent to ensure assignments are managed safely, effectively and efficiently.

3.3 ACCOUNTABILITY/DISCIPLINE
Leaders will regularly monitor operations for effectiveness and take action when there is recognition of exceptional or problematic employee performance and/or when systems or processes pose barriers to the successful achievement of objectives.

3.4 INTEGRITY
We are committed to duty, respect for others and personal integrity. Every employee fosters a work environment that is enjoyable, rewarding, recognizes the value of diversity and is free of harassment and hostility.

3.5 DUTY
As displayed in Doctrine, every Forest Service employee has a responsibility to support fire suppression emergencies in a manner that meets identified needs and is within his or her qualifications and capabilities.

3.6 COOPERATION
Cooperative relationships between USDA-FS FAM, other agencies and non-governmental partners are essential. The Forest Service is committed to honor its part of the joint responsibility to develop and maintain effective working relationships with its internal, intergovernmental and non-governmental cooperators.

3.7 COLLABORATION
Collaborative processes among multiple levels of government, including the National Wildfire Coordinating Group and a range of interests will be used to ensure that
healthier fire-adapted ecosystems, enhanced community preparedness and protection and diminished risk and consequences of severe wildland fire will be realized.

“Given the threats and risks of the escalating wildfire challenge, the path forward must seek to ensure that the efforts of all stakeholders in fire management reinforce and multiply each other—so the whole will be greater than the sum of the parts.”—2009 Quadrennial Fire Review, Final Report

3.8 INNOVATION

Employees are empowered to be creative and decisive, to exercise initiative and accept responsibility and to use their training, experience and judgment in decision-making to carry-out their leader’s intent, while appropriately managing risk at all levels of their assignments.

3.9 COST EFFECTIVENESS/EXECUTION

Fire and Aviation Management performs its mission safely and efficiently by maximizing effectiveness and controlling costs.

3.10 STEWARDSHIP

We practice sound fire management to help sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the nation’s forests and grasslands.
4. Fire and Aviation Workforce Planning and Development Strategic Framework

The Fire and Aviation Workforce Planning and Development Strategic Framework takes into consideration the over-arching Forest Service values:

- *Cares for the Nation’s forest and grassland ecosystems.*
- *Values the varied skills and contributions of a diverse workforce.*
- *Strives for accountability by every employee for the efficient management of the capital resources he or she uses.*
- *Is responsive to national and local interests.*
- *Is focused on the needs of future generations.*

Integration of the values throughout all program areas will assist in the success of any program whether it is fire and aviation or recreation. As any strategic framework is developed, it is critical to be holistic in the approach and not program centric. In order to achieve this, the vision needs to be supported at all levels throughout the agency. This framework is comprised of a set of specific statements representing leadership’s vision and intent for FAM in the Forest Service, with consideration for the Cultural Transformation initiative and will guide the agency’s Fire and Aviation Program in the future to meet the Forest Service mission.

This Framework also follows best practices outlined by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Workforce Planning Model and exemplified by the USDA Forest Service 2009 Workforce Analysis and 2010-2014 Workforce Plan:

- *Set Strategic Direction*
- *Analyze Workforce*
- *Identify Skill Gaps and Conduct Workforce Analysis*
- *Develop an Action Plan*
- *Implement Action Plan*
- *Monitor, Evaluate and Revise*

4.1 Fire and Aviation Management’s Vision, Beliefs and Mission

**FAM Vision:** Shared responsibility for fire management sustains a landscape and communities that are resilient to fire.

**Belief:** We are committed to land and resource stewardship that aligns with Forest Plan Desired Conditions and to emergency response. As a result of leadership and successful partnerships, fire is managed to sustain resilient, fire-adapted ecosystems. Human communities are fire-adapted and well-prepared for fire.
**FAM Mission:** We manage fire on the landscape to sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the Nation’s forests and grasslands.

**Belief:** The Fire and Aviation Management mission statement is also the Forest Service mission statement. Fire and Aviation Management supports and implements the mission by executing risk management processes, managing fire to sustain ecological processes, reducing hazardous fuels, promoting fire-adapted human communities and realizing our emergency incident management responsibilities.

The first statement of the framework addresses Fire and Aviation Management’s vision, beliefs and mission but also incorporate the overall Forest Service vision and mission. Together, these statements express the agency’s highest regard for the lands entrusted to us to manage.

The FAM vision incorporates integration of all programs into the management of fires in order to meet natural resource objectives and sustain the landscape.

The FAM mission statement is the Forest Service’s mission statement which tells the public what we do.

The belief statements incorporate integration of all programs into the fire responsibilities in order to sustain the landscape which leads to the purpose of this strategic framework.

**4.2 Focus Areas, Goals, Objectives and Progress Indicators**

Focus areas for the framework recognize the role a highly skilled and diverse professional functioning workforce plays in meeting the agency mission and vision. High performing organizations realize that efficient and effective business practices will produce the ultimate goal for their agency.

The intent of the focus areas is to develop the workforce for the future that will meet the agency’s fire and aviation program needs. The desired outcome is a well-balanced organization that meets both fire and aviation land management programs and response to incidents.

Three focus areas for this framework – protect resources, restore landscapes and prepare communities. These focus areas express the key elements of good land stewards which are accomplished through the workforce.

First, the ultimate goal is to demonstrate over time through execution, that the agency exemplifies the traits of the premier resources and wildland fire management agency and an employer of choice. The new business model is responsive to the agency’s chosen future course. The framework describes the components of a different approach
by the agency adjusting to prevailing conditions, social and political issues, business practices, recruitment and retention of employees.

Secondly, integrating the land management practices in a more cohesive manner will assist in the restoration of our Nation’s landscapes and applying fire to the landscape is one facet of restoration. Providing the agency with a workforce that has the applicable ecological, fire prescription and fire ignition knowledge and practical experience is a primary component of the fire organization of the future.

Thirdly, the fire and aviation workforce will engage fully with our communities as we move forward with key initiatives such as the Cohesive Strategy and other rule making decisions. Developing the workforce for the future, that both compliments and supports the communities that are at greatest risk from wildland fire is a critical factor in the success of minimizing and eventually eliminating catastrophic fires.

Focus areas are further defined by goals, objectives and progress indicators. Progress indicators help leadership measure whether the agency is moving in the desired direction to achieve the objectives and, ultimately, the goals. The indicators are not targets and are not intended to drive work accomplishment. Rather they show whether the right work is being done to achieve the desired outcomes. Progress indicators provide further context and definition for the objectives to which they are tied.

4.2.1 Protect Resources

**Goal: The Nation’s human, natural, cultural and physical resources are protected from wildland fire.**

Managing our Nation’s resources is the mission of the Forest Service for those lands entrusted to the Agency. Providing the appropriate workforce to meet this responsibility is done through sound workforce and succession planning. Protecting these resources from wildland fire is accomplished with sound land management practices, utilizing fire where possible to the betterment of the landscape and with cooperation with our partners and the communities.

