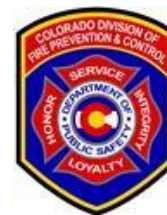




**COLORADO**  
Department of Public Safety

Division of Fire Prevention and Control  
690 Kipling Street  
Lakewood, Co 80215



## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Governor Jared Polis &  
Members of the Colorado General Assembly

**FROM:** Mike Morgan, DFPC Director

**DATE:** April 5, 2019

**RE:** 2019 Wildfire Preparedness Plan

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### **Wildfire Preparedness Plan**

Colorado law, specifically Section 24-33.5-1227 (2) (a), C.R.S. requires the Director of the Division of Fire Prevention and Control to develop an annual Wildfire Preparedness Plan in collaboration with a representative of the County Sheriffs of Colorado, a representative of the Colorado State Fire Chiefs' Association, the Director of the Office of Emergency Management and the Adjutant General.

The Wildfire Preparedness Plan shall be designed to address the following:

- (1) The amount of aerial firefighting resources necessary for the state of Colorado at times of high and low wildfire risk;
- (2) The availability of appropriate aerial firefighting equipment and personnel at times of high fire risk to respond to a wildfire;
- (3) The availability of state wildfire engines and staffing of the engines at different levels of wildfire risk;
- (4) The availability of wildfire hand crews, including state inmate wildfire hand crews, at different levels of wildfire risk; and
- (5) A process for ordering and dispatching aerial firefighting equipment and personnel that is consistent with, and supportive of, the statewide mobilization plan prepared pursuant to Section 24-33.5-705.4, C.R.S.



## **History of Wildfire Preparedness Fund**

The Wildfire Preparedness Fund (WPF) in Colorado was authorized by the Legislature through Senate Bill 06-096, which also appropriated funding for state fiscal years 2006 through 2010 to support implementation of the actions directed by the legislation. Senate Bill 11-238 extended the annual transfer of \$3.25 million by the Department of Local Affairs from the mineral leasing fund to the Division of Fire Prevention and Control for two years beginning July 1, 2012.

Senate Bill 13-270 amended Section 10-3-209 (4), C.R.S., and allows for appropriations to be made by the General Assembly for the Wildfire Emergency Response Fund (WERF) and the WPF from insurance premium taxes collected by the Division of Insurance in the Department of Regulatory Agencies prior to their transfer to the General Fund. However, SB13-270 did not make an appropriation for FY 2014-15 to the WPF.

The Department of Public Safety requested an annual appropriation of \$4,150,000 Cash Funds from the proceeds of insurance premium taxes to the WPF for FY 2014-15, FY 2015-16, and beyond for the ongoing funding of wildfire suppression functions within the Division of Fire Prevention and Control (DFPC). The request was approved and the moneys in the WPF are now continuously appropriated.

DFPC may use the moneys in the Wildfire Preparedness Fund to implement the Wildfire Preparedness Plan, including:

- (a) Increase upgrades to fire engines acquired through the federal excess personal property program that are on loan to local fire departments;
- (b) Increase technical assistance in wildland fire preparedness to counties, municipalities, and fire protection districts; and
- (c) Ensure, in conjunction with the wildfire preparedness plan, that state firefighting equipment is fully operational and both available to and coordinated with the equipment capacities of fire protection districts and that county, municipality, and fire protection districts personnel are fully trained in the use of such equipment;
- (d) training, equipping, or supervising one or more hand crews employed by veterans' fire corps programs in Colorado for wildland fire mitigation and suppression.

### **Other Wildland Fire Legislation and Funding**

House Bill 12-1283 consolidated the State's fire prevention and control and homeland security and emergency management functions, resources, and personnel within the Department of Public Safety. This legislation transferred the State responsibilities for wildland fire preparedness, response, suppression, coordination, and management from the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) to DFPC.

