



NATIONAL WILDFIRE COORDINATING GROUP

Fire Danger Subcommittee Memorandum #22-001

Purpose: The Fire Danger Subcommittee has issued this memorandum to provide an update to the rollout timeline and transition plan for the 2016 version of the National Fire Danger Rating System (NFDRS2016) and formally recognize the use of the correct version identification (NFDRS v.4). Please distribute this information through your respective agency channels.

Actions:

1. *Change in naming convention from NFDRS2016 to NFDRS v4*

In recent months, a request to reference the system version (v.4) rather than the year this rollout started (2016) was made to reduce confusion in the field. The components of the NFDRS2016 Rollout are the 4th version of the NFDRS system, and at this time all elements have been incorporated into the WIMS & Fire Family Plus applications. While these are interchangeable nomenclatures, the FDSC has agreed the formal designation of this effort will now be known as NFDRS v.4.

2. *Adjusted NFDRS v4 Transition Timeline*

In July 2019, the NWCWG Executive Board approved a proposal from the Fire Danger Subcommittee (FDSC) to update the initial NFDRS2016 Rollout Plan. Memorandum 2019-002, NFDRS 2016 Release, <https://www.nwcg.gov/sites/default/files/memos/eb-m-19-002.pdf>, which includes a timeline with the expectation that all units will be fully transitioned to NFDRS2016 by January 2021, and archival of legacy fuel models in January 2022. Delays in transition have occurred due to COVID, fire activity, and lack of subject matter experts. Currently, only 67% of 3rd tier units have formally completed this transition.

All units were asked to fully transition by January 2021, and the legacy fuel models (78/88) were scheduled for archival in January 2022. The FDSC has recognized the need to adjust the NFDRS v.4 transition timeline to accommodate the delays noted above. This change will provide additional time for units to finalize model evaluations, update fire danger operating plans, and minimize impacts to connected products like Predictive Services, IFPL, PAL, and WFAS. The adjusted transition cut-off date needs to be shared widely and emphasized as a priority to meet the final phase of this rollout.

NFDRS v4 Transition Timeline Milestones:

Tuesday, March 15, 2022 – NFDRS v4 Transition and “*Soft Archival*” of legacy fuel models in WIMS

- In an effort to support transition efforts and complete the transition process, the v4 “enable” checkbox will be activated in WIMS again. Once a unit evaluates their readiness to fully transition, the removal of legacy models in WIMS station catalogs can be accomplished by enabling the transition check box in WIMS. Units are encouraged to complete that step by March 15th, with the intent to identify any downstream impacts and latent errors.

Tuesday, May 31, 2022- NFDRS v4 Transition Completion “*Hard Archival*” of legacy fuel models in WIMS

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- All legacy fuel models in WIMS station catalogs will be removed, and associated data will be archived.
 - a. The incoming weather data from the authoritative source (WFMI) will no longer be paired with the legacy NFDRS Calculator that produces indices.
 - b. NFDRS v.4 fuel models selected in WIMS will be used to calculate indices, paired with the v4 NFDRS calculator.
 - c. NFDRS v.4 Fuel Model “Y” will be included in all WIMS station catalogs to support predictive services
 - d. “Archival” means that legacy (78/88) fuel model data before this date will be archived, with no additional support for data correction, gap filling, or calculations. Legacy data will be available for research activities but will not be available for operational purposes.

- All NWCG agencies utilizing NFDRS will need to complete their transition to v.4 fuel models, and “enable” the transition in WIMS to remove all legacy fuel models from station catalogs. This transition date applies to all NWCG agencies, predictive services products using WIMS, and associated applications using NFDRS calculations.

- Expectations for all agencies and partners utilizing the NFDRS system includes:
 - ✓ Updated Fire Danger Operating Plans to reflect v.4 fuel models, analysis, climatology, thresholds, and associated breakpoints
 - ✓ Updated subordinate plans to reflect the inclusion of v.4 models in thresholds
 - ✓ Update pocket cards to reflect v.4 fuel models
 - ✓ Use of v.4 indices and connected business, staffing, preparedness thresholds in all communications
 - ✓ Review of transition compliance in all agency preparedness reviews and readiness checks

- Units are expected to update and adjust their FDOPs annually to address any issues encountered during the previous year and review the breakpoints and thresholds accordingly.

Background and Coordination:

Since 2017, the FDSC has worked in close coordination with the geographic subject matter expert teams to conduct workshops for fire staff, dispatch personnel, and agency administrators on the new model and incorporation of NFDRS2016 in the development of Interagency Fire Danger Operating Plans (FDOP) and other fire business applications. Workshop curriculum and FDOP examples have been provided on the NWCG FDSC website, along with support from a national cadre of SMEs.

In August of 2020, the NWCG Executive Board issued Memorandum 20-006, Update on Revisions to the National Fire Danger Rating System, <https://www.nwcg.gov/sites/default/files/memos/eb-m-20-006.pdf>, providing an update of the transition to the NFDRS2016. The primary objective is to provide a stable NFDRS v4 system along with updates to the WIMS, <https://famit.nwcg.gov/applications/WIMS>, and Fire Family Plus application, <https://www.firelab.org/project/firefamilyplus>, to ensure end-users are comfortable with the new model outputs and associated applications.

The NWCG NFDRS website, <https://www.nwcg.gov/committees/fire-danger-subcommittee/nfdrs>, is designed to facilitate education regarding the new science and improve the utilization of NFDRS2016 through the standard interagency applications of the system.

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Distribution: NWCG Committee Chairs, NFDRS Geographic Leads, National Fire Leadership