

NWCG FIRE DANGER SUBCOMMITTEE INTERNAL STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

This template can be used to draft internal committee/subgroup SOPs that supplement those identified in the Committee Toolkit <https://www.nwcg.gov/nwcg-committee-toolkit>. Remove sections that do not apply and add information specific to your subgroup.

(Revised May 2023)

Purpose:

The purpose of these SOPs is to establish internal protocols and procedures for the Fire Danger Subcommittee (FDSC).

The FDSC operates under the authority of the National Wildfire Coordination Group (NWCG) Executive Board and NWCG Master Charter.

The chair is responsible for maintenance of this document and will ensure, at a minimum, an annual review is completed during a scheduled meeting. This is a living document and may be modified any time the committee, support staff, and/or primary member determines a need. All edits are approved by the chair prior to a document update.

Mission and Objectives:

Mission: The FDSC provides national leadership to advance **fire danger rating** in support of effective fire management decision-making.

Glossary Terms:

- **Fire danger rating:** A fire management system that integrates the effects of selected fire danger factors into one or more qualitative or numerical indices of current protection needs. (FDSC)
- **Fire management:** All activities for the management of wildland fires to meet land management objectives. Fire management includes the entire scope of activities from planning, prevention, fuels or vegetation modification, prescribed fire, hazard mitigation, fire response, rehabilitation, monitoring and evaluation. (IFPC, FUSC)

Primary Objectives: *(approved FDSC April 18, 2023 meeting)*

- Develop and support standards, analysis processes, and tools for fire danger rating.
- Facilitate development and dissemination of training and information that enable effective interpretation and utilization of fire danger rating.
- Promote the effective integration of fire danger rating into wildland fire planning, operational practices, and decision support.
- Contribute to the standardization of fire danger rating associated information technology systems to collect and distribute data, processes, spatial displays and analysis outputs.

The mission statement and primary objectives will be reviewed annually at the **January** meeting.

The authoritative source for the FDSC mission and objectives is the NWCG website:

<https://www.nwcg.gov/committees/fire-danger-subcommittee>

Membership Management:

The authoritative source for the FDSC Roster is the NWCG website:

<https://www.nwcg.gov/committees/fire-danger-subcommittee/roster>

Membership on FDSC consists of one or two representatives (primary & alternate) from:

- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Bureau of Land Management
- Fish and Wildlife Service
- National Park Service
- National Association of State Foresters (Southern, Eastern & Western)
- National Weather Service
- United States Forest Service

If a primary member is unable to attend a scheduled meeting, an alternate member should be identified by the primary member to serve in their absence. Alternate members will be empowered with full membership authority during any time they are identified/called upon to act in this capacity.

Refer to <https://www.nwcg.gov/committee-roles-membership-information> for additional information on roles and membership information.

Subgroups, Advisors, Liaisons:

The FDSC may establish subgroups or assign individuals as necessary to advise and assist the work of the FDSC.

Subgroups: <https://www.nwcg.gov/committees/fire-danger-subcommittee/subgroups>

- Fire Danger Curriculum Management Unit (FDCMU)
- S491 Intermediate National Fire Danger Rating System Course Steering Committee
- S591 Advanced National Fire Danger Rating System Course Steering Committee

Advisors:

Participates in topic-specific discussions but not engaged in consensus decisions. Provides subject matter expertise, often from a separate functional area or multidisciplinary perspective. May or may not be an employee or representative of an NWCG member agency.

- DOI Field Representative – Local/Regional perspective
- USFS Field Representative – Local/Regional perspective
- National Fire Danger Rating System (NFDRS), Subject Matter Expert
- Canadian Forest Fire Danger Rating System (CFFDRS), Subject Matter Expert

Liaisons:

Participates in discussions but not engaged in consensus decisions. Facilitates a close working relationship and coordinates information exchange between two or more NWCG committees/subgroups or other stakeholders.

- Predictive Services Program – operational fire danger guidance and GACC PS coordination
- Fire Environment Observation Unit – National Agency RAWS Coordinator perspective
- Fire Environment Mapping System (FEMS) Design Team Representative – Needed during development, will re-assess as application moves to operations and maintenance.
- Fire Danger Curriculum Management Unit (FDCMU) – Vision and support
- S491 Intermediate National Fire Danger Rating System CSC – Vision and support
- S591 Advanced National Fire Danger Rating System CSC – Vision and support

Support Staff:

The **support staff position** provides administrative and technical support to the FDSC. The term of service is two years; however, the position may serve longer as available. The term of service should be staggered from the chair rotation to ensure continuity of internal processes with the least interruption to the functioning of the FDSC.

