

## **Forest Service Responsibilities under the National Response Framework**

The National Response Framework details how the nation conducts all-hazards response. Under the National Response Framework, the USDA Forest Service provides federal support for the detection and suppression of wildland, rural, and urban fires resulting from, or occurring coincidentally with, an all hazard incident requiring a coordinated national response for assistance. The Forest Service coordinates firefighting activities and provides personnel, equipment, and supplies in support of local, state, tribal, territorial, and insular area agencies involved in wildland, rural, and urban firefighting operations.

Under the National Response Framework, the Forest Service is the primary agency for Emergency Support Function #4 (ESF #4), Firefighting. The primary mission of ESF #4 includes:

- Coordination of federal firefighting activities
- Providing personnel, equipment, and supplies in support of local, state, tribal, territorial, and insular area agencies involved in wildland, rural, and urban firefighting operations

The Forest Service is also identified in the National Response Framework as a support agency for 12 of the remaining 14 Emergency Support Functions (ESFs). While technically not ESF #4 missions, support provided by the Forest Service is coordinated through personnel staffing the ESF #4 function. These support missions include tasks such as emergency road clearing, managing logistics facilities, providing communications equipment and personnel, and providing command and control resources.

The National Response Framework states that all requests for wildland or structural firefighting resources through ESF #4 are coordinated through the existing national firefighting mobilization system. In all cases, resources are assigned commensurate with each unit's level of training and the adequacy and availability of personnel and equipment. ESF #4 missions are accepted using the following priorities:

1. Agency response mission
2. ESF #4 missions under the National Response Framework
3. Support to other ESFs as specified in the National Response Framework
4. Non-specified support to other emergency support functions and departments/agencies

Below is a list of specific support that may be provided to other emergency support functions through ESF #4, and the emergency support function primary agency(ies).





**ESF #1, Transportation (Department of Transportation)**

- Provides transportation assets to ESF #1 when Forest Service resources are the most effective to support the ESF #1 mission.
- Provides appropriate engineering and contracting/procurement personnel and equipment to assist in emergency removal of debris, demolition, repair of roads and bridges, and temporary repair of essential public facilities.

**ESF #2, Communications (FEMA, Department of Homeland Security/National Communication System)**

- Provides radio communications systems to support firefighters, law enforcement officers, and incident response operations.
- Provides engineers, technicians, and liaison staff to assist the Disaster Emergency Communications Group.
- Provides national interagency radio support systems for damage reconnaissance teams and other applications.
- Provides a communications officer to accompany radio systems for user training and operator maintenance indoctrination.
- Provides additional radio systems.

**ESF #3, Public Works and Engineering (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, FEMA)**

- Provides engineering and contracting/procurement personnel and equipment to assist in emergency removal of debris, demolition, temporary protection of roads and bridges, temporary protection of essential public facilities, water supply, and sanitation.

**ESF #5, Information and Planning (FEMA)**

- Provides accurate and timely information related to an actual or potential incident.
- Develops and executes plans related to an actual or potential incident.

**ESF #6, Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Temporary Housing, and Human Services (FEMA)**

- Provides appropriate resources (e.g., cots, blankets, sleeping bags, personnel) for shelters.

**ESF #7, Logistics (General Services Administration, FEMA)**

- Provides staff to support incident facilities, facility, property, telecommunications, and transportation management.

**ESF #8, Public Health and Medical Services (Department of Health and Human Services)**

- Provides personnel, equipment, and supplies, primarily for communications, aircraft, and base camps for deployed Federal public health and medical teams.





**ESF #9, Search and Rescue (FEMA, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Department of Interior National Park Service, Department of Defense)**

- Develops standby agreements to provide equipment and supplies from the National Interagency Cache System at the time of deployment.
- Develops contingency plans for use of National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) contract aircraft during incidents.
- Provides equipment and supplies from the National Interagency Cache System and use of NIFC contract aircraft.

**ESF #10, Oil and Hazardous Material Response (Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Coast Guard)**

- Measures, evaluates, and monitors the impact of the emergency incident on National Forest System land.
- Provides technical assistance and logistical support.

**ESF #11, Agriculture and Natural Resources (Department of Agriculture, Department of Interior)**

- Makes available response resources, including incident management teams.

**ESF #12, Energy (Department of Energy)**

- No identified Forest Service responsibilities

**ESF #13, Public Safety and Security (Department of Justice)**

- Provides general and specialized resources to assist in the ESF #13 response.

**ESF #14, Cross-Sector Business and Infrastructure (Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, FEMA)**

- No identified Forest Service responsibilities

**ESF #15, External Affairs (FEMA)**

- Provides appropriate support to ESF #15 organization and staff.





ESF #4 may also coordinate support or perform tasks outside of the tasks identified in the National Response Framework when resources are available; however, certain parameters are followed to ensure that our agency's primary missions are not negatively affected:

- The request should be presented through the ESF #4 primary leader at the Regional Response Coordination Center or Joint Field Office and approved by the regional/area ESF #4 primary agency representative.
- All-hazard response will be focused on missions that the responding personnel perform consistently and successfully. Workforce assignments will be directed toward the core skills developed through our existing training and curriculum.
- Federal firefighting support is primarily a response function. Efforts should be made to ensure that firefighting resources are managed and utilized appropriately so they can be available for life saving, incident stabilization, and property protection assignments. Otherwise, the nation's capability to respond to new emergencies may be compromised.
- If not a one-time task, the request should include the necessary resources from the requesting agency so that the requesting agency can perform the task in the future with minimal support from ESF #4 agencies.