**Objective 1: Manage fires to protect people and resources**

Every fire is evaluated upon discovery in order to determine the appropriate strategy for that fire. Protection of resources and people is the primary factor considered during this evaluation. Developing the appropriate tools and suppression strategies/tactics for use by the workforce is a component in meeting this objective. Ensuring the workforce gains the necessary skill and knowledge in using these tools/tactics, interpreting and applying the outputs on the landscape will lead to a successful fire outcome.
Progress Indicators:
1. The fire and aviation workforce can effectively demonstrate skills learned from applicable training in using the current technology/tactics for the development of strategies and implementation of the strategies on wildland fire.
2. Outreach and recruitment efforts target critical skills required to continue program efforts.
3. Outreach, train and retain Forest Service employees to support emergency response for surge capacity to the FAM organization.
4. The fire science and technology transfer program leaders are actively engaged with key fire and aviation leadership staffs to determine the needs of the fire community in meeting their fire program responsibilities during changing conditions. Current models are evaluated and presented in such a manner that if improvements can be made that will provide for better decision and risk management it is clear to fire leadership and the investment to move forward is acknowledged.

Objective 2: Reduce human-caused wildfires

Educating the public is a critical component in the reduction of human-caused wildfires. Developing a state-of-the-art fire prevention program, engaging with stakeholders and reaching out to organizations that have not been traditionally involved is the foundation to reaching reduction in the number of human-caused wildfires annually.

Progress Indicators:
1. The fire and prevention workforce has been provided the opportunity to evaluate current prevention practices and propose new methods and materials for educating the public. The result of this is a measured reduction in human-caused fires in the primary geographic areas that have the highest numbers of fires.
2. The fire and aviation workforce can effectively demonstrate skills learned from applicable training to improve upon progress of public education and outreach.
3. Outreach and recruitment efforts target critical skills required to continue program efforts.
4. The fire and aviation workforce plan includes this program area as a critical component in a manner that it integrates a multitude of skills and knowledge within the fire community in order to maintain a high level of currency with the changing culture. This will be identified in the mapping of a career path for individuals who are interested and motivated toward a prevention career.
Objective 3: Prevent and mitigate fires in the wildland-urban interface

The continued growth into the interface has provided new challenges for both federal and state agencies. Working collaboratively with all levels of government is required in order to reach this objective. The implementation of the Cohesive Strategy, working with the communities at risk, other organizations that can assist in working with communities and individuals to develop firewise properties are all contributors to achieving this goal.

Progress Indicators:
1. The actual reduction in wildland-urban interface fires will be a key indicator of success of programs that are currently in use today as well as new ones that are developed.
2. Entering into additional agreements and commitments with cooperators with a focus on educating communities on how to reduce their potential fire risk is also an indicator towards reducing these fires.
3. The FAM prevention and mitigation workforce can effectively demonstrate skills learned from applicable training to improve upon progress of partnership building and agreement development with local, county, state and other entities.
4. Outreach and recruitment efforts target critical skills required to continue program efforts.

4.2.2 Restore Landscapes

Goal: Wildland fire is used as a tool to restore and maintain desired landscapes and accomplish the overarching land management objectives.

Implementing the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy revised guidance supports the need to utilize fire to meet both restoration of landscapes and land management objectives. Use of wildland fire to accomplish both of these is now available and utilized by allowing a wildland fire to be managed for one or more objective(s) based on the land management plan. Using prescribed fires in a landscape restoration methodology and integrating with other land ownerships needs to be an element of achieving the goal. Developing a workforce that can support these land management practices in the future will support success in achieving the goal.

Objective 1: Reduce Hazardous Fuels

Developing an overall plan that identifies the priority treatment locations based on a set of criteria will provide for investing fuels funding for the future and ultimately achieve the reduction of hazardous fuels. Integrating these treatments within our own resource
management objectives as well as coordinating treatments with our partners will provide for reaching a reduced hazardous fuel situation.

**Progress Indicators:**
1. The establishment of an integrated fuels management portfolio which establishes a larger investment strategy of greater land management priorities and multi-jurisdictional goals.
2. Funding and fuels treatment acres/project allocations are directly tied to the portfolio and accomplishment reporting reflects meeting the reductions in hazardous fuels acres targeted for each year.
3. The fire and aviation workforce can effectively demonstrate skills learned from applicable training.
4. Outreach and recruitment efforts target critical skills required to continue program efforts.

**Objective 2: Restore and maintain fire-adapted ecosystems**

Utilizing the current conditions of the landscape, land managers can establish fuel treatment objectives and projects focused in the fire-adapted ecosystems. Developing prescriptions for these areas to support utilizing both wildfire and prescribed fire will further along the objective and provide the agency administrators with flexibility to take advantage of a wildfire start if the situation warrants.

**Progress Indicators:**
1. Prioritize and fund treatments initially in fuel reduction zones in fire-adapted communities where it brings in large landscapes and public lands between the wildland urban interface and the landscape beyond the WUI.
2. Having in place managers with increased fuels management skills to better work with and develop modeling capabilities, adaptive management and assessment of risk so all fuel planning efforts lead to supporting decision making.
3. The fire and aviation workforce can effectively demonstrate skills learned from applicable training.
4. Outreach and recruitment efforts target critical skills required to continue program efforts.

**Objective 3: Emphasize the ability of fuels treatments to meet social and economic needs in an environmentally sensitive manner**

Removing hazardous fuels has the potential to have multiple benefits which are not just specific to the landscape. The advancement of using woody biomass for other industries and manufacturing is growing, especially with the Nations’ emphasis on being much more energy efficient and recycling. Increasing the awareness of the Firewise Communities program which encourages local solutions for wildfire safety by involving
homeowners, community leaders, planners, developers, firefighters and others in the effort to protect people and property from the risk of wildfire will lead to both social and economic benefits.

Progress Indicators:
1. Working together with cooperative state and local government programs to increase community efforts in building fuels treatment programs via grant mechanisms will increase if an emphasis is placed on the commercial opportunities. Success of this would be measured through the actual numbers of grants provided to communities and the investment in a biomass manufacturing entity in the local community.
2. Participating with communities that have Community Wildfire Protection Plans developed and in place will provide for a more efficient use of limited dollar resources and obtain both reductions in fuels and potential economic growth in that area much faster.
3. The increase in the number of communities that are identified as FIREWISE each year supports the continued partnership with other levels of government and the public.
4. The FAM fuels management workforce can effectively demonstrate skills learned from applicable training to improve upon progress of partnership building and agreement development with local, county, state and other entities.
5. Outreach and recruitment efforts target critical skills required to continue program efforts.

4.2.3 Prepare Communities

Goal: Communities play an active role in managing the risks of wildland fire

Over the past several decades the public has relied heavily on different levels of government to protect their property, both the publicly owned property and their privately owned property. The shift of the population into more of the wildland areas has identified the need for stronger involvement from the public. The development of several educational materials and programs geared to communities and individuals to protect themselves, which includes the Firewise Communities Program, has occurred. Continuing with this endeavor and increasing the partnerships with state and local governments will assist in meeting the goal.

Objective 1: Communities have the capacity, knowledge and experience to reduce the risk of wildland fire

Providing the tools and information to all communities that have the potential to be impacted from wildland fire is an interagency effort which reaches down to the local government levels. The Forest Service has expanded its prevention and education program and developed additional ways to get the messages out, which actually starts
with grade school children. Continuing this effort, along with continuing to be a partner in the Firewise program will build capacity to assist in reducing the risk of wildfires.