Since the passage of HB 12-1283, the following legislation has further expanded the responsibilities of DFPC related to wildland fire:

- Senate Bill 13-083 – Colorado Prescribed Burning Act;
- Senate Bill 13-245 and SB 14-164 – Colorado Firefighting Air Corps and the Center of Excellence for Advanced Technology Aerial Firefighting (CoE). SB 14-164 included \$19.7 million General Fund and 19.3 FTE in FY 2014-15, \$9.8 million General Fund and 27.0 FTE in FY 2015-16, and \$9.6 million and 27.0 FTE in on-going base funding;
- Senate Bill 14-008 – Creation of the Wildfire Information and Resource Center. SB 14-008 included \$27,175 General Fund and 0.5 FTE in FY 2014-15 and \$22,472 General Fund and 0.5 FTE in FY 2015-16 and beyond;
- Senate Bill 15-205 – Veterans Fire Corps for Wildland Firefighting. The bill appropriated 6.0 FTE to DFPC and authorized DFPC to expend moneys out of the Wildfire Preparedness Fund for the implementation of the bill;
- House Bill 15-1129 – Colorado Disaster Prediction and Decision Support System. HB 15-1129 included \$600,000 General Fund and 0.5 FTE for five fiscal years, FY 2015-16 through FY 19-20;
- Senate Bill 15-234 (Long Bill) included \$1,660,000 Capital Construction Fund for the purchase of five wildland firefighting engines. DFPC took delivery of five Type 3 Engines in 2017.

For FY 19-20, DFPC has approximately \$22.1 million total funds available for wildland fire planning, coordination, firefighting operations, and research through three main funding sources: General Fund, the Colorado Firefighting Air Corps Fund and the Wildfire Preparedness Fund. Please note that at the time of the writing of this report, the FY 2019-20 base operating budget for the Division has not been approved, however, the Division requested continuation funding from FY 2018-19. The funds and activities are summarized in the table below.



<b>DFPC Wildland Fire Management Operations Budget - FY 2018-19<sup>4</sup></b>				
	<b>General Fund<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Cash Funds<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Reappropriated Funds<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>Total Funds</b>
Aviation Program	9,119,813	3,012,000	0	12,131,813
Center of Excellence (CoE)	950,000	0	0	950,000
Colorado Disaster Prediction and Decision Support System (H.B. 15-1129)	600,000	0	0	600,000
Other Wildland Fire Management Programs*	642,400	650,000	7,150,000	8,442,400
<b>Total WFMS Operating Budget</b>	<b>\$11,312,213</b>	<b>\$3,662,000</b>	<b>\$7,150,000</b>	<b>\$22,124,213</b>

<sup>1</sup> Other General Fund includes funding for engines and fire investigations.

<sup>2</sup> Cash funds are from the Colorado Firefighting Air Corps Fund and the Wildfire Emergency Response Fund.

<sup>3</sup> Reappropriated Funds are from the Wildfire Preparedness Fund.

<sup>4</sup> FY 2018-19 Operations Budget information is as of 02/26/2019.

\* Funding is for the following programs: 1. Wildland fire management services, technical assistance, and training through the District and Battalion Chiefs; 2. Suppression and Prescribed Fire Program including staff and engines located strategically throughout the state; 3. Veterans Fire Corps Program; 4. State Wildland Fire Team (SWIFT) Crews; 5. Vehicle Maintenance Shop; and 6. Various other support staff.

As the table above shows, the majority of the wildland fire preparedness budget for the Division is provided through General Fund appropriations, the Wildfire Preparedness Fund, and reimbursements deposited in the Colorado Firefighting Air Corps Fund when DFPC aircraft are used by federal agencies or other states.

In addition to the base operating budget of the Wildland Fire Management Program, the State has available resources from other funding sources to cover expenses for state responsibility wildland fire emergencies and disasters. These funding sources include:

- Wildfire Emergency Response Fund (WERF) – Utilized as part of the State’s effort to assist in keeping fires small and reducing the number of State Responsibility Fires, this fund provides, at a minimum, funding or reimbursement for the first aerial tanker flight or the first hour of a firefighting helicopter, and/or two days of a wildfire hand crew at the request any county sheriff, municipal fire department, or fire protection district.

The Governor may increase the use of WERF funding on wildland fires at his discretion. The fund does not currently have a dedicated annual revenue source, however, the fund can be replenished through appropriations by the General Assembly either from direct General Fund dollars or insurance premium tax dollars pursuant to Section 10-3-209 (4)(a)(II), C.R.S, or from the Disaster Emergency Fund (DEF) pursuant to Section 24-33.5-706 (4.5)(b), C.R.S.



