

RX-341, Prescribed Fire Plan Preparation (Applies to 2009 Version)

An update to the Prescribed Fire Planning Procedures and Implementation Guide (the Guide), now NWCG PMS-484, has been released that affects content for RX 341.

Due to the updates to “the Guide” instructors should note the following changes prior to instructing the course.

Unit 1

- IG pg. 1.5
 - Element #2 Go/No Go checklist will no longer be called AA checklist. (Now called the AA Ignition Authorization.)
 - #18 is now called “wildfire declaration.”
- IG Pg. 1.11- The second instructor note mentions AA checklist again.

Unit 4

- IG pg. 4.11- Instructor Note “see the Guide page 20” is now page 27. (Complexity analysis.)

Unit 6

- IG pg. 6.1- Smoke Management and Air Quality- “the Guide” added Appendix C (Basic Smoke Management Practices) as a reference.

Unit 7b

- IG pg. 7b.4- Positions of Strategic Operations Planner (SOPL), Fire Behavior Analyst (FBAN) and Long Term Analyst (LTAN) added to “the Guide” to assist in prescribed fire planning and implementation. Suggest mentioning these new positions during ILT portion of training. Emphasize, that although optional their assistance during the planning and implementation of long duration/landscape scale prescribed burns may be crucial to success

Unit 7E

- IG pg. 7.2-7.8- changed the name from “wildfire conversion” to “Wildfire Declaration”.

Unit 8

- IG pg. 8.5- “The Guide” added the position (SOPL) here also (as in Unit 7b.)

Unit 9

- IG pg. 9.6 RX 341 refers to the “Agency Administrators Checklist” now called the Agency Administrator Ignition Authorization.
- IG pg. 9.7- RX 341 references smoke- there is now an Appendix C added to “the Guide” to provide more reference material on the subject of smoke.

Unit 11

- IG pg. 11.8- AA Pre-ignition approval checklist mentioned here, now called AA Ignition Authorization, and also refers to information in Appendix D which is now Appendix D-Contingency Planning Aids.

Handouts

- HO 10.1 references the “AA Checklist” now referred to as the Agency Administrator Ignition Authorization.

Instructor References

- IR 7E- RX 341 talks about contingency in this reference, new guidelines in “the Guide” suggest different parameters associated with contingency than what is currently referenced in this IR.

Changes to the Guide which affect RX 341:

Risk Management Principles- Incorporated into the guide where applicable. The Guide emphasizes the role of the complexity analysis process in risk management. The complexity analysis process identifies critical items, mitigation measures, and implementation actions to be addressed in the prescribed fire plan and will acknowledge any remaining unmitigated risk in the final rating.

Lessons Learned – Lessons learned have been incorporated throughout the guide, not as policy statements, but as a tool to help the prescribed fire plan preparer be aware of situations and issues that have caused problems in the past. We encourage you to utilize these, and others from instructors, throughout the course instruction. Many of the Lessons Learned are specific to long duration/landscape scale prescribed fire planning and implementation that the Lead Instructor should be familiar with for the prescribed fire plan elements

Prescribed Fire Plans- Added allowances for programmatic low complexity prescribed fire plans. Programmatic Low Complexity Plans are intended for low-complexity projects such as district-wide pile burning under snowy conditions. The Guide outlines the differences between Programmatic Low Complexity Plans and Programmatic Moderate/High Complexity Plan (may be known as a Multiple Unit Plan) which can be used for prescribed fire projects with multiple ignition units that can be ignited separately or concurrently.

Element 2a- Changed the name “Agency Administrator Go/No Go checklist” to the name “Agency Administrator Ignition Authorization”. The Guide outlines the reason for this change as to, “clarify intent and use” and to encourage a conversation rather than checking things off. In addition, the form content was substantially modified and the form number was changed from NWCG PMS 422 to NWCG PMS 485.

Element 2b- The Prescribed Fire Checklist is now the Prescribed Fire Go/No-Go Checklist. Its form number has changed from NWCG PMS 421 to NWCG PMS 486.

Element 4a- Description of Prescribed Fire Area, Physical Description: the template adds identification and description of units.

Element 4b- Description of Prescribed Fire Area, Vegetation, and Fuels Description: the template adds description of the percent of the ignition unit composed of each vegetative type and the corresponding fuel models.

Element 4d- Description of the Prescribed Fire Area, Maps: the template identifies two required maps and provides for three optional but recommended maps.

Element 7- Prescription- clarified that in some cases spatial fire behavior modeling may be needed or desirable to establish the prescription window and assist in building contingency plans.”

Element 17- Contingency Plan- clarified intent and flexibility when using Management Action Points. Contingency should be based on the expected fire behavior, fuel models inside and outside the ignition unit, and values at risk. Contingency needs may vary depending on each phase or activity on the prescribed fire. Lead Instructor should read new Appendix D in the “guide” to familiarize with some of the new tenants and ensure concepts are covered during unit instruction.

Element 18- Changed terminology from “Wildfire Conversion” to “Wildfire Declaration” and revised the criteria for declaring a wildfire. The 2009 federal fire policy implementation guidance required this change and it is reflected in Element 17.

Reviews – The Guide encourages units to review prescribed fires whenever a learning opportunity presents itself regardless of the outcome, either positive or negative. It also introduces Before-Action Reviews (BAR) and Technical On-Site Peer Reviews as tools to assist prescribed fire plan preparers identify potential weakness and threats to success.

Appendix C- Added- to the guide. Basic Smoke Management Practices

Appendix D- Added- Contingency Planning Aids as a complement to the changes in Elements 17/18. This Appendix introduces PACE Planning, as a risk containment/contingency planning tool that may be used in prescribed fire planning and implementation.