**Progress Indicators:**

1. The increase of communities recognized as Firewise communities will grow at a commensurate rate based on the development of partnerships with State and local governments to assist in the aggressive implementation of Firewise programs.
2. The development of a plan within communities to build capacity of local resources to respond to initial and extended attack fires should be done.
3. The FAM prevention and mitigation workforce can effectively demonstrate skills learned from applicable training to improve upon progress of partnership building and agreement development with local, county, state and other entities.
4. Outreach and recruitment efforts target critical skills required to continue program efforts.

**Objective 2: More and diverse communities are fully engaged in mitigating the impacts of wildland fire**

Communities that have been identified as potential communities at risk as well as others that may have expanded into the wildland urban interface but may not have the current level of risk need to engage with the local fire managers (regardless of level of government) to understand the potential impacts of wildland fire. Forest Service personnel across the country are working toward building the relationships and assisting communities with developing their local plans and methods for mitigation depending upon their situation.

**Progress Indicators:**

1. The increase in the number of communities that put in place Firewise programs and incorporate building codes for new developments which includes fire mitigation requirements will be a strong indicator of success.
2. Continuing the Forest Service’s current level of commitment, at a minimum, to maintain a viable Firewise program to educate communities about the importance of individual responsibility in home protection should lead to communities being recognized as a Firewise community.
3. Establishment of a safety and risk management plan cooperatively with local governments in underserved communities will increase involvement from the public and help mitigate potential impacts.
4. The FAM Risk Management, Fuels and Prevention and Mitigation workforce can effectively demonstrate skills learned from applicable training to improve upon the progress of partnership building and mitigation plan development with local, county, state and other entities.
Objective 3: Communities invest in fuel reduction strategies to reduce their exposure to major damage from wildfire

Working with communities to recognize their exposure to wildfire has been increasing over the past decade partly due to the very large fires that have occurred. Taking advantage of these events assists the Forest Service with developing integration strategies for treatments not only on FS lands but also on private lands. The establishment of grants for fuel reductions and the Healthy Forests Restoration Act provided a catalyst to communities to have influence on fuel reduction funds.

Progress Indicators:
1. An increase in the number of communities that have a shared responsibility in the wildland urban interface where fuels reduction efforts are jointly planned and treated (restoring landscapes to desired condition) and long term expectations for community maintenance are factored in occurs on an annual basis.
2. The number of communities that develop a plan and process to implement and support biomass utilization through community activities increases with the assistance of Forest Service personnel.
3. The actual numbers of acres treated in communities that have been identified as a community at risk increases at the commensurate rate associated with the funding provided through the grant program.
4. The FAM fuels management workforce can effectively demonstrate skills learned from applicable training to improve upon progress of partnership building and biomass plan development with local, county, state and other entities.

4.3 Capacity Areas

To accomplish FAM mission goals and objectives, there must be adequate capacity. Capacity refers to both the “hard” resources, such as money and infrastructure (easy to quantify) and the “soft” resources, such as knowledge and reputation. These soft resources are more difficult to quantify, but are nevertheless required to enable FAM personnel to be successful in meeting their roles and responsibilities in supporting the mission.

This section of the FAM strategic framework addresses three areas of FAM capacity needed for the agency to fully realize the benefit of the FAM mission work. These three areas are inter-related as well as are critical to the success of meeting the goals and objectives of the focus areas. Each capacity area has a goal, a set of objectives and accompanying progress indicators, in a structure similar to that of the FAM mission focus areas.
Agency leadership recognition and support of these capacity areas is critical in meeting the mission but also in sustaining the workforce needed for the future within FAM.

4.3.1 Enhance Technology

**Goal:** The best available science and technology informs Fire and Aviation Management decisions

Utilizing science and technology in accomplishing the fire mission is one of the pillars in the foundation for success. The overarching priority for any work within the fire and aviation program is to provide for safety first. Incorporating science and technology at a pace faster than traditional will further lead to minimizing direct human participation in high-risk activities and activities where human error could lead to significant failure.

**Objective 1: People have access to wildland fire tools and technologies**

Securing funding in a planned methodology that supports the technology program is a must and also has to be a priority of the agency. Developing the tools to assist in mission delivery is more than just the traditional firefighting equipment. It is the integration of the new science and technology needed to assist in decision making, using the resources more efficiently and establishing the programs that will lead to a fully restored landscape.

**Progress Indicators:**
1. The establishment of a process to identify, evaluate and select for funding research and potential of new technology for use by fire managers drives the budget request for technology projects. This process is used for priority setting and funding allocations annually.
2. The allocation of the technology and tools is accomplished through a planned program and coincides with changes in applications, procurement of equipment and annual training requirements.

**Objective 2: The application of innovative science and technology makes all fire and aviation activities safer and more effective**

Any use of science and technology needs to provide a benefit. Otherwise it is not necessary and resources should not be committed. The use of innovative science and technology can have a multitude of benefits, but the primary purpose for FAM is to enhance safety for both the firefighters and the public. Historically fire science and technology has been an evolution within the agency and outside of the agency. Until recently we have not seen the initiative or this level of effort and investment in utilizing the science which has prompted the development of new tools for decision makers and leadership. It is anticipated this pace of change will continue, that is why it is critical we
focus on the safety and efficiency aspect of any science and technology that may be of interest.

**Progress Indicators:**
1. A delivery method is identified when new technology is being developed and will be utilized in the field which provides the foundation for the training component. This is accomplished prior to the full implementation and use of any technology for FAM in order to ensure it is properly used.
2. Once the technology has been developed based on the science or other foundation and implemented, a monitoring plan is established and followed to ensure the intended purpose of the application is met or if changes are required. This becomes a project plan in a sense for each application/technology in order to meet the requirements it established when developed.

**Objective 3: Fire management leaders use new technologies and approaches to improve wildland fire decisions**

The development of new systems, changes to existing applications, new discoveries in science and technology may all have a bearing on how decisions are made relative to fire and aviation. The integration of all three is the future we must head into and stay abreast of potential changes. As land managers decisions that are made today can influence the land being treated well into the future, therefore integrating new technologies into the decision making process is critical. As policies change, new initiatives come into existence, such as the Cohesive Strategy and influences that are beyond our control, moving fairly quickly is imperative. Educating our fire management leaders in how to use these tools has to be a priority otherwise we will not achieve the efficiencies we can gain.

**Progress Indicators:**
1. Fire management leaders utilize any new technology that is implemented within the fire season it is ready to support for decision making and provide an evaluation of its use back to FAM leadership.
2. Annual program reports and reviews from fire managers at the field unit level indicate success in using new technologies and approaches for both decision making and accomplishing work and if not successful FAM develops a process to adjust either the technology or applicable approach to improve upon its effectiveness.

**4.3.2 Build Leadership**

**Goal:** Stakeholders, partners and cooperators recognize and support FAM as a leader in fire and land management
Providing a highly qualified and professional workforce to support FAM’s mission, provides for success within the agency but also globally. Identifying and developing future leaders that can continue to implement FAM’s goals well into the future is a partnership within the agency as well as with our cooperators. Establishing the appropriate competencies for any fire leader position is critical and required in order to build that leadership. Utilizing the work within the interagency fire and aviation community as well as professional institutions that already identifies the skills, abilities and knowledge needed will be incorporated in order to reach this goal.