Within the past 5 fiscal years, WERF-funded activities have received resources three times, once through a General Fund appropriation of \$608,200 through the FY 2012-13 supplemental process (S.B. 13-101) to cover requests for reimbursement from the 2012 wildland fire season, again in FY 2013-14 through a transfer of \$500,000 in insurance premium tax dollars into the fund (S.B. 13-270), and again in 2018 through a transfer of \$500,000 by Executive Order D 2018 018.

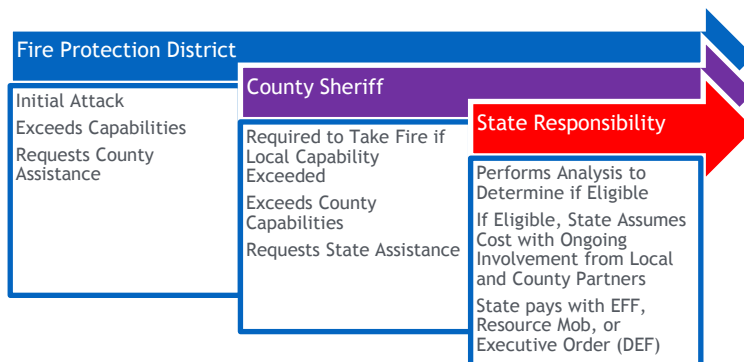
- Emergency Fire Fund (EFF) - funded by an approximately \$1.0 million yearly voluntary contribution assessed among 42 participating counties as well as approximately \$30,000 in contributions from four non-county participants (Colorado Springs Utilities, Denver Water, City of Aurora, Denver Mountain Parks). This is the first resource the State uses when responsibility for a wildland fire is transferred to the State if the incident occurs within a County that contributes to the EFF. Once this fund is depleted, Disaster Emergency Funds are requested from the Governor.
- Disaster Emergency Fund (DEF) – The Disaster Emergency Fund is available to provide State funding for State disasters upon a commitment by the Governor of DEF resources through an Executive Order. During the 2018 wildland fire season, there were 18 wildland fires that became state responsibility fires, of those, 14 fires received an Executive Order and funding from the DEF. The other four were funded through the Emergency Fire Fund or Resource Mobilization Funds.
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Fire Management Assistance Grant Program (FMAG) - Fire Management Assistance is available to States, local and tribal governments, for the mitigation, management, and control of fires on publicly or privately owned forests or grasslands, which threaten such destruction as would constitute a major disaster. In 2018, 3 of the 18 State Responsibility Fires were declared eligible for FMAG reimbursement.



2018 State Responsibility Fires	Colorado Share of Costs (Estimated)	Other Agency Share of Costs (Estimated)	Total Costs (Estimated)
Stateline	\$ 175,000	\$ 2,125,000	\$ 2,300,000
MM 117	\$ 900,000	\$ -	\$ 900,000
Badger Hole	\$ 133,150	\$ 32,850	\$ 166,000
Emery Gap	\$ 350,000	\$ 350,000	\$ 700,000
Upper Mailbox	\$ 150,000	\$ 600,000	\$ 750,000
Buffalo Mountain	\$ 200,000	\$ 2,250,627	\$ 2,450,627
Spring Creek	\$ 25,584,000	\$ 6,396,000	\$ 31,980,000
Chateau	\$ 2,780,000	\$ -	\$ 2,780,000
Weston Pass	\$ 1,900,000	\$ 7,750,000	\$ 9,650,000
Lake Christine	\$ 3,775,848	\$ 13,637,152	\$ 17,413,000
Divide	\$ 570,000	\$ 250,000	\$ 820,000
2018 RBC Complex (Fawn)	\$ 1,580,199	\$ 1,580,199	\$ 3,160,398
Skunk Creek	\$ 120,000	\$ 680,000	\$ 800,000
Sulphur	\$ 460,000	\$ 933,869	\$ 1,393,869
Red Canyon	\$ 500,000	\$ 3,981,000	\$ 4,481,000
Bull Draw	\$ 200,000	\$ 11,900,000	\$ 12,100,000
Cabin Lake	\$ 350,000	\$ 12,800,000	\$ 13,150,000
Silver Creek	\$ 350,000	\$ 24,880,000	\$ 25,230,000
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$40,078,197</b>	<b>\$90,146,697</b>	<b>\$130,224,894</b>

