

# Annual Activity Report

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# Boise Interagency Coordination Center Annual Activity Report 1999

## Introduction

### Highlights of the Year 1999

#### Personnel

Boise Dispatch Center had numerous changes in personnel this year. There was a changing of the guard in the Forest Service Logistic Coordinator position. Ellen Bogardus-Szymaniak moved to the Supervisor's Office to take the position of Forest Fire Planner. Karin Frost accepted the position of Logistic Coordinator in July.

In 1999 the Dispatch Intelligence position entered a phase of transition to fill an increased need for broader intelligence information, and to assume new responsibilities. During 1999 the position was covered by three people. Al Crouch, the intelligence dispatcher for two years, took a field position with the BLM in Oregon in May. Tristan Fluharty detailed into the position for the rest of the summer, but returned to BOD field operations in October. Finally, Charlie Leonard assumed the role of intelligence dispatcher permanently in November.

Kevin Mason worked as summer seasonal in the office to fill a void left by the exodus of Ellen and the absence of Kole Berriochoa. He then accepted the Forest Service Assistant Dispatcher position (vice Karin) in December.

Kole Berriochoa returned to Boise Dispatch in December to give the Forest Service a full complement of dispatchers.

We added a receptionist position this year. With the help of the Boise National Forest's

Senior Citizen Employment Program we were able to hire Ann Rutledge to assist us with the management of the telephone calls and performing other miscellaneous receptionist/secretarial duties, on a part time basis.

The only currently vacant position is the permanent career seasonal (6 - 9 month) Lower Snake River District BLM, Initial Attack Dispatcher position. The job announcement will be flown early in the New Year (see *"BDC Organizational Chart" in appendices*).

### **Interagency Successes**

The Boise Interagency Logistics Center continues to be effective in selecting the closest interagency initial attack resources for cost effective and safe incident management. The three agencies commonly exchange resources to meet agency suppression needs. The Forest Service and BLM helitack crews exchanged personnel for better coverage and utilization. The Forest and BLM continued to share an Interagency Aviation Officer position who provided aviation management expertise for both agencies.

The local Interagency Type III Overhead Teams are comprised of individuals representing the Forest, State of Idaho, Lower Snake River District, BLM and the National Interagency Fire Center. An interagency board of directors provides support and oversight for these teams. All members of the command and general staff on these teams are qualified to at least the Type II level. This mix of interagency personal has been instrumental in managing incidents on the Forest that exceeded the capabilities of local extended attack resources.

The Boise National Forest continued to develop an interagency fire station near Lucky Peak Nursery through a memorandum of understanding with the Lower Snake River District, BLM and the Southwest Area Idaho Department of Lands. This fire station will include a helibase for the Forest Service and BLM Helitack Crews. The BLM is seeking funding for their share of this project and the Idaho Department of Lands provided their heavy equipment and operators to construct roads and level building sites for this project.

Local fire training through the Southwest Idaho Interagency Fire Training (SWIFT) partnership provided fire training to more than 800 federal, state and local firefighters during 1999. The Lower Snake River District participated in numerous educational projects in cooperation with rural and city fire departments, as well as local schools.

The Forest facilitated an interagency press conference on prescribed fire and smoke which emphasized the partnership between state and federal wildland management agencies and the Idaho Division of Environmental Quality.

The Lower Snake River District, BLM and the Boise National Forest shared an air attack

aircraft and Air Tactical Group Supervisors during 1999.

The Forest worked closely with the medical community to produce a pamphlet on prescribed fire and health precautions for smoke sensitive individuals.

### **Seasonal Weather and Severity**

Southwest Idaho snow pack was about 110 percent of normal for the 1998/1999 winter. Despite this, the Forest Service's Energy Release Component (ERC) followed the 97<sup>th</sup> Percentile from mid-May until mid-November (see *"Energy Release Components for Pine Creek, Bearskin, and Town Creek"* in appendices). There were six days in which the Boise National Forest broke historical highs for the ERC.

The Lower Snake River District, BLM Burn Indexes (BI) were generally above the norm through the 1999 fire season (see *"Burn Index for Lower Snake River District Special Interest Group"* in appendices). From mid-May through October there were only seven instances where the 1999 BI's dropped below the thirty year average. Through much of the 1999 fire season BI's were near or at record highs, including one all time record high day in late July.