**Objective 1: Develop Future Leaders**

Identifying and developing future leaders that can continue to implement FAM’s goals well into the future is a partnership within the agency as well as with our cooperators. Establishing the appropriate competencies for any fire leader position is critical and required in order to build that leadership. Leadership skills help employees work effectively on project teams, succeed in complex assignments and meet strategic objectives.

**Progress Indicators:**
1. The number of Forest Service employees participating in leadership development programs increases at the identified rate within the geographic area support targets indentified in the workforce plan.
2. Formal mentor programs are in place at the forest level to assist personnel develop their leadership skills.

**Objective 2: Clear, consistent leadership direction strengthens program delivery**

Leadership direction from the Chief down to each supervisor is a critical component to be successful in meeting our mission. Every leader sets the tone for their personnel and within the fire and aviation organization it becomes a key factor to ensure safety is the overarching principal. Understanding the doctrine of each fire program area and how to reinforce leaders intent for any component of fire delivery is a requirement for all personnel engaged in that activity.

**Progress Indicators:**
1. The Chief continues to place emphasis on clear direction in the annual letter to the field concerning the upcoming fire season.
2. Fire and aviation has included in the appropriate curriculums, handbooks and manuals the key points to being a successful leader and giving leaders’ intent in such a manner that any fire activity initiated has a successful outcome.
**Objective 3: Build pool of incident responders throughout the Forest Service**

There are two sides to the fire and aviation program, one is fire program management which includes our land stewardship responsibilities and the other is emergency response. Utilizing personnel from within the agency and outside of the agency is critical in order to be successful in both parts. Developing leaders for all fire and aviation program responsibilities has to be done in partnerships. Leadership therefore supports and encourages participation by employees of other program areas in emergency response roles.

**Progress Indicators:**

1. FAM works with all program areas within the agency to secure a workforce for the future through initiatives to increase the number of Forest Service employees that hold incident response qualifications. This is measured through the monitoring of geographic area support targets identified within the workforce plan.
2. Training priorities developed to include hosting training for the most needed positions and prioritizing attendance by level of commitment to participate.
3. Formal trainee mentor programs are in place at the forest level to assist getting personnel fully qualified as quickly as possible.

**Objective 4: Retain knowledge within the agency**

Conserve, discover and share knowledge across the agency regardless of geography, rank, generation or time. Access to lessons learned, personal experience, best practices, key contacts and more, accumulated by all staff across the agency allows us to take advantage of our collective knowledge and work better, learn faster and survive into the future. Continuing to work at saving knowledge within existing systems is necessary but also searching out additional methods for knowledge retention in the agency needs to occur.

**Progress Indicators:**

1. Continue to provide information and share experiences with the Wildland Fire Lessons Learned Center.
2. Disseminating information on the Wildland Fire Lessons Learned Center to FAM employees.
3. The FAM workforce can effectively demonstrate skills learned from applicable training to improve upon knowledge sharing and research processes.
4. Outreach and recruitment efforts target critical skills required to continue program efforts.
5. Search industry practices for capturing knowledge and determine potential adoption within the agency.
**Objective 5: Innovative communication tools improve our ability to promote our vision, mission and programmatic goals**

Communicating in a decentralized organization is a challenge especially if the information is intended for all personnel. Evaluating the latest methods for communicating program goals, site specific tasks or strategies in emergency response will ensure success.

This endeavor should be done in concert with and even as a component of the information resources technology program leaders to ensure integration, collaboration and economies of scale.

**Progress Indicators:**
1. Fire and aviation have a funded technology program that has established priorities that evaluate the latest communication equipment and software that can meet the requirements of delivering information and data for decision makers on the ground.
2. As a project is funded, an implementation plan is developed which includes a pilot program to ensure the technology is viable for assisting in accomplishing the fire and aviation program of work.
3. A monitoring strategy and plan are created as soon as the overall technology program requirements are established in order to adjust the program when it is needed.
4. The FAM workforce can effectively demonstrate skills learned from applicable training to improve upon communications methods and techniques for both internal and external audiences.

**4.3.3 Develop Workforce**

**Goal: The Fire and Aviation Management workforce is highly skilled, diverse and innovative**

The success of any organization is founded on its workforce. As the Forest Service transitions with the changes in the country and worldwide so must its workforce. Developing the personnel within the Fire and Aviation Management positions, as well as the other program areas that provide support to the FAM mission is a high priority. Drawing from the diverse individuals available today will bring us strength and new ways of thinking in the future and move us into being an employer of choice.

**Objective 1: Develop, recruit and retain a highly skilled fire and aviation workforce**

Identifying where and how to recruit the best and the brightest individuals is always a goal of businesses and is now part of the overall succession planning strategies of fire and aviation. Identifying and developing a methodology to use all of the available
hiring, recruitment and retention authorities available will be a component of the succession plan. Implementing a career development management tool and student programs will guide our workforce into the future and assist in sustaining the organization needed to be successful in delivering the mission.

**Progress Indicators:**
1. A guide containing authorities available for recruitment and retention is established and reviewed and updated as needed on an annual basis.
2. Statistics are kept of where new hires come from to measure the success of the recruitment strategy that is part of the succession plan.
3. Each region has established a recruitment strategy tiered from the national fire and aviation strategy in order to incorporate unique skills needed based on the geographic area.

**Objective 2: The Fire and Aviation Management workforce represents the diversity of the American workforce**

Fire and aviation leadership recognizes it is essential to have a highly skilled and diverse workforce. Working towards improving the diversity of the workforce is accomplished with outreach, recruitment, professional development and retention strategies. The economic, social and technologic footprint for the 21st century is changing dramatically which has an influence in fire and the work to be accomplished. Establishing a flexible plan that can be adjusted to support these changes is critical to succeed in the hiring and development of the future workforce.

**Progress Indicators:**
1. The regions are meeting the diversity goals established through the Forest Service National Recruitment and Diversity Plan which includes FAM and if not an evaluation is conducted to determine what needs to change.
2. The fire and aviation program in total has incorporated diverse, cross-functional teams in support of meeting the mission.