**History and Background on Wildland Fire in Colorado**

Wildfires occur as unscheduled emergency events in wildland fuels (grassland, shrub land, and forest vegetation) and in fuels that include a combination of wildland and human introduced fuels such as houses and improvements. Wildfires increasingly involve or threaten human life, residential housing, commercial occupancies or other improvements, communities, natural resources, watersheds, the economy, and quality of life in Colorado. Wildfire knows no boundaries and does not respect jurisdictional responsibilities. For this reason, wildland firefighting in Colorado is interagency in nature, involving local, county, state, federal, and tribal partners.



Due to natural fuels build-up, declining forest health, and increased population in wildland-urban-interface (WUI) areas, wildfires that exceed the control efforts of local and county resources are becoming more common. Colorado's wildfires are now occurring within subdivisions, which increases the risk to public and firefighter safety and requires additional management efforts and coordination of local, state, and federal resources. Further compounding the criticality of the situation, Colorado's traditional fire season has expanded into times of the year that we have not traditionally experienced fires. DFPC continues to engage in strategic planning process and works with our partners and stakeholders to implement recommended changes. This allows us to continually identify ideas and solutions to assist in ensuring resource availability and types mirror Colorado's growing fire seasons and changing fire risk.

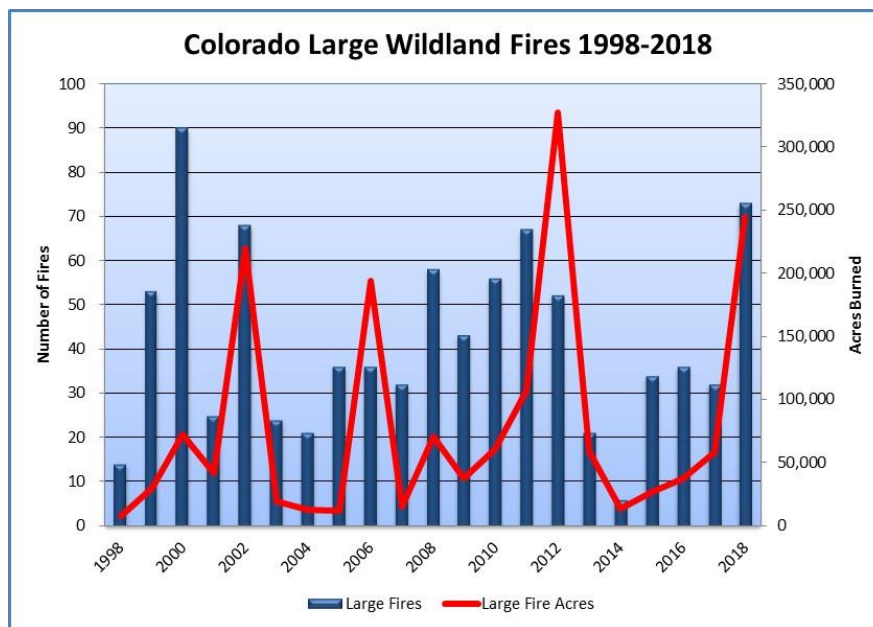
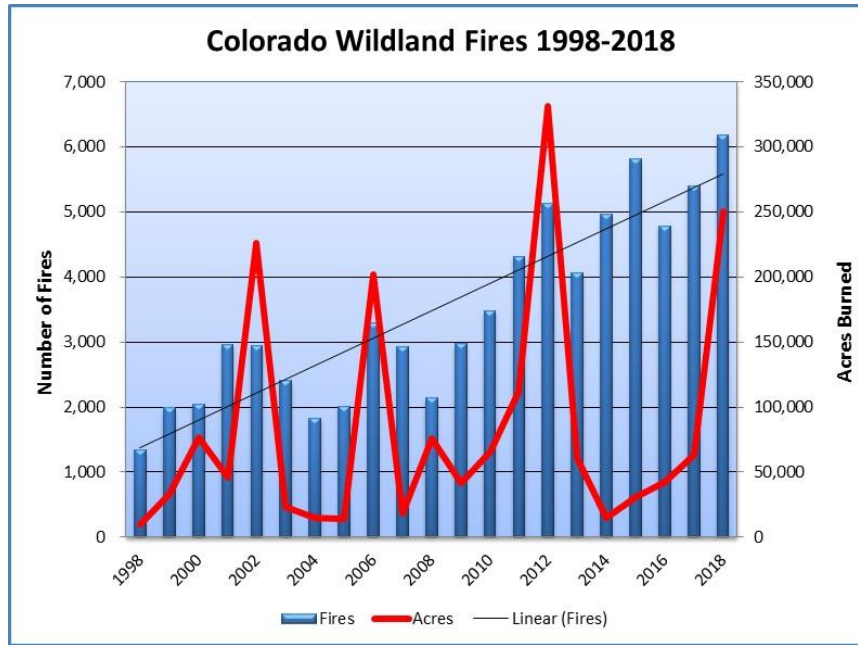
Since the 1990s, the number, intensity, and complexity of wildfires in Colorado have been growing exponentially, and experts predict that it will continue to worsen. In the 1960s, the average annual number of wildfires in Colorado was 457. These fires burned an average of 8,170 acres annually. By the 1990s, the average number of fires and acres burned had more than doubled to about 1,300 fires with 22,000 acres burned. Between the 1990s and the 2000s, the average number of fires and acres burned more than doubled again. Looking at the historical data of the twenty largest wildfires in Colorado's history, five of those (25%) occurred in 2018, thirteen of those (65%) have occurred since 2010, and all twenty (100%) have occurred since 2000.