Due to the conditions, Lower Snake River District BLM applied for and received severity on four different occasions while the Boise National Forest applied for and received severity on three different occasions. The final severity request was approved through the end of November. Luckily, it was not needed as a season ending weather event occurred November 15th.

## **Fire Activity**

### **Overview**

Fire activity in southwest Idaho in 1999 could be described as normal with the exception of the very dry and warm weather conditions which persisted late into the fall. A breakdown of first and last fires for the three agencies represented by Boise Dispatch are as follows.

- Lower Snake River District (BOD) experienced its first fire of the season on May 18 (< 1 acre), and its last fire on November 8 (1 acre).
- Boise National Forest (BOF) experienced its first fire of the season on May 19 (0.1 acre), and its last fire on November 1 (0.1 acres).

- Idaho Department of Lands experienced its first fire on July 24 (0.1 acre), and its last fire on October 9 (2.5 acres).

The first lightning caused fire activity did not occur until August 5<sup>th</sup>.

## **Interagency Large Fire Statistics**

### **Lower Snake River District BLM**

(fires over 1,000 acres.)

**Sheep Creek:** Started on 7/9/99; controlled 7/13/99; 4,795 acres; Type II Team assigned.

**Black Mesa:** started 7/23/99; controlled 7/24/99; 1,096 acres burned.

**Buck:** started 08/03/99; controlled 08/05/99; 2,513 acres.

**Doe:** started 08/03/99; controlled 08/05/99; 6,455 acres.

**Deer Creek:** started 08/06/99; controlled 8/9/99; 2,683 acres.

**Broken Wagon:** started on 08/12/99; controlled 08/14/99; 5,026 acres.

**The Scales:** started 08/13/99; controlled 8/14/99; 1,284 acres.

**Fritz Spur:** started 08/17/99; controlled 8/18/99; 2,109 acres.

**Middle Butte:** started 08/23/99; controlled 8/24/99; 6,908 acres.

**Shoofly:** started 08/23/99; controlled 8/26/99; 7,502 acres.

**East Slick:** started on 08/30/99; controlled 09/03/99; 35,041 acres; Type II Team assigned.

**Impact SE:** started on 10/14/99; controlled 10/15/99; 4,802 acres.

**Sheep Creek:** started on 7/9/99; controlled 7/13/99; 4,795 acres; Type II Team assigned.

### **Boise National Forest**

(fires over 10 acres.)

**Lost Basin:** started 05/25/99; controlled 6/1/99; 68 acres.

**North Fork:** started 08/09/99; controlled 8/18/99; 23 acres.

**Lime Creek:** started 10/18/99; controlled 10/28/99; 145 acres.

### **Idaho Department of Lands**

(no large fires in 1999)

## **Fire Cause Statistics**

The Lower Snake River District, BLM had a total of 145 fires for a total of 99,010 acres, of

which 44 were lightning-caused for a total of 42,747 acres. The largest human factors were equipment, fire use and campfires. (See *"Lower Snake River District BLM Fire Activity 1999" in appendices*).

The Boise National Forest had a total of 163 fires for a total of 297.45 acres burned, of which 101 were lightning-caused for a total of 53.25 acres. Human caused fires numbered 62 for a total of 244.10 acres. Occurrences of non-statistical, abandoned campfires have increased dramatically from years past with a total of 225 for the Forest (see *"Boise National Forest Fire Activity 1999" in appendices*).

The Idaho Department of Lands had a total of 17 fires for a total of 51.3 acres, of which 3 were lightning caused, for a total of 0.3 acres. Human caused fires numbered 14 for a total of 51 acres (see *"Idaho Department of Lands Fire Activity 1999" in appendices*).

Prevention technicians remained busy, especially during Fourth of July Holiday for visibility and public educational purposes and during the hunting season.

## **Fire Assist Information**

### **Assists among Boise Dispatch's supporting agencies:**

- BOD provided fire suppression assistance to the Forest on 23 incidents, 9 incidents for rural fire departments, and 4 incidents for IDL.
- BOF assisted BOD on 42 incidents. (Other assist data is not available.)
- No local assist data is available for IDL.