**Objective 3: Leadership promotes a working environment that fosters innovative thinking**

Innovative means to invent or begin to apply. Advanced, forward-looking and modern are other terms to describe innovative. Having leadership promote innovative thinking in their employees brings to the organization a highly skilled and motivated workforce that will take on challenges, changes and be creative in accomplishing that work without hesitation. Without leadership’s support the program will not advance.
Progress indicators:
1. New programs are developed and tested that were created from individuals in support of their position or through developmental career classes such that they are adopted region-wide and recognized formally.
2. Doctrine is established by leadership that fosters innovative thinking on each unit with a strong fire program in order to determine if a new way of doing business is more efficient, meets the mission equally or better and enhances the safety element.
3. A formal recognition system is established to encourage individual’s to be creative, forward-looking and apply new methods and ideas to accomplishing their work.
5. Acknowledgements

5.1 Firefighting Workforce and Succession Planning Strategic Team (WST)

The WST is a chartered team by the Director of Fire and Aviation Management and is comprised of representatives from fire and aviation, human resources and line officers. The WST is responsible to assist in the development of the National Fire and Aviation Management Workforce and Succession Strategic Plan which responds to the OIG Audit Report No. 08601-54-SF for redesigning the agency’s firefighting business model. This FAM Workforce and Development Strategic Framework document incorporates the succession plan. The following people comprise the WST:

Tory Henderson, FAM Assistant Director, Workforce and Development
Rhonda Flores, HRM Assistant Director, Workforce Planning
Vickie Huelster, HRM, Workforce Team Leader
Karin Frost-Madrid, HRM HR Specialist
Patti Hirami, FAM Chief of Staff
Bill Waterbury, FAM Assistant Director, Risk Management
Karyn Wood, FAM Assistant Director, Operations
Merrie Johnson, FAM Director of National Fire Training Centers, NAFRI
Bob Kuhn, FAM Program Specialist, Planning
Erin Newman, FAM Liaison to HRM
Erica Kim, FAM OIG Liaison, Planning
Forest Supervisor, TBD

5.2 Reviewers

The Fire and Aviation Management Workforce and Development Strategic Framework was reviewed by other key personnel within the Forest Service during its development. The reviewers provided valuable input into the document in order to present a final version that meets the needs for the organization in the future.

Mark Davis, President NFFE Forest Service Council
Laura Kalifeh, S&PF Analyst, Region 8
Nancy Guererro, FAM Public Affairs Specialist, Workforce and Development
Jill McCurdy, FAM Branch Chief Fire and Aviation Training
Alan Quan, FAM Fire Program Specialist, Cohesive Strategy
Appendix A – Fire and Aviation Management Workforce and Development Strategic Framework Statements and National Fire and Aviation Management Strategic Plan

Fire and Aviation Management Workforce and Development Strategic Framework Statements

Vision: Shared responsibility for fire management sustains a landscape and communities that are resilient to fire.
Belief: We are committed to land and resource stewardship that aligns with Forest Plan Desired Conditions and to emergency response. As a result of leadership and successful partnerships, fire is managed to sustain resilient, fire-adapted ecosystems. Human communities are fire-adapted and well-prepared for fire.

Mission: We manage fire on the landscape to sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the nation’s forests and grasslands.
Belief: The Fire and Aviation Management mission statement is also the Forest Service mission statement. Fire and Aviation Management supports and implements the mission by executing risk management processes, managing fire to sustain ecological processes, reducing hazardous fuels, promoting fire-adapted human communities and realizing our emergency incident management responsibilities.

Focus Areas

The focus areas express the key elements of good land stewards which is accomplished through the workforce.

Protect Resources
Goal: The Nation’s human, natural, cultural and physical resources are protected from wildland fire.
Objective 1: Manage fires to protect people and resources.
Objective 2: Reduce human-caused wildfires.
Objective 3: Prevent and mitigate fires in the wildland-urban interface.

Restore Landscapes
Goal: Wildland fire is used as a tool to restore and maintain desired landscapes and accomplish the overarching land management objectives.
Objective 1: Reduce Hazardous Fuels.
Objective 2: Restore and maintain fire-adapted ecosystems.
Objective 3: Emphasize the ability of fuels treatments to meet social and economic needs in an environmentally sensitive manner.

Prepare Communities
Goal: Communities play an active role in managing the risks of wildland fire.
Objective 1: Communities have the capacity, knowledge and experience to reduce the risk of wildland fire.
Objective 2: More and diverse communities are fully engaged in mitigating the impacts of wildland fire.
Objective 3: Communities invest in fuel reduction strategies to reduce their exposure to major damage from wildfire.

Capacity Areas

The following capacity areas are inter-related and also are critical to the success of meeting the FAM mission and sustaining the workforce needed for the future.

Enhance Technology
Goal: The best available science and technology informs Fire and Aviation Management decisions.
Objective 1: People have access to wildland fire tools and technologies.
Objective 2: The application of innovative science and technology makes all fire and aviation activities safer and more effective.
Objective 3: Fire management leaders use new technologies and approaches to improve wildland fire decisions.

Build Leadership
Goal: Stakeholders, partners and cooperators recognize and support FAM as a leader in fire and land management.
Objective 1: Develop future leaders.
Objective 2: Clear, consistent leadership direction strengthens program delivery.
Objective 3: Build pool of incident responders throughout the Forest Service
Objective 4: Retain knowledge within the agency
Objective 5: Innovative communication tools improve our ability to promote our vision, mission and programmatic goals.
Develop Workforce

Goal: The Fire and Aviation Management workforce is highly skilled, diverse and innovative.

Objective 1: Recruit, develop and retain a highly skilled fire and aviation workforce.

Objective 2: The Fire and Aviation Management workforce represents the diversity of the American workforce.

Objective 3: Leadership promotes a working environment that fosters innovative thinking.
National Fire and Aviation Management Strategic Plan

A Basis for Change; A Strategy for the Future

2009 - 2012

Revised October 1, 2009
Executive Summary

A Strategy for the Future

Strategic planning allows an organization the opportunity to “look to the future” in an effort to have a hand in planning their success. In order to do so, the organization must ask questions. What will our world look like 10 or 20 years out? What will assist us in preparing for these changes and challenges to come in order to be successful? What critical capabilities will prepare us for those changes?

This plan answers many of those questions. It establishes six goals - Enhance Technology; Protection Resources; Restore Landscapes; Prepare Communities; Improve Communication; and Develop Workforce - to assist the organization in meeting our mission within the agency. It outlines strategies to meet these goals.

Although it is unrealistic to predict the future exactly, there are many forces that drive changes throughout our organization which are very clearly defined. The effects of climate change will continue to result in greater probability of longer, bigger fire seasons in more regions across the nation. Cumulative drought effects will further stress fuels accumulations. There will be continued wildfire risk to those communities established near wildlands, despite greater public awareness and broader involvement of communities. Emergency response demands will continue to escalate. Our fleet of aviation assets is rapidly aging, as is our workforce - with many of our experienced, seasoned employees rapidly approaching retirement. Our fire agency budget resources—at the federal, tribal, state and local levels - are strained by increased demands and rising costs during a period where government budget revenues will be either tight or falling. The publics’ expectation for timely, almost real-time, information continues to increase. This Strategic Plan is our response to many of these challenges. As the agency looks forward to the next five to ten years, fire and aviation must significantly increase efficiency, manage organizational structure and continue to be a leader in the agency.

Those complicating factors outlined above emphasize the need for clear prioritization of scarce resources and a comprehensive understanding of roles, responsibilities and objectives. Doing business as usual is no longer acceptable.

The Fire and Aviation Strategic Plan will guide the Fire and Aviation Management program into the future by providing a framework for utilizing efficient, cost effective ecosystem and emergency management practices that will restore the health of fire-adapted ecosystems, promote fire-adapted communities and support Land and Resource Management Plan Desired Conditions.
A Basis for Change

The U.S. Forest Service’s Fire and Aviation Management program is at a turning point. Emphasis over the past ten years has led to numerous reviews and policy changes and the acceleration of fuel treatment and vegetation management activities. As the agency and Fire and Aviation Management look to the next ten years, we must increase efficiency and manage organizational change and structure while evaluating and managing risks and maintaining a leadership role.

