



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
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Instruction Memorandum No. FA-IM-2021-016  
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To: State Directors, State Fire Management Officers

From: Assistant Director, Fire and Aviation

Subject: Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Guidance for Fuels Treatment Effectiveness Monitoring (FTEM) reporting and Success Story Submission

**Program Area:** Fuels Management

**Purpose:** This Instruction Memorandum (IM) provides BLM-specific direction for fuels treatment effectiveness monitoring in the FTEM application. Furthermore, this IM describes the process for submitting success stories that showcase the positive effects of fuels management, past wildfire, and Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation (ESR) treatments when intersected by wildfire.

**Administrative or Mission Related:** Mission

**Policy/Action:** As established in Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) Department of Interior (DOI) Wildland Fire Program Policy Memoranda No. 2020-04 and 2020-09, the FTEM application is the Department's Official System of Record and Authoritative Data Source for documenting the outcome of fuels treatments intersected by wildfires. In addition to FTEM data, Fuels Treatment Success Stories are a commonly requested item for budget and staffing justifications. The following sections provide requirements for FTEM monitoring and Fuels Treatment Success Stories submissions.

**FTEM**

Offices are required to complete an FTEM monitoring report for all wildfires that start in, burn into, or burn through any portion of a fuels treatment area. Beginning in 2021, BLM states will reach a minimum of 80% monitoring completion for potential wildfire/fuels treatment intersections as identified in FTEM. Furthermore, FTEM

monitoring is required when a fuels treatment is used to support wildfire operations such as providing safety zones, contingency lines, access, staging areas, an anchor for burnout operations, or other features that complement operations. BLM Office and States will complete FTEM monitoring for previous year's fires by February 15<sup>th</sup>. These intersections may also include previous wildfires reported as fuels accomplishments in the Hazardous Fuels Reduction module of the National Fire Plan Operations and Reporting System (NFPORS). Detailed FTEM guidance from the Fuels Management and Community Assistance Manual (MS-9214) and the Fuels Management and Community Assistance Handbook (H-9214-1), as well as frequently asked questions, are provided as Attachment 1.

### **Fuels Treatment Success Stories**

In addition to statistics derived from FTEM monitoring, Fuels Treatment Success Stories demonstrate the value of fuels management and other projects that contribute to positive outcomes during or after a fire. Beginning in 2021, each BLM State will develop and submit a minimum of two Fuels Treatment Success Stories each year, due by February 15<sup>th</sup> of the subsequent year. These narratives typically include photos, descriptions of treatments, statements from fire managers, and summaries of the positive outcomes resulting from the treatment. In addition to fuels management projects, these stories may also include positive outcomes of wildfires intersecting Emergency Stabilization and Burned Area Rehabilitation (ESR) treatments, previous wildfires, and fuels treatments implemented on non-federal lands funded by BLM under Community Assistance Agreements. A template for Fuels Treatment Success Stories is provided as Attachment 2. Topics requested for Fuels Treatment Success Stories include:

- Fuels treatments on BLM lands impacted by fire related to the goals of the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy;
- Fuels treatments that favorably modify fire behavior (e.g., reduced flame length, fire intensity, spotting distance, crown fire activity), thereby improving firefighter safety or fire response effectiveness;
- Fuels treatments that reduced final fire size;
- Fuels treatments aiding suppression efforts by serving as contingency lines, safety zones, anchor points, or other helpful features;
- Fuels treatments leading to positive fire effects, such as post-fire resiliency, survival of desired species, and land health;
- Fuels treatments that conserved or protected valued resources such as habitats, rare species, infrastructure, communities, or private property;
- ESR treatments where the effects of seedings, plantings, and herbicides helped modify fire behavior, fire size, or improved fire operations efficiency;
- Past wildfires, reported as fuels accomplishments in NFPORS, that reduced fire behavior, or resulted in improved fire operations efficiency; and
- Treatments implemented on non-federal land, funded by BLM Community Assistance Agreements, that were intersected by or interacted with wildfire and contributed to community protection, fire operations efficiency, or other positive outcome.

**Timeframe:** This IM is effective immediately.

**Budget Impact:** The budget impact of this IM is minimal. As stated in the Fuels Management and Community Assistance Handbook and Fuels Management and Community Assistance Manual (H-9214-1 and MS-9214, respectively), Offices are required to complete FTEM monitoring and provide examples of successful fuels management projects as part of their base labor allocations.

**Background:** Demonstrating the positive outcomes of fuels management treatments supports the funding, staffing, and targets for the Bureau's fuels management activities. Together, FTEM and Fuels Treatment Success Stories illustrate the multiple benefits resulting from strategically placed management actions.

BLM currently has over 160 FTEM users. Since 2002, FTEM users have documented over 1,800 wildfire/treatment intersections. The resulting data reveal the following statistics in support of active fuels management:

- 77% of fuels treatments assist control efforts by fire operations personnel;
- 81% of fuels treatments result in