



Forest Service

Helena - Lewis and Clark
National Forest

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File Code: 5130

Date: August 30, 2017

Route To:

Subject: Delegation of Authority, Alice Creek Fire

To: Russ Bird, Incident Commander Type 2

Delegation

We hereby delegate to you the authority for management of the Alice Creek Wildland Fire Incident on the Lincoln and Rocky Mountain Ranger Districts, Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forests (H-LC NF), Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (MT DNRC) Protection lands, and Lewis and Clark (County) County Protection lands. The fire is currently under jurisdiction of the USDA Forest Service, MT DNRC and Lewis and Clark County. The fire is currently along the continental divide, in the head of the Alice Creek drainage and east of the National Forest in the Dearborn River area. The fire is currently moving south, north and east. The fire is under a direct perimeter control suppression strategy on MT DNRC and County protection. The fire is under a direct perimeter control suppression strategy on National Forest System lands on its' southern perimeter, and a confine and contain suppression strategy on National Forest lands on its western and northern perimeter, with the intent to keep the fire south of the Falls Creek Drainage on the Rocky Mountain Ranger District (north of the continental divide). Use the tactics with the highest probabilities of success with the lowest exposure to firefighting assets cumulatively.

There are currently evacuations and closure to public access within and adjacent to the fire. Coordination for potential public evacuation remains. All evacuations recommendations are made to Sheriff Leo Dutton or his designee; please refer questions regarding any evacuations to the Lewis and Clark County Sheriff's Office.

This delegation supersedes and replaces the delegation you received on August 27, 2017.

Event/Incident Summaries

The Alice Creek Fire was discovered July 22, 2017 in the Alice Creek drainage at approximately 2300 hrs. Initial and extended attack efforts were unsuccessful. The fire experienced large growth on August 26, 2017. The fire is currently estimated at 5,500 acres.

Expectations

Contingency actions will likely need to be identified for National Forest System (NFS) land, private, BLM and State land. The primary areas of concern regarding private property are in the lower reaches of Alice Creek; the Dearborn subdivision; the Evergreen and Elk Meadows subdivisions and several large ranches extending north of Highway 200 and west of Highway 435. It is our expectation that you use tactics that ensure the highest probability of success with the minimum cumulative risk of exposure to firefighters, while minimizing the impacts to private lands, structures and infrastructure on National Forest System lands.

Concerns

Concerns are primarily related to managing the exposure of fire personnel and aviation resources to the risk and hazards of the fire environment and public safety. Use the tactics with the highest probabilities of success with the lowest exposure to firefighting assets cumulatively. **Finally, and most importantly, the fire is currently burning in timber stands with high mortality and multiple snags. The 2003 Snow-Talon Fire is directly west and there are some previous prescribed fire units in the planning area as well. We want you to utilize tactics that maximize the use of these previously burned areas, as long as they are effective, and allow them to buffer fire behavior so that exposure to firefighters, aviators and other first responders are minimized to the greatest extent possible.**

Responsibility

You have full authority and responsibility for managing activities associated with the Alice Creek incidents, within the framework of law, policy, and direction provided in the WFDSS. Your primary responsibility is to plan, organize, direct and coordinate your assigned and ordered resources for safe, efficient and effective suppression of the Alice Creek incidents, focusing on the south end of both incidents for indirect suppression line construction. You are accountable to the Forest Supervisor of Helena and Lewis and Clark National Forest and the Central Land Office Manager of the MT DNRC (Agency Administrators). The Forest Supervisor of the H-LC NFs will serve as the approving official of the WFDSS, after consultation with the Central Land Office Manager of the MT DNRC. Upon approval of the WFDSS, you will become accountable to the Agency Administrators. The District Rangers of the H-LC NF (RMRD – Mike Munoz and LRD- Michael Stansberry) and the Conrad Unit Manager of the MT DNRC (Erik Eneboe) will serve as the designated Agency Representatives; in addition, as needed, other District Rangers of the H-LC and Unit Managers of the MT DNRC may also serve as Agency Representative(s) in relief. The Deputy Forest Supervisor of the HLC may serve as Agency Administrator in relief as needed as well. USFS Resource Advisors will be named as necessary for National Forest Service lands.