To this end, Fire and Aviation Management (FAM) is developing a strategy to guide the program over the next decade. The Strategy’s foundation is embedded in numerous Agency documents and strategies including, but not limited to:

1. Goal 1 of the “U.S. Forest Service Strategic Plan FY 2007 – 2012” which emphasizes restoring, sustaining and enhancing the nation’s forests and grasslands;
2. The current USDA Strategic Plan which links program expectations to the Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART);
3. The December 2006 updated 10 Year Strategy Implementation Plan
4. Fire and Aviation Management PART measures and the corresponding Improvement Plan which are designed to increase accountability, performance and efficiency;
5. The Forest Service Chief’s key themes of climate change, clean water and establishing a strong connection to the land;
6. Other key documents such as the 2007 “Safety Culture for the 21st Century” report by Dialogos, the 2005 “Quadrennial Fire and Fuel Review” report and analysis of mega fires;

Intent and Expected Results

The FAM Strategic Plan will support the Administration’s expectation for accountability and transparency of government and the Agency’s expectation of sound ecosystem and emergency management through efficient and effective organizations and management practices. The Plan defines Fire and Aviation Management’s vision, mission, guiding principles and goals. The goals are characterized by objectives. Strategies define the method or approach taken to accomplish the objectives and are reflective of opportunities and threats. Action Plans will move the strategies forward and will be specific, measurable and attainable. Progress will reported on a regular basis to assist the organization in monitoring our level of success. This success will be reported annually in our fiscal year accountability report.

The National Fire and Aviation Management Strategic Plan is the umbrella document that provides strategic context for all fire and aviation activities. It is not a stand-alone document, but
rather it complements, enhances and guides other plans and strategies. It is tiered to higher level documents, like the agency’s Strategic Plan and the 10 Year Comprehensive Strategy and it incorporates elements of other agency plans, like the Woody Biomass Utilization Strategy. It is the long-term framework for guiding all of FAM’s future activities.

**Current Situation**

The federal agencies, as well as many states, are making changes in the way they manage wildland fire. There are several criteria driving the need to change. The effects of climate change will continue to result in greater probability of longer, bigger fire seasons in more regions across the nation; cumulative drought effects will further stress fuels accumulations; health and emissions concerns regarding smoke will make it difficult to use fire as a management tool; there will be continued wildfire risk to the communities closest to our wildlands as their numbers increase, despite greater public awareness and broader involvement of communities; emergency response demands will escalate; and agency budget resources—federal, tribal, state and local, will be strained by increased demands and rising costs during a period where government budget revenues will be very tight or falling.

The fire and aviation program within the constrained budget of the Forest Service has grown to the point that the other program areas within the agency are at risk. High protection costs, confusion about roles and responsibilities, inconsistent messages and differing public expectations about community preparedness responsibilities have lead to increased tensions. Continuing to do business the same way has the potential to cripple key agency programs and undermine partnerships. In order to move ahead and get beyond the “status quo,” FAM is taking an aggressive approach within all components of the program. The FAM program is structured around managing wildland fires, maintaining high initial attack success rates, applying prescribed fire and other fuels treatments to the land and managing risks at all level of our work.

In order for FAM to move into a new way of doing business, the Strategic Plan needs to be supported and adopted throughout the agency, as well as by external partners and stakeholders. This Plan will essentially serve as a roadmap for our actions into the near future and help us to ensure we safely reach our destination.

**The Challenge**

We recognize that implementation of the FAM Strategic Plan will be a challenge. It is always difficult to change direction, especially in a large organization like the Forest Service. However, we can be successful in moving forward in a new direction. Key to our success will be negotiating this change with our partner program areas within the Forest Service, our FAM workforce and with our interagency governmental and non-governmental partners; partnering with our world-class Research organization to develop and deploy the latest technology and fill gaps in our understanding of ecological systems; and focusing on a risk-based approach the fire management across the landscape. Leadership, sound communication and effective workforce planning, recruitment and retention will also be
critical. This plan will provide a framework for negotiating change. It will allow FAM to respond to pressures from Congress and the public and address the effects of growth in the wildland urban areas. It will provide an opportunity for FAM to continue to be a leader in management efficiencies and the integration of fire management practices to achieve healthy ecosystems. Our vision of Fire and Aviation Management is consistent with meeting the needs of the Forest Service, the interagency wildland fire community and our publics. Given the threats and risks of the escalating wildfire challenge, the path forward must seek to ensure that the efforts of all the stakeholders in fire management reinforce and multiply each other so that the whole will be greater than the sum of the parts. We will work together with our partners to realize this purpose.
Fire and Aviation Management Strategic Plan

The Fire and Aviation Management Vision

Shared responsibility for fire management sustains a landscape and communities that are resilient to fire.

We are committed to land and resource stewardship that aligns with Forest Plan Desired Conditions and to emergency response. As a result of leadership and successful partnerships, fire is managed to sustain resilient, fire-adapted ecosystems. Human communities are fire-adapted and well-prepared for fire.

The Fire and Aviation Management Mission

We manage fire on the landscape to sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the nation’s forests and grasslands.

The Fire and Aviation Management mission statement is also the Forest Service mission statement. Fire and Aviation Management supports and implements the mission by executing risk management processes, managing fire to sustain ecological processes, reducing hazardous fuels, promoting fire-adapted human communities and realizing our emergency incident management responsibilities.

The Fire and Aviation Management Guiding Principles

Guiding principles are general guidelines that set the foundation for how Fire and Aviation Management will operate. The guiding principles identified include those committed to by the Fire and Aviation Management leaders but also complement guiding principals of the Forest Service.

The guiding principles are as follows:

RISK MANAGEMENT: No resource or facility is worth the loss of human life. Risk management is the deliberate identification and subsequent mitigation of hazardous conditions to promote human health and safety. We are committed to risk management at every level of FAM operations.

LEADERSHIP: Leaders will express clear, concise intent to ensure assignments are managed safely, effectively and efficiently.

ACCOUNTABILITY/DISCIPLINE: Leaders will regularly monitor operations for effectiveness and take action when there is recognition of exceptional or problematic employee performance and when systems or processes pose barriers to the successful achievement of objectives.
INTEGRITY: We are committed to duty, respect for others and personal integrity. Every employee fosters a work environment that is enjoyable, rewarding, recognizes the value of diversity and is free of harassment and hostility.

DUTY: As displayed in Doctrine, every Forest Service employee has a responsibility to support fire suppression emergencies in a manner that meets identified needs and is within his or her qualifications and capabilities.

COOPERATION: Cooperative relationships between USFS FAM, other agencies and non-governmental partners are essential. The Forest Service is committed to honor its part of the joint responsibility to develop and maintain effective working relationships with its internal, intergovernmental and non-governmental cooperators.

COLLABORATION: Collaborative processes among multiple levels of government, including the National Wildfire Coordinating Group and a range of interests will be used to ensure that healthier fire-adapted ecosystems, enhanced community preparedness and protection and diminished risk and consequences of severe wildland fire will be realized.

