



DOI Priority Goal Action Plan

# Undertake Fuels Management Projects To Reduce Wildfires

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# Overview

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## Goal Statement

- By September 30, 2021, the Department of the Interior will undertake at least 85% of all fuels management projects utilizing collaborative risk assessments that identify wildfire likelihood.

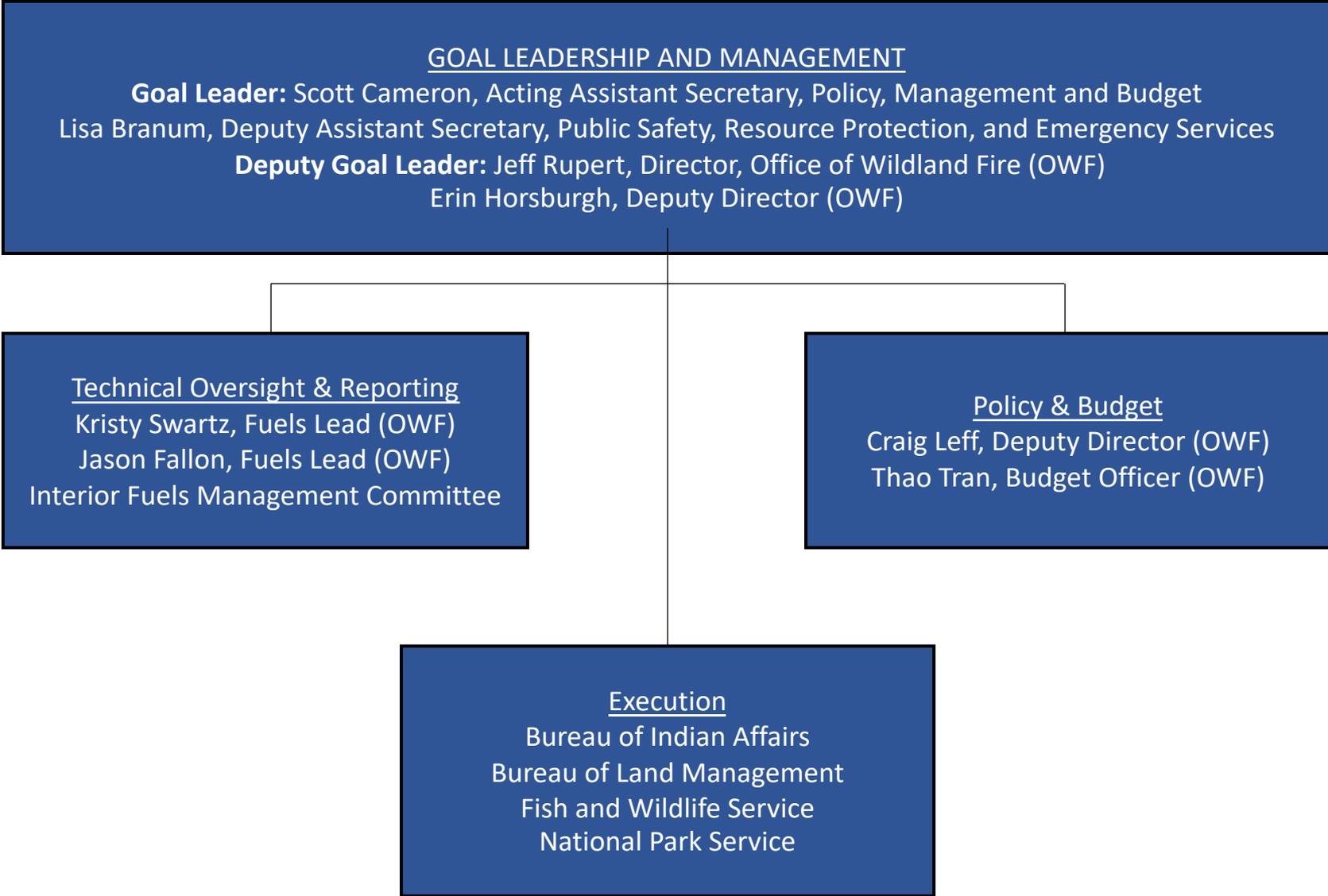
## Challenge

- The Department of the Interior manages 253 million total acres of burnable lands in the continental U.S. The “Wildfire Hazard Potential” index indicates that approximately 21% of this land has High to Very High hazard potential.
- Between 2010-2019, the number of large wildfires is an increasing percentage of all wildfires, and the number of days at Planning Levels 4 and 5 has substantially increased. This indicates that overall wildland fires are becoming larger, costlier and more complex to manage.
- Currently, bureaus are completing risk assessments to inform regional allocation strategies, but there is no mechanism to universally track completion of project-level risk assessments.