Support staff responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Attend all the calls/meetings and document with official meeting notes and action log.
- Assist the chair with development of call/meeting agendas and invitations.
- Submit roster changes/updates (via online form or thru NWCG coordinator).
- Provide webpage updates to the NWCG coordinator.
- Maintain/archive all FDSC correspondence and provide appropriate 508 compliant documents (e.g., minutes, memos) to the NWCG coordinator.
- Disseminate correspondence to all members.
- Assist with all meeting logistics.

Chair and Vice-Chair:

The chair will serve a two-year term that begins in **June** of each **even** numbered year. The chair is responsible for scheduling meetings as necessary to carry out the FDSC business and responsibilities. The chair may call and conduct meetings, establish subgroups, and submit committee/subgroup recommendations to other NWCG subgroups and the NWCG Executive Board (via NWCG coordinator) and sign FDSC correspondence. The chair shall determine meeting agendas, submit necessary briefing papers and reports, and have minutes prepared for each meeting and distributed to the members. In addition, the chair may represent the FDSC at NWCG Executive Board meetings, other NWCG subgroup meetings, or other meetings and events as appropriate.

The FDSC will also designate a vice-chair from amongst its members to serve a two-year term. The vice-chair will move to the chair, the chair will return to being a primary member, and a new vice-chair will rotate in from the member agency rotation below. The vice-chair performs the duties of the chair when the chair is not available or as requested by the chair.

The chair and vice-chair will rotate among the member agencies every two years in the following order:

History:

- United States Forest Service – Chair ~ until 2009
- Bureau of Land Management – Chair ~ 2009-2013
- United States Forest Service? – Chair ~2013-2014
- Fish and Wildlife Service – Chair: 2014-2022
- United States Forest Service – Vice Chair: 2021-2023

Start of Agency Rotation: *(approved FDSC April 18, 2023 meeting)*

- Bureau of Indian Affairs – co-Vice Chair: 2021-2022; Chair: 2022-2024
- National Association of State Foresters – Vice Chair: 2023-2024; Chair: 2024-2026 (if capable)
- National Park Service – Vice Chair: 2024-2026; Chair: 2026-2028
- National Weather Service (if capable)
- United States Forest Service
- Bureau of Land Management

- Fish and Wildlife Service

If an agency representative is unable to serve in the chair position, that agency is responsible to find an alternate to serve as chair. The selected individual must be able to carry out all responsibilities required of the chair position.

Fire Environment Committee and Subcommittees Chair and Vice-Chair Succession Guidelines

- Chairs and Vice-Chairs shall not serve in each role for more than three years consecutively
- The Vice-Chair will move to the Chair, the Chair will return to being a primary member, and a new Vice-Chair will be chosen from the subcommittee's or committee's primary members
- The three consecutive year guideline applies to each role. For example, a Vice-Chair could serve three years, then move to Chair for three years before returning to being a primary member.
- A subcommittee may request an exemption if there is consensus within the subcommittee. The parent committee will review the request and must reach consensus on allowing the exemption.

Decision Making:

A quorum for conducting business shall be a minimum of **five (2/3 of primary members)** members. Decisions will be based on a consensus of those members present. All members should contribute to the consensus seeking effort. Consensus decision making does not require unanimous or unqualified agreement. However, to achieve consensus, all decision-making members must be willing to support the decision. Even when consensus is achieved, a member with a dissenting position may have his or her position documented for the record.

All decisions will be recorded in the meeting minutes. All member entities speak with one voice in the consensus model; internal agency or organization differences should be resolved outside of meetings. For additional information on decision making see <https://www.nwcg.gov/committee-roles-membership-information>.

Meetings:

The FDSC shall meet **monthly** or as necessary to conduct business. The FDSC may also meet upon request of the chair at a location to be determined by the chair.

Agenda items will be submitted to the chair and support staff by the FDSC members or advisors/liaisons. A written agenda will be provided to the FDSC members, alternates, and advisors/liaisons at **least (insert # of days, e.g., seven)** days prior to the meeting. The chair and support staff may conduct an agenda setting call to determine agenda topics prior to compiling the agenda; the NWCG coordinator can be involved based on needs. Agenda items will be prioritized prior to the start of each meeting and additional items may be added by consensus of the FDSC.

Meeting minutes will be taken by the support staff (**if no support staff, insert who will be taking minutes**) and will be finalized within one week of the meeting and distributed to the FDSC members for review/comment. Notes will be finalized at the beginning of the next scheduled meeting and sent to the NWCG coordinator for review and posting. Minutes will be made 508 accessible prior to sending to NWCG coordinator.

Publications:

Outline how the committee/subgroup will handle review and revision of the publications under their stewardship, including those of their subgroups.

Position Management:

The FDSC has stewardship over the following positions:

- None

Incident Position Descriptions and position qualifications will be reviewed by the FDSC on an annual basis at the (insert month) meeting. Recommended changes will be discussed with other subgroups as appropriate and coordinated with the NWCG coordinator.

Additional Operating Procedures / Process:

Outline any additional processes or procedures not covered above.