### **BDC dispatched the following local resources to provide initial attack and support assistance to adjacent forests and districts (does not include overhead team mobilizations):**

- Vale District BLM (VAD):
  - Two helicopters with modules.
  - Seven engines.
  - Two overhead personnel.
  - Three air tankers (does not include multiple sorties by a single ship on one incident).
  - One lead plane.
  - One air attack plane with ATGS.
- Central Idaho Dispatch (CIC):

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- Five Type-2 crews.
  - Two Type-1 crews.
  - Fourteen overhead.
  - One helicopter with module.
  - One infrared device with operator.
  - Three air tankers (does not include multiple sorties by a single ship on one incident).
  - One lead plane.
- East Idaho Dispatch (EIC):
    - Two engines.
    - Two overhead.
    - Three air tankers (does not include multiple sorties by a single ship on one incident).
- Payette National Forest (PAF):
    - Two helicopters with modules.
    - One air tanker (does not include multiple sorties by a single ship on one incident).
    - Twenty-one overhead personnel.
    - Two Type-2 crews.
- National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC):
    - Six overhead personnel (primarily dispatch support to NICC).
- Southern Idaho Dispatch (SID):
    - Twenty-one engines.
    - Four dozers and tenders.
    - Three helicopters with modules.
    - Two air attack planes with ATGS.
    - Fourteen air tankers (does not include multiple sorties by a single ship on one incident).
    - Three lead planes.
    - One water tender.
    - One fuel truck.
    - One overhead personnel.
- Sawtooth National Forest (STF):
    - Nine engines.
    - One forest patrol.
    - Two Type-2 crews.
    - One Type-1 crew.

- One lead plane.
- One helicopter with module.

# Prescribed Burning and Smoke Management

## Overview

Last year the Boise National Forest joined into an agreement with the Montana/Idaho State Airshed Group ensuring that our RX Burning program complies with State Air Quality regulations . This procedure was adopted providing burn information to the Montana Monitoring Unit to comply with DEQ Smoke Management Guidelines.

## Statistics

Agency	Numbers of Burns	Acres	Type
Lower Snake River District	5	4,008	Prescribed Fire
Lower Snake River District	0	0	WFURB
Boise National Forest	28	7,009	Prescribed Fire
Boise National Forest	0	0	WFURB
Idaho Department of Lands	19	955	Prescribed Fire
Idaho Department of Lands	0	0	WFURB

# Logistical Activity Statistics

## Resource Mobilized to and from Boise Interagency Logistics Center

### Number of resource orders processed:

Resource Type	Resources Coming In	Resources Going Out	Total
Aircraft	143	77	220
Overhead	274	1009	1283
Crews	43	27	70
Equipment	172	61	233

Boise Interagency Dispatch processed a total of 1806 requests, with 1174 requests supporting other geographic areas. The graph "Resource Activity By State" shows the number of Overhead resources that we processed in 1999. (See *Resource Activity By State* in appendices.)

### Smokejumper Report:

Dispatch ordered six loads of smokejumpers for initial attack and one load to assist with falling of class "C"-sized trees.

### Type I Crew Mobilizations:

The Boise Hot Shots were mobilized a total of eight times. They traveled off unit but within the Great Basin on five occasions, to California twice and to Montana once.

### Type II Crew Mobilizations:

The Boise Forest Type II crews were dispatched to four incidents off unit but within the Great Basin in 1999, while the two Southern Idaho Correctional Institution Crews were dispatched ten times to incidents off unit but within the Great Basin in 1999. The Forest Service Type II crews were utilized several times as Smokechaser/IA Teams locally and thus were unavailable for off-forest assignments.

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## **Dispatch Support From BDC:**

The Center Manager was mobilized as Coordinator, Expanded Dispatch (CORD) to Region 8, in Atlanta, Georgia and as an Expanded Dispatch Coordinator to Richfield BLM. He also acted as the MAC group coordinator for fire several fire busts that occurred locally.

BDC sent an Expanded Supervisory Dispatcher, Expanded Dispatch (EDSP) Trainee to the Payette National Forest for a 10 day assignment, an Support Dispatcher, Expanded Dispatch (EDSD) to assist the National Interagency Coordination Center for 21 days, an EDSD Trainee to Eastern Great Basin for 12 days, an Initial Attack Dispatcher (IADP) to the Grand Canyon National Park for 21 days, an Dispatch Recorder, Expanded Dispatch (EDRC) to Eastern Great Basin for 14 days, and an IADP to Winnemucca for 7 days.

## **BDC Participation Statistics:**

The Resource Manager Database compiles all individuals mobilized by BDC regardless of agency affiliation. We currently have 936 fire participants within this database. This includes not only red carded individuals, but also individuals that work as drivers, receptionists, etc. Listed below are the approximate participation rates for the agencies which BDC represents. This information is compiled by individuals that are shown as available at one point in time, this status will change on a frequent basis. (See "*BDC Agency Participation for 1999*" located in the Appendices). This also represents any out-of-area participation.