Years	State Responsibility Fires (SRF)	SRF Average/Year	FEMA Incidents	FEMA Average/Year
1967-1969	0	0	0	0
1970-1979	1	.1	1	.1
1980-1989	8	.8	1	.1
1990-1999	15	1.5	4	.4
2000-2009	65	6.5	32	3.2
2010-2017	56	7	17	2.1
<b>2018</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
Total	161		58	

In 2018, there were a total of 6,184 wildland fires reported on state and private lands by local fire agencies. These fires burned 250,297 acres. A total of 75 fires were classified as large fires (100 acres or more or is of a complexity requiring a Type 1 or Type 2 Incident Management Team).







The number of State Responsibility fires has continually increased since the creation of the Emergency Fire Fund (EFF) in 1967. Between 1967 and 1979 there was a total of 1 fire that became a state responsibility fire, from 1980 to 1989 there were 8, from 1990 to 1999 there were 15, and in 2001 to 2009 that number exploded to 65 qualifying events. So far in this decade, even with the single qualifying fire in 2014 and no qualifying fires in 2015, we have had 74 state responsibility fires costing an estimated \$168,000,000.00 in EFF and State suppression costs alone (it is estimated that \$95,000,000.00 of these State costs are eligible for





reimbursements through FEMA Fire Management Assistance Grants). This number does not include local or federal agency suppression costs, property losses that resulted from the fires, or the recovery efforts following the event. With an estimated 2.9 million Coloradoans living in the Wildland Urban Interface, while we may experience years of low fire occurrence, the overall outlook requires robust preparedness capacities.

### **Preparedness Planning Assumptions**

- Public and firefighter safety is the priority.
- Wildfires that exceed the capabilities of local and county resources will occur.
- Wildfires will threaten lives, property, and natural resources.
- Wildfires will threaten water supplies for Colorado residents and non-residents.
- Wildfires have significant potential to threaten local and State economies.
- No single entity or jurisdiction alone can manage every wildfire.
- Successful suppression and extinguishment of catastrophic wildfires requires organized interagency cooperation at all levels of government.
- Ensuring that state wildfire resources are identified, staffed, and positioned to respond will prevent some wildfires from becoming large catastrophic events, and will assist in the containment and suppression of those wildfires that do escape initial attack, thereby mitigating the far reaching impacts of these large incidents.