## Opportunity

- Reduce threats to at-risk communities, infrastructure, and natural/cultural resources through active vegetation management.
- Develop and implement a consistent approach to analyze risk utilizing a shared-values methodology.
- Reduce the severity, intensity, and negative effects of wildfires and help avoid costs associated with wildfire suppression.

# Leadership & Implementation Team



# Goal Structure & Strategies

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- OWF will coordinate closely with the bureaus to ensure that Fuels Management program direction and guidance is followed.
- OWF guidance requires that bureaus collaborate with stakeholders (State/local governments, Tribes, and communities) to identify and prioritize shared values at appropriate geographic scales in developing and implementing fuels management projects. All bureaus have protocols in place that establish a risk profile based on the “Wildfire Hazard Potential” to help rank and categorize projects.
- Currently, bureaus are only required to report on fuels management accomplishments at the end of the fiscal year using the National Fire Plan Operations and Reporting System (NFPORS).
- In FY 2020, OWF will issue policy requiring quarterly reporting to better track accomplishments and ensure that DOI is on track to meet annual fuels management goals on a quarterly basis.
- OWF will review and approve all annual fuels management spend plans, and evaluate quarterly progress throughout the year.
- OWF will continue to test and evaluate the effectiveness of a pilot “Shared Wildfire Risk Mitigation” tool in FY 2020. This tool will better assess wildfire risk utilizing a collaborative approach that identifies overlapping priority areas and establishes consistency in program implementation and methodology throughout DOI.

# Summary of Progress – FY 2020 Q2

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- **Level of Results Achieved**
  - During FY 2020, DOI bureaus reported completion of 311,248 acres in the first quarter and 241,641 acres of vegetation management treatments in the second quarter. This represents approximately 44% of all planned fuels management projects in FY 2020 utilizing collaborative risk assessments that identify wildfire likelihood.
  
- **Likelihood of Success**
  - High
  
- **Basis for the Assessment**
  - The current cycle of fuels management accomplishments varies by bureau, with peak accomplishments in September and a reporting due date after the fiscal year ends.
  - While prescribed burns make up a significant portion of the fuels management workload, bureaus use mechanical treatments which can be substituted if burn windows are not available.
  
- **Actions planned to ensure achievement of the goal**
  - Policy changes will support improved quarterly accomplishment reporting and assessment of progress.
  - Implementation of a tool to assess wildfire risk utilizing a collaborative approach will establish consistent program implementation and methodology throughout DOI.

# Key Milestones

- The key milestones below support the completion of actions described as part of the Goal Structure & Strategies.
- Quarterly reporting dates and annual spend plan guidance will be included in policy memoranda issued by OWF to ensure that these key milestones will be accomplished by the respective due dates.

| Milestone Summary  |                    |                  |   |
|--|--------------------|------------------|---|
| Key Milestone  | Milestone Due Date | Milestone Status | Comments  |
| Review of annual spend plans   | 1/31/2020          | Completed        |   |
| Kick off initial pilot of the "Shared Wildfire Risk Mitigation" tool                           | 2/1/2020           | Completed        | Pilot tool in progress, initial field engagement completed 4/7 and 4/15 |
| OWF issues policy memorandum on Fuels Management Program Priorities and Reporting Requirements | 3/31/2020          | Completed        | Memo issued on March 18, 2020.  |
| Second Quarter accomplishments report deadline   | 4/15/2020          | Completed        | Bureaus have reported approximately 44% of planned work is complete.    |
| Third Quarter accomplishments report deadline  | 7/15/2020          |                  |   |
| Year-End accomplishments report deadline   | 10/15/2020         |                  |   |

# Key Indicators

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- Policy changes described previously will support improved quarterly accomplishment reporting and assessment of progress towards the goal statement.
- Implementation of a tool to assess wildfire risk utilizing a collaborative approach will establish consistent program implementation and methodology throughout DOI.
- DOI does not anticipate encountering any significant issues or barriers in achieving the goal statement.

# Data Accuracy and Reliability

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- The National Fire Plan Operations and Reporting System (NFPORS) is the authoritative data source for planning, tracking, and reporting fuels management activities. All DOI bureaus are required to use NFPORS.
- Reporting of performance measures relies on data collected in NFPORS (e.g. the number of accomplished acres).

# Additional Information

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## Contributing Programs

### Organizations:

- Office of Wildland Fire
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Bureau of Land Management
- Fish and Wildlife Service
- National Park Service

### Program Activities:

- Wildland Fire Management – Fuels Management

### Authorities/Policies:

- Executive Order 13855: “Promoting Active Management of America's Forests, Rangelands, and Other Federal Lands To Improve Conditions and Reduce Wildfire Risk”
- Secretarial Order 3372: “Reducing Wildfire Risks on Department of the Interior Land Through Active Management”