<b>Unit</b>	<b>Participation Rate (Percentage)</b>
Bureau of Land Management, NIFC (FCD)	75%
Bureau of Indian Affairs, NIFC (FCA)	55%
Forest Service, NIFC (FCF)	83%
National Park Service, NIFC (FCR)	64%
Fish & Wildlife Service, NIFC (FCR)	50%
Idaho Department of Lands (IDS)	82%
Bureau of Land Management - State Office (ISO)	75%
Lower Snake River District, BLM (BOD)	78%

Boise National Forest (BOF)

50%

### **Unable to Fill Statistics:**

Boise Interagency Logistics Center was able to fill 445 out of 836 requests for fully qualified overhead positions, and 77 out of 106 requests for trainee qualified overhead positions. This is a success ratio of 53% and 73% respectively. (See *“BDC Hardest to Fill Overhead Positions 1999”* and *“Overhead Resource Activity”* in appendices).

### **BDC Operational Periods**

The Boise Interagency Dispatch Center remained open 24 hours supporting local incidents 76 days in 1999. The office started seven-day-a-week coverage June 20<sup>th</sup> in support of incidents. We remained open 7 days a week to support Lower Snake River District BLM rehabilitation projects November 7th to December 18th.

## Aircraft Activity

### Retardant and Foam Usage

The Boise Air Tanker Base pumped 372,469 gallons of retardant in 1999 which included fires out of area as well as within the area. It also hosted the Payette National Forest's air tanker during the later part of the season while the ecogroup was still in severity.

### Interagency Annual Aircraft Use Summary

For the 1999 fire season, the total aircraft flight hours (fixed wing and rotor wing) were 1,614.74 for a total cost of \$2,780,876. This was in support of out of area incidents as well as within our response area.

Type of Aircraft	Agency Missions	Total Flight Hours	Total Cost
Helicopters	BOD	319.60	\$354,176.38
Helicopters	BOF	425.30	\$208,721.45
Fixed Wing	BOD	233.22	\$96,329.56
Fixed Wing	BOF	105.85	\$17,379.00
Airtanker, Multi-Engine	BOD	81.97	\$357,179.17
Airtanker, Multi-Engine	BOF	16.18	\$511,523.00
Airtanker, Single-Engine	BOD	9.51	\$11,340.75
Airtanker, Single-Engine	BOF	0	0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>All</b>	<b>1,191.63</b>	<b>\$1,556,649.20</b>

## Miscellaneous Office Activities

### Radio Activity

During the height of fire season, the six radio consoles located in dispatch are occupied by Initial Attack Dispatchers monitoring fire radio traffic. In addition to fire traffic, BDC spent a considerable amount of time dealing with other emergencies and projects. The table listed below gives the approximate amount of time spent on non-fire activities (*also see "BDC Radio Activity Non-Fire for 1999 in appendices*).

Type of Non-Fire Activity	Hours	Dispatcher Shifts*
Aircraft Flight Following (Fire and non-fire traffic)	2,273	284
Prescribed Fires	19	2.4
Medical Emergencies	18	2.25
Miscellaneous	20	2.50
Law Enforcement	40	5.0

\* Dispatcher Shift - One dispatcher working an eight-hour day.

Each activity is further broken down into specific categories for instance with Aircraft Traffic, 63% of the time was spent on fire missions, with 12% of the dispatcher's time was spent on Courtesy Flight Following. Of the Law Enforcement radio traffic, 36% of the was spent on vandals and 14% on illegal dumping. The Miscellaneous radio traffic consists of projects like tree planting, RAWS maintenance, burn permits, etc. Additional information can be viewed in the appendices (*see Air Traffic 1999, Law Enforcement 1999, Miscellaneous Radio Traffic 1999" in appendices*).

### Intelligence Activity

The intelligence position in 1999 primarily dealt with accumulating, managing, and disseminating fire information, weather activity, and statistical fire reports. Among the data and reports generated by the intelligence dispatcher were potential assessment reports, fire update reports to managers, weather reports, Weather Information Management System data (RAWS and manual weather stations), resource availability reports, fire news briefs to the media, daily situation reports to Eastern Great Basin Coordination Center, and a variety of other clerical duties. One new task assigned to the Intelligence position was the daily reporting of prescribed burns to the Idaho/Montana

Airshed Group. This involved a fair amount of time each day during the fall burn season to acquire and publish mandatory reports of prescribed fire activity in our area. In addition, the intelligence dispatcher assisted the Dispatch office with initial attack dispatching and processing resource orders for regional and national incidents.