### **Fire Season Outlook 2019**

In late April and early May of every year, scientists and land managers produce coordinated outlooks for fire season across the western US to better prioritize resources. While it is too early to forecast with accuracy what the 2019 fire season will bring, the current National Predictive Services models indicate significant improvements in fire risk indices across Colorado compared to 2018.

- Favorable weather patterns from mid-January through March prior to green-up of grasses and herbaceous fuels have resulted in minimal fire activity across the state to date. In March of 2018, significant fire activity was noted east of the divide, including the Stateline fire which burned 30,000 acres along the New Mexico, Oklahoma and Colorado border.
- Despite a warm and dry period from December through early January, a very active weather pattern has supported above average snowpack for all drainages across the state of Colorado. Statewide, the Snow Water Equivalent (SWE) is 140% vs. 70% a year ago. Importantly, southern Colorado has experienced significant improvement from last year with the Gunnison, San Juan and Upper Rio Grande over 150% SWE (compared to 50% SWE in 2018).
- In 2018, warm winter conditions along with below average precipitation resulted in expanding and intensifying drought conditions across much of Colorado, especially over



southern parts of the state with snowpack depletion occurring much earlier than average. Drought conditions during the last year have improved from Severe/Extreme to Abnormally Dry/Moderate indices across the state. In addition to weather and drought factors, overall forest health remains a concern for fire impacts and risk in the higher elevations of Colorado.

- In March 2019, the best science available suggests near average temperatures and average to above average precipitation in Colorado for the late spring and summer time periods.
- In 2018, many factors lined up for above average fire season conditions, especially for southern portions of Colorado. In 2019, Fire Potential indices do not suggest above average fire season conditions for the reasons listed above. Long-range models and outlooks lean towards favorable weather patterns that would generate beneficial precipitation and temperature regimes for the next several months, resulting in average, and in some cases, below average fire potential during the late spring and summer of 2019. Overall, current and expected conditions will not eliminate fire occurrence in 2019, however, severity will likely be reduced.
- Outside of wildfire occurrence, current snowpack values, typical spring warmups, and runoff could lead to flooding. The flooding potential should be monitored on a regular basis during the spring runoff season.

It is important to note that even in an average fire season, there will be on average 4,712 fires on non-federal lands burning a total of 101,357 acres, with large State Responsibility Fires likely occurring. The 2016 and 2017 calendar years were both considered below average from a statistical standpoint, however there were a combined total of 16 State Responsibility Fires in those years, with a total cost of over \$13 million in State funds for suppression alone.

### **Colorado's Wildfire Management Goals**

Suppression costs escalate significantly as fire size increases, and as values within the WUI are threatened. A wildland fire becomes a local emergency before it evolves into a State, then regional, and then national incident. Colorado's wildfire management program will continue to prioritize the strengthening of first response firefighting forces to safely and effectively suppress wildland fires when the fires are small.

Fast, aggressive, initial attack on new fires (for fires where full suppression efforts is the appropriate management response) can reduce the number of mega fires that may burn hundreds of homes and cost millions of dollars in suppression costs, recovery costs, and insured losses. The safety of firefighters and the public will continue to be the first priority in all fire management activity.



**DFPC's Strategic Policy Initiative for wildland fire management is to reduce the number of large wildland fires that threaten lives or property by 8% (from 39\* to 37) by June 30, 2019 and by 15% (from 39 to 34) by June 30, 2021 for the people of Colorado.**

### **Enabling Objectives**

Because DFPC's role is primarily to support local and county firefighting organizations in keeping fires small, in order to achieve this wildfire management goal, accomplishment of the following enabling objectives will be necessary:

1. Generate an incident assessment for every fire within 60 minutes of request or detection.
2. Deliver the appropriate aviation suppression resources to every fire within 60 minutes of the request.
3. Provide on-scene technical assistance and support within 90 minutes of request for support from a local agency.

Aviation assets will be strategically located based on preparedness levels, interagency occurrence of fire activity, weather, National Fire Danger Rating System indices, location of other aerial assets, and other relevant factors. In an effort to achieve these enabling objectives, the Division will coordinate with our federal partners to send the closest available resource to requests for aviation and other types of assistance.