“Given the threats and risks of the escalating wildfire challenge, the path forward must seek to ensure that the efforts of all stakeholders in fire management reinforce and multiply each other—so the whole will be greater than the sum of the parts.”—2009 Quadrennial Fire Review, Final Report

INNOVATION: Employees are empowered to be creative and decisive, to exercise initiative and accept responsibility and to use their training, experience and judgment in decision-making to carry out their leader’s intent, while appropriately managing risk at all levels of their assignments.

COST EFFECTIVENESS/EXECUTION: Fire and Aviation Management performs its mission safely and efficiently by maximizing effectiveness and controlling costs.

STEWARDSHIP: We practice sound fire management to help sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the nation’s forests and grasslands.
Goal 1: Protect Resources

The nation’s human, natural, cultural and physical resources are protected from unwanted wildland fire.

OBJECTIVES

**Objective 1:** Manage fires to protect people and resources.

**Objective 2:** Reduce human-caused wildfires.

**Objective 3:** Prevent and mitigate fires in the wildland-urban interface.

STRATEGIES

1. Systemically incorporate and strengthen safety and risk management into fire planning processes, developing safety metrics on a level equal with post-fire resource impacts and cost efficiency.

2. Weigh factors such as risks, suppression costs and value of resources lost against the value of ecosystems restored/improved and infrastructure protected when managing fires.

3. Better integrate cost sensitivity and risk management in the acquisition and allocation of all resources.

4. Redesign incident management team structures to not only broaden their ability to respond (range of tactics and capabilities), but to shift focus to more modular and meldable incident management organizations.

5. Develop capacity of incident management organizations (Types 1, 2 and 3) so that all team members have the training and ability to address wildfire and emergency response situations, regardless of jurisdictional boundaries.

6. Continue to train and assist other communities and partners in incident management and adding fire and emergency response planning to emergency response training.

7. Maintain a viable Human-Caused Fire Prevention Program.

8. Maintain a viable FIREWISE program to educate communities about the importance of individual responsibility in home protection and promote recalibration of public expectations for fire adapted communities.

10. Network and collaborate with state and local officials to successfully realign fire governance relative to roles and responsibilities for fire prevention and protection in communities in close proximity to wildlands.

11. Incorporate a sense of responsibility among private landowners, home owners, the insurance industry, fire districts, local governments and other key players in the interface communities for wildfire prevention and mitigation.
Goal 2: Restore landscapes

*Wildland fire and other integrated treatments are used as a tool to restore and maintain desired landscapes.*

OBJECTIVES

**Objective 1:** Reduce hazardous fuels.

**Objective 2:** Restore and maintain fire-adapted ecosystems.

**Objective 3:** Emphasize the ability of fuels treatments to meet social and economic needs in an environmentally sensitive manner.

STRATEGIES

1. Establish an integrated fuels management portfolio that would transform fuels management from a project/output perspective to a larger investment strategy of greater land management priorities and multi-jurisdictional goals.

2. Leverage fuels treatment projects through cooperative state and local government programs to incentivize community efforts and build “local” fuels management capacity via grant programs to state and local entities and establish cooperative programs with willing and able neighbors, focusing on proactive communities with CWPPS or that are part of FIREWISE, Fire Safe, etc.

3. Further develop managers’ skills in fuels management to provide better modeling capabilities, adaptive management and assessment of risk, fuels and disturbance regimes in order to seamlessly integrate these skills into all fuel planning efforts which will further support decision making.

4. Start with fuels reduction zones in fire-adapted communities and work toward efforts to treat larger landscapes and public lands between the wildland urban interface and the landscape beyond the WUI.

5. Continue to be active participants and partners in agency efforts related to biomass, climate change and carbon sequestration.
Goal 3: Prepare communities

*Communities play an active role in managing the risks of wildland fire.*

**OBJECTIVES**

**Objective 1:** Communities have the capacity, knowledge and experience to reduce the risk of wildland fire.

**Objective 2:** More and diverse communities are fully engaged in mitigating the impacts of wildland fire.

**Objective 3:** Communities invest in fuel reduction strategies to reduce their exposure to major damage from wildfire.

**STRATEGIES**

1. Identify and develop partnerships with State and local governments to assist in the aggressive implementation of “FIREWISE” ordinances.

2. Develop a process to implement and support biomass utilization through community activities.

3. Develop a plan to build the capability of local resources to respond to initial and extended attack fires.

4. Work with partners to clearly define roles and responsibilities.

5. Maintain a viable human-caused fire prevention program.

6. Maintain a viable FIREWISE program to educate communities about the importance of individual responsibility in home protection.

7. Develop a FAM outreach strategy to effectively increase program delivery to diverse and underserved communities.

8. Pursue “shared responsibility” in the WUI where fuels reduction efforts are jointly planned and treated (restoring landscapes to desired condition) and long term expectations for community maintenance are factored in.

9. Promote and integrate safety and risk management throughout all capabilities and cooperative ventures.
Goal 4: Enhance Technology

The best available science and technology informs Fire and Aviation Management (FAM) decisions.

OBJECTIVES

Objective 1: People have access to wildland fire tools and technologies.

Objective 2: The application of innovative science and technology makes all FAM activities safer and more effective.

Objective 3: Fire management leaders use new technologies and approaches to improve wildland fire decisions.

STRATEGIES

1. Develop a process to identify, evaluate and select research and development projects for funding.

2. Develop a delivery method that is accessible, adaptive and allows for full utilization of the technology.

3. Build and expand partnerships with other science and technology organizations, such as NASA, the National Institute for Standards and Technology and the military, to leverage research and technology dollars.

Increase the use of sophisticated remote sensing technologies to minimize direct human participation in high-risk activities and activities where human error could lead to significant failure.
Goal 5: Improve communication

*Improved communication enhances our capability.*

**OBJECTIVES**

**Objective 1:** Open dialogue leads to shared expectations about roles and responsibilities among fire leadership.

**Objective 2:** Clear, consistent leadership direction strengthens program delivery.

**Objective 3:** Innovative communication tools improve our ability to promote our vision, mission and programmatic goals.

**STRATEGIES**

1. Develop key messages and a plan to communicate those messages to inform and educate the appropriate target audience—both internal and external, including the national, regional and local media sources by using existing networks of employees, stakeholders and interest groups, as well as exploring innovative, emerging technology.

2. Ensure FAM involvement in communications/collaborations with the public during Forests’ Land Management Planning process.

3. Enhance collaboration and building partnerships through social networks within Web 2.0 (Myfirecommunity.net)

4. Revitalize environmental stewardship education for public lands and wildfire (“Fire-opedia” Web 2.0)

5. Consider public information on fire risk, prevention and fire Safety within Web 1.0 (The Fire Channel)

6. Improve basic firefighter and aviation training curriculum to communicate core safety culture and risk management concepts.