### **Receptionist Activity**

As previously mentioned, BDC added a receptionist position to our staff this year. This position proved to be a valuable one for not only the overall daily operations, but also for end of the year processes.

### **Telephone Load**

Dispatch continues to receive a large volume of telephone calls, both dispatch related and non-dispatch related. A large number of calls are for the District BLM Office, and the Forest Service State Office as well as NIFC, dealing with requests for rock permits, wild horses, maps, land use and road conditions in various areas of the District. Probably the largest number of non-dispatch related calls were requests for telephone numbers for people in the Supervisors Office, State Office, District Office, NIFC, NICC, and various Guard Stations, Lookouts, and Aircraft Offices. There were also requests for telephone numbers for business' in Boise from people who were in other states and did not have telephone directories for Boise. There were a lot of wrong numbers because our number is very similar to one of the local schools and a local Doctor's office. A number of calls are inquiries for job information (*See "Telephone Load for 1999" in appendices*).

During the busy fire months, staff was often called in from other offices (after regular hours and on weekends) to cover the reception desk when Ann's shift was finished.

### **Customer Service**

In addition to answering the telephone the receptionist position was responsible for typing, filing, data input, recording burn permits, processing e-mail, creating and updating Red Card files, updating Forest Service Manuals as materials were provided and providing information to staff and public concerning phone numbers and locations of Forest Service, Lower Snake River District BLM and Law Enforcement personnel and equipment, plus other duties as assigned.

### **Walk in Traffic**

During the 1999 fire season there was an almost constant flow of people walking into the Dispatch Office, including pilots, firefighters, people looking for job applications, and vendors looking for any possible work. We also have tours, media people, and people who simply want to visit. We try

to keep this to a minimum to reduce noise and confusion for the dispatchers.

## **Public Information Assistance**

The receptionist provides a valuable service in providing Agency information to Agency employees and the general public.

## **Miscellaneous Projects**

### **Center Manager**

#### **Steve Waters:**

- Smoke Management Coordinator for the Montana Airshed Group, new position for 1999.
- Eastern Great Basin Dispatch steering committee, Chairman.
- Review team member, analyzing Minden Dispatch Center operations.
- Interagency Fire Program management Qualifications Task Group member, developing standard competencies for dispatchers.
- Instructor: Great Basin Buying Team Training
- Coordinated Eastern Great Basin Dispatchers Workshop.
- Participated in Ada County Interagency Wildfire Simulation exercise.
- I-420 (roll playing.)

### **Coordinator Projects**

#### **Bonnie Barcus:**

- Ross Partner team member
- Arcview/Tactical mapping for Dispatch use
- D-110 course coordinator for 1999

#### **Karin Frost:**

- Red Card Functional Support for Region 4.
- Development of Interagency Resource Manager Database.
- Coordinated the planned revision of Forest Service settings in WIMS and NFDRS with Forest Fire Management Officer.
- Coordinated the implementation of the new Forest Service Red Card Program.
- D-110 instructor for 1999.

## **Dispatcher Projects**

### **Charlie Leonard:**

- Smoke and airshed management project.
- Revised settings in WIMS and NFDRS using Fire Family Plus for our response area (FDR, staffing, etc.).
- GIS/G.P.S. course development, coordination, and instruction.
- Annual statistical tracking of fire incidents, aircraft use and costs, and prescribed fire activity by agency.

### **Kevin Mason:**

- Worked with Forest Fire Management Officer to update run cards within the Computer Aided Dispatch Program (CAD).
- Assisted in the development and implementation forest-wide CAD demonstration.
- Assisted with start up of the new Forest Service Red Card Program.

### **Mark Rich:**

- Worked with Forest Fire Management Officer to update run cards within the Computer Aided Dispatch Program (CAD).
- Assisted in the development and implementation forest-wide CAD demonstration.
- Formatted file and linked Response Areas to RLs in ArcView.

### **Tristan Fluharty:**

- Completed the groundwork in Fire family Plus for the planned revision of Forest Service settings in WIMS and NFDRS.
- Filled two IADP requests at Grand Canyon and Winnemucca.