### **Leaders' intent on incident priorities:**

When developing incident strategies, tactics, and plan implementation. The following list, in order of numerical importance, shall be considered:

1. Public and Firefighter Safety
2. Incident Stabilization
3. Property Conservation
4. Endangered Species, Environmental, and Economic Impacts
5. Resource Benefit



## 2019 Wildfire Preparedness Plan

Following is a summary of the activities that will be implemented to address the required components of the annual Wildfire Preparedness Plan as well as facilitating the achievement of DFPC's wildfire management goals.

### Wildland Fire Management

Colorado's structure for combatting wildland fires is a cooperative, interagency system involving local, county, state, and federal agencies. Wildland fire protection responsibilities on non-federal lands in Colorado follow a hierarchy of local jurisdiction, to the county sheriff, and finally to the Director of DFPC for the State of Colorado. DFPC is the lead state agency for wildland fire management and suppression as identified in the Colorado State Emergency Operations Plan and in accordance with the provisions of Section 29-22.5-103(3)(a), C.R.S.

DFPC's Wildland Fire Management Section (WFMS) will continue to provide technical assistance, incident support, and fire suppression resources to counties and local fire departments. In order to achieve its goals for the 2019 Wildfire Preparedness Plan, DFPC relies on a core group of WFMS employees. Based on estimated base funding levels for FY 2018-19, the DFPC staffing assumptions for wildland firefighting personnel are based on a mixture of approximately 71.93 FTE equivalent full-time and part-time positions and 30 temporary employees. This includes the Section Chief, Deputy Section Chief, Planning Branch, and Operations Branch, which houses four District Chiefs, 14 Regional Battalion Chiefs, and State aviation and ground firefighting resources.

### Technical Support

Based upon stakeholder driven strategic planning efforts, in 2019 the DFPC changed its field structure to better support local Government needs. At the request of local governments, the Division has reorganized from two Area Fire Management Officers (FMOs) and ten Regional Fire Management Officers, to four District Chief and 14 Battalion Chief positions strategically positioned throughout Colorado to provide the desired level of technical assistance and support to local jurisdictions. These Battalion Chiefs are the first point of contact for local jurisdictions when they need training, funding support, or subject matter expertise in any component of wildland fire management. Battalion Chiefs also direct local jurisdictions to contacts who can assist with needs provided by other DFPC programs.



## **Aerial Firefighting Resources**

The 2019 plan for DFPC aerial firefighting resources will be based on wildfire risk and need, as well as available funding, and may include any number of potential arrangements. To the degree practicable and possible, the minimum deployment of DFPC aerial firefighting resources will be:

**Multi-Mission Fixed-Wing Aircraft** – In order to achieve the goal of generating an incident assessment for every fire within 60 minutes of request or detection of a wildfire, DFPC will operate two State-owned fixed-wing multi-mission aircraft. This resource performs fire detection, extended attack surveillance and support, and other non-fire mission when needed and appropriate.

**Rotor-Wing Aircraft** – In order to achieve the goal of providing the appropriate aviation suppression resources to every fire within 60 minutes of the request, DFPC will operate a minimum of two type 2 helicopters with ten-person DFPC helitack crews through a 120-day exclusive-use contract. The aircraft and crews perform a variety of tasks including recon, transport of personnel and supplies, water delivery, and non-fire missions when needed and appropriate. One helicopter will be equipped with night operations capabilities. DFPC anticipates the first helicopter to begin contract on May 15th in Canon City and the second to begin on June 12th in Montrose.

**Single Engine Air Tankers (SEATs)** – In order to achieve the goal of providing the appropriate aviation suppression resources to every fire within 60 minutes of the request, DFPC will operate a minimum of two SEATs through an exclusive-use contract. DFPC will also administer a “Call-When-Needed” (CWN) program that makes additional SEATs available if the wildfire situation dictates the need for additional resources. DFPC started the first exclusive-use SEAT contract on April 1st, 2019. The start date for the second SEAT will be based on early fire activity and fire aviation needs.

**Other Aviation Resources** – DFPC continues to evaluate and pursue other opportunities for CWN resources to enhance firefighting capabilities. This includes CWN agreements for the use of Large Air Tankers with Airstrike and a Very Large Air Tanker with Global Supertanker.