Financial considerations will be consistent with the best approach to achieve fire suppression objectives of the Alice Creek incidents, in due consideration of values at risk. We expect you to keep fire costs as constrained as possible without compromising your ability to perform your delegated authority. We also expect you to scale your organization up or down quickly to meet

and resources to meet the needs of this assignment as efficiently as possible, without using components that are not applicable in this assignment.

You will provide assistance with the Cost Share Agreement, but responsibility and authority for negotiating and implementing to the Cost Share Agreement is retained by the Agency Administrators for the H-LC NF and MT DNRC.

Specific direction for the Alice Creek Fire Incident includes the following management and environmental concerns as listed:

- 1. The management of fire personnel exposure (including aviation resources) in the high risk fire environment and the public's safety are the highest priority in planning and implementing appropriate fire suppression response strategy and tactics. Follow the 10 Standard Fire Orders, mitigate the 18 Watch-Out Situations and maintain LCES at all times. Assess situational awareness and exposure to risks before engaging in field operations using and documenting the 10 risk questions. And ensure all fire personnel are aware of measures used to disengage from operations.**
- 2. Your strategic objective is to protect structures and reduce the loss of structures on all lands (NRCG Community and Structure Protection Guidelines); You are expected to effectively manage the fire incident tactics commensurate with objectives developed in the WFDSS and as described in the first paragraph of this delegation. We expect you to consult daily with a line officer representative on revalidation of the WFDSS. You are expected to manage the fire under a direct perimeter control suppression strategy on MT DNRC and County protection; under a direct perimeter control suppression strategy on National Forest System lands on its' southern perimeter, and a confine and contain suppression strategy on National Forest lands on it's western and northern perimeter, with the intent to keep the fire south of the Falls Creek Drainage on the Rocky Mountain Ranger District (north of the continental divide). We want you to focus on minimizing fire impacts, potential and behavior on private, State and BLM land while you develop a long term management and implementation plan that the forest can use to manage this event for the rest of the fire season. On all lands utilize direct perimeter control where and when it is safe to do so. We expect you to consult with the H-LC NF and MT DNRC and prepare a transition to a less complex Incident Management Organization as you complete the specific tasks associated with your assignment, at the earliest possible time.**
- 3. Your assigned personnel need to become familiar with the Emergency Plan (E-Plan) for the Rocky Mountain Ranger District and adjacent areas and; use of the plan and related documents to coordinate any potential pre-evacuation and evacuation procedures with county authorities.**
- 4. You and your assigned personnel will ensure that relationships with cooperators and the public are maintained and enhanced.**
- 5. On NFS land, all fire actions should be compatible with Forest Plan guidance displayed in the WFDSS. Critical natural resource habitat should be given**

appropriate consideration in planning and implementation of strategy and tactics. Use the direction provided by the 2011 Fire Retardant EIS avoidance areas on NFS land to ensure any retardant applied does not impact avoidance areas.

