



USDA Forest Service Fire and Aviation Management Key Messages



Topic: Wildland Firefighter Occupational Series Template for FAM Positions

- Progressive workforce development through on-the-ground fire management experience is a cornerstone of FAM. Entry level positions such as engines, helitack, and hotshot/hand crews, and dispatch are foundational for fuels specialists, training officers, FMOs, dispatch managers, and senior-level fire management positions.
- FAM worked closely with HRM, and NFFE-FSC to jointly develop the Occupational Series Template to comply with current OPM regulations. Agency leadership has endorsed the approach.
- The Occupational Series Template enables future workforce succession goals and ensures that managerial skills and emergency management experience remain integral to FAM employee development.
- The Occupational Series Template provides a near-term viable career pathway that complies with OPM regulations while the agency pursues the long-term development of a unique wildland firefighter series.
- The Occupational Series Template shows the likely career pathways for FAM personnel from entry-level GS-2/3 positions through the GS-15 level using the GS-0462, GS-0301, and GS-0401 occupational series. Not shown on the Template is FAM's intention to continue utilizing the GS-1712 series for Training Specialists and GS-2101 and GS-2181 series for Aviation Specialists and Pilots.
- FAM and HRM do not intend for this process to be disruptive to careers or job responsibilities. Rather, management believes that the current workforce will be able to transition into the near-term Occupational Series Template and long-term unique wildland firefighter occupational series, and these changes will greatly enhance career opportunities for FAM employees and meet agency workforce succession goals.
- Conversion from the GS-0462 series to the GS-0401 series is easier to accomplish at lower grade levels, and it becomes progressively more difficult at higher grades. As a result, FAM and HRM have identified the GS-7, GS-8, and GS-9 levels as the critical career juncture when considering potential advancement into managerial or natural resource specialist positions.
- Professionalism remains a core value of FAM. OPM maintains a process definition of technical, administrative/managerial, and specialist duties, and FAM considers all employees engaged in wildland fire management to be *professionals*.
- The FS remains committed to implementation of the IFPM and FS-FPM. The minimum qualification requirements contained in both standards will remain in effect, albeit with the shift to the GS-0301 series for affected managerial positions.
- The interim guidance issued by former Chief Kimbell on May 29, 2009 and former Deputy Chief Kashdan on Nov 5, 2008 have been rescinded with the issuance of Chief Tidwell's July 8, 2011 memo.