**Closest Available Aviation Resources** – DFPC continues to coordinate availability and location of aviation assets with our federal partners to send the closest available resource in our efforts to meet the enabling objectives.



## **Engine Program**

The DFPC Engine Program provides assistance to local jurisdictions when local firefighting resources are overburdened due to number, complexity, or duration of fires. When areas of the state are under high or extreme fire danger, DFPC engines may be pre-positioned on severity assignments for the purpose of supplementing local resources for rapid initial attack. The state engines work with our partners to develop regional strike team / task force capabilities to enhance initial attack capacity. DFPC has engines located in Berthoud, Lyons, Timberline, Canon City, La Junta, Alamosa, and Montrose. These engines consist of Type 3, Type 4, and Type 6 engines and utilize a combination of staffing models to maximize efficiency and availability, including co-staffing with local agency personnel.

The 2019 plan for state engines and firefighters will be based on wildfire risk and need, as well as available funding, and may include any number of potential arrangements, including:

- Strategically located State engines (with permanent, seasonal, and/or local government staffing); and
- Strategically located Squads and Hand crews.

## **Ten Person Module and Veterans Fire Corps Program**

Senate Bill 15-205, which was signed into law on May 12, 2015, directs DFPC to “train, equip, and supervise hand crews employed by Veterans’ Fire Corps program in Colorado for wildland fire mitigation and suppression.”

In 2016, DFPC converted the Fort Collins Engine into a five-person squad by adding two additional personnel. For this fire season, DFPC redirected resources to build this into a ten-person module. The resource is available for initial attack, and has the capability to form the overhead and supervision for a twenty-person hand crew. The module partners with Veterans’ Fire Corps, BLM Team Rubicon (comprised of military veterans), and local government personnel to increase hand crew capacity in Colorado. The decision to increase staffing is based on a documented shortage of available handcrews during periods of high fire activity. When not involved in incident response, the module is actively involved in teaching courses to Veterans and local agencies, implementing fuels management projects, and planning and implementing prescribed fire projects.

## **State Wildland Inmate Fire Team (SWIFT) Crews**

DFPC will continue to support the State Wildland Inmate Fire Team (SWIFT) crews operated by the Colorado Department of Corrections to provide training, logistical and/or overhead support



that may be needed to ensure operational readiness and hazardous fuel reduction projects.

### **Resource Availability and Mobilization**

DFPC will also ensure the maintenance of the process for ordering and dispatching aerial firefighting equipment and personnel that is consistent with, and supportive of, the statewide mobilization plan prepared pursuant to Section 24-33.5-705.4, C.R.S. DFPC will provide the technical assistance and program management that identifies local, county, and state resources; their qualification to national standards; and their listing in interagency zone dispatch centers and in the Colorado Statewide Resource Mobilization System.

### **Heavy Equipment Pilot Program**

DFPC has partnered with the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to increase the availability of bulldozers, road graders, and other heavy equipment for wildfire suppression. CDOT provides the operators, heavy equipment and transports, while DFPC provides training, overhead for fireline supervision, and coordinates mobilization of resources. To date 75 CDOT equipment operators have received basic training, and these resources were utilized on several fires in 2018, including the Spring, Chateau, Lake Christine, and Weston Pass Fires.

### **Future State**

The Division will continue to proactively engage with internal and external partners and stakeholders at the local and federal level in an effort to proactively address the growing fire problems within Colorado by continually evaluating capacities and resources to support initial attack, regional, statewide, and federal support of rapidly growing fires threatening Colorado through on-going post incident analysis and collaborative strategic planning efforts and activities. The Division will remain focused on the diverse needs of all areas of the state as it relates to coordination and response to fire incidents and reduction of the likelihood or severity of an event when it does occur.





**Concurrence**

The following organizations and individuals were consulted in the development of the Wildfire Preparedness Plan and concur with the recommendations contained therein:

**For the County Sheriffs of Colorado**

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Printed Name	Signature
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**For the Colorado State Fire Chiefs'**

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Printed Name	Signature
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**For the Director of the Office of Emergency Management**

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Printed Name	Signature
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**For the Adjutant General**

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Printed Name	Signature
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