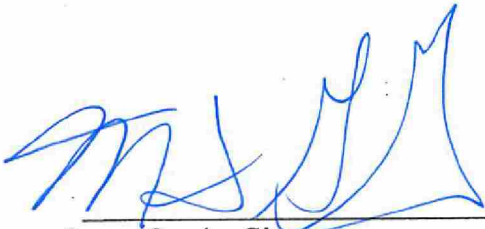
6. Management actions and incident support facilities must consider the presence of grizzly and black bears and the need to minimize contacts with humans; with the goal of ensuring fire personnel safety from contact with bears. As such you are assigned responsibility to ensure all personnel assigned to the incident in any spike camps comply with the Food Storage Special Order, in effect for the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem (NCDE). Management actions and incident support facilities must consider the presence of bears and the need to minimize contacts with humans. Failure for an individual or crew to comply with the Special Order could result in dismissal from the fire incident and potentially further disciplinary action, including issuance of citations to the individual(s).
7. You will be responsible for responding to any new fire starts that are within the Alice Creek Wildfire Incident WFDSS Planning Area, with the exception of any starts within the Scapegoat Wilderness. Your organization and resources may be requested to assist initial attack efforts outside of the WFDSS Planning Area. Requests will be coordinated through the Interagency Dispatch Center in Helena, Montana. You will be responsible coordinating with the MT DNRC and County Fire departments through the Helena Interagency Dispatch Center.
8. There may be further delegation of mutually agreed to areas of Initial Response Responsibilities in the vicinity of the Alice Creek WFDSS Planning Area and coordination with the H-LC NF. Any additional resources and due consideration of additional actions will require approval by the Agency Administrator.
9. Precautions must be taken to prevent the introduction and subsequent spread of terrestrial invasive plants. This includes the pre-treatment and post-treatment of vehicles and helicopters utilized to support the incident. Please refer to the NRCG PMS 444.
10. Precautions must be taken to prevent the introduction and subsequent spread of aquatic nuisance species or pathogens. This includes pre-treatment and post-treatment of buckets, snorkels, and other apparatus utilized for water delivery operations during the incident.
11. Continue to keep public and government representatives informed of fire behavior and management actions. Public information meetings, fact sheets, press releases and news media relations for the fire incident will be coordinated between you, the team's fire information officer and the Forest Supervisor or the District Ranger/ Area Manager or Unit Manager (MT DNRC)/ Lewis and Clark County Sheriff's Office. We expect your team to continue the high level of public and media engagement in fire information we have established.
12. You are delegated responsibility for the timely update, completion and submittal of the ICS-209 to Northern Rockies Coordination Center.

13. As the host agencies, we authorize and encourage you to provide training assignments in any position of your incident command team. We expect host agencies' trainees to be the priority.
14. You are authorized to use mechanical equipment as necessary outside of Inventoried Roadless Areas without additional consultation with the Agency Representative; within IRA's and Wilderness you should receive prior approval of their use through the Agency Representative.
15. As opportunities arise, document any modified fire behavior that occurs as the fire enters either previously wildfire burned areas or prescribed fire areas, or mechanically treated fuel reduction areas.

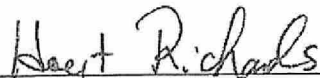
We are honored and privileged to have your assistance in addressing the Alice Creek Wildfire Incident. Please share with us how we may contribute to your safe and successful assignment. This delegation of authority is effective when signed for the Alice Creek fire which you took command of at 0600 hours, Monday, August 28, 2017.



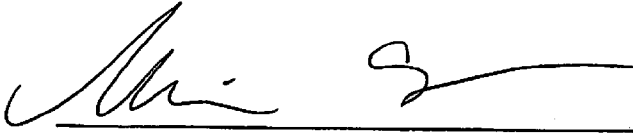
Russ Bird
Incident Commander – T2



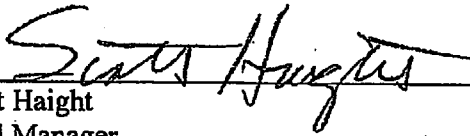
Susan Good – Giese
Lewis and Clark County Commission



Hoyt Richards
Central Land Office Area Manager
MT Department of Natural Resources and Conservation

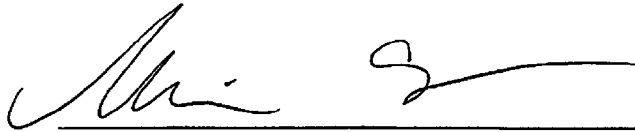


William Avey
Forest Supervisor
Helena - Lewis and Clark National Forests

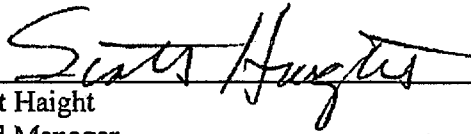


Scott Haight
Field Manager,
USDI BLM

Leo C. Dutton
Lewis and Clark County Sheriff



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