7. In support of workforce planning, develop multi-media projects to communicate the positive attributes of careers in the Fire and Aviation Management organization.
Goal 6: Develop workforce

*The Fire and Aviation Management workforce is highly skilled, diverse and innovative.*

**OBJECTIVES**

**Objective 1:** Develop, recruit and retain a highly skilled fire and aviation workforce.

**Objective 2:** The FAM workforce represents the diversity of the American workforce.

**Objective 3:** Leadership promotes a working environment that fosters innovative thinking.

**STRATEGIES**

1. Develop workforce planning program that increase diversity in the workforce through innovative partnerships and recruitment and mentoring.

2. Increase the number of individuals qualified for wildland fire assignments in shortage areas through employee and Line Officer commitment, contracting and exploration of other traditional and non-traditional sources of workforce.

3. Develop criteria to enhance recognition of employee accomplishments.

4. Depart from behavior-based programs to Safety Management Systems that use risk management processes to improved decision-making in the workforce.

5. Develop metrics that define employee accountability in meeting their Fire and Aviation Management commitments.

6. Ensure fire management officials and agency administrators possess the decision-making skills for long-term risk assessments and monitoring to allow for adaptive management
What's Next

Once approved by the Fire and Aviation Management Director and Deputy Chief for State and Private Forestry, staff will begin to develop the action plan and associated work plans necessary to implement the strategies, and work with Line to ensure the action plan components are feasible and supported by Line.

Action Plans will be assigned to the appropriate Assistant Director and/or his/her staffs. Reporting requirements will be established and progress will be monitored for efficiency and effectiveness. The Strategic Plan is crafted as a “living document”, which means that as progress is monitored, revision of not only the action plans, but the strategic plan, should occur as the need arises. Outcomes will be reported as part of the agency’s annual performance measure reporting process, but also highlighted more specifically in the FAM annual accountability report. In addition, the FAM strategic plan will be directly linked to future budget requests and justifications.

Communicating the Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives within the interagency fire community will be a critical next step in successfully implementing all the goals identified. This Plan not only provides the FAM organization with the appropriate roadmap to successfully reaching our destination, but our external communication efforts of the plan will allow us to be more accountable and transparent in our operations with not only our stakeholders, including the regulatory agencies and Congress, but with the American people. Once finalized, the plan will be published on both the internet and intranet.
Appendix B – Firefighting Business Model

The Forest Service was audited by the Office of Inspector General, regarding the Agency’s firefighting succession planning process. FS has recognized that a different business model is necessary for firefighting resources in order to ensure numbers for both primary fire program personnel and “militia” to support the mission.

The Firefighting Business Model embodies all of the elements that go into workforce and succession planning, but also drives the success of the FAM Workforce and Development Strategic Framework. The national organizational picture of the future is established through the analysis of historical data and applying the current organization picture in order to predict what the organization should look like in the future. Regional planning is critical in the development, implementation and assessment for success on. The end product should be that Forest Service has the professional premier firefighting workforce it wants to have.
Workforce Plan

Workforce Planning is the business process for ensuring that an organization has appropriate skills and competencies suitable to ensure future success. Workforce planning is considered an iterative discipline. The cycle of workforce planning includes filling resource requests, analyzing resource utilization, forecasting capacity, managing and identifying the resources (human) to fill that capacity and then re-starting the cycle. The agency must consider the standard knowledge, skills, abilities, along with the aptitude and predisposition to undertake required activities including decision making. Access to talent includes considering all potential access sources (employment, contracting out, partnerships, changing business activities to modify the types of talent required, etc.).

Strategic Planning considers the business risks concerning insufficient, disrupted, mis-deployed talent on the organization's business priorities.

The Forest Service has established a national workforce planning process that is guided by the Human Capital assessment and Accountability Framework (HCAAF) established by Office of Personnel Management (OPM). Annually a request is sent to the Regions/Stations/Areas/Deputy Chiefs (R/S/A/DCs) to complete Workforce Planning templates. This work is then collated to produce the rolling 5-year agency plan. The agency Workforce Plan is adjusted annually based on the collection of the new data. The Fire and Aviation Plan feeds into this overall Forest Service Plan. The Succession plan is built based on the analysis completed from the Workforce Plan.

This appendix brings into it the contents of the latest Forest Service Workforce Plan, with a subset identified specific to Fire and Aviation Program positions. Final Fire and Aviation Workforce and Succession plan will be completed by March 1, 2012. The Firefighter Workforce and Succession Planning Action Plan include the key elements for the development of the plan and the critical dates. The Action Plan will be updated as key elements are completed, as well as status of ongoing elements.

The latest Workforce Plan and Fire specific numbers will be added to this appendix once received. The intent of this appendix is to be reviewed and adjusted annually based on the latest workforce data and any adjustments that may be needed in the succession plan. The Framework would not change annually unless agency focus, mission, or other items change that would influence the strategies and goals established.
Fire and Aviation Succession Plan

Succession planning is a systematic approach for building a diverse leadership pipeline/talent pool to ensure leadership continuity; developing potential successors in ways that best fit their strengths and the agency’s needs, identifying the best candidates for categories of positions; and concentrating resources in the talent development process yielding a greater return on investment. The objective is to ensure that the agency continues to operate effectively when individuals occupying critical leadership positions depart.

The Forest Service utilizes a blend of personnel to meet its obligations. Personnel include fire program positions, other resource program areas, Job Corps, interagency fire and aviation cooperators and private industry. The succession plan for Fire and Aviation must take into account all sources of personnel. In addition, the succession plan strategies should include being flexible enough to adjust for changes in budgets and other influences.

The Succession Plan will be a component of this appendix when completed (3/1/2012) and will be based on the latest data pulled and analyzed at the time. Adjusting the succession plan annually will be critical in meeting the needs of the agency. This section will be modified annually if needed after the data is reviewed.

Gap Analysis

Gap analysis is based on the current workforce as well as historical workforce numbers in order to effectively evaluate trends. The analysis conducted to complete this succession plan included both fire and aviation program positions and “militia” positions. Utilizing the latest workforce planning template data collected provided for the current supply and anticipated demand for the organization and assisted in identifying the core and technical competencies for the long term.

The data summary information that is completed for the gap analysis will be added to the appendix when completed. This information will be supplemented on an annual basis as looking at trends in the workforce is a dynamic process.
Identifying Talent Pools

The gap analysis will identify where the organization needs to focus in bringing in personnel into the agency or into other positions that require certain skills, knowledge and competencies from multiple levels within fire and aviation as well as we can draw from for “militia” and outside sources.

The completed analysis will be entered in this section and will be adjusted annually if needed.

Succession Strategies for Recruitment, Development and Retention

Will identify these once we have the base data analysis completed in order to determine where we might need to focus to pursue hiring (specific position gaps)

Implementation Plan of Succession Strategies

The implementation plan for the succession strategies is developed as the last step in workforce planning. As the Forest Service works through the implementation and reviews the data annually, strategies may need to be revised in order to mitigate any shortcomings discovered.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The workforce and succession plan will include monitoring and evaluation which will provide for adjustments if the Forest Service is not meeting its goals. This step in the process will be completed last and is dependent upon all other components of the plan.
Appendix C – Supporting Information

This appendix is intended to provide the reader with other information or plans that the Forest Service is engaged in or utilizing to support the work being done in succession planning. Will include relevant elements from the Wildland Firefighter study, the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) Incident Management Organization Succession Planning Team Report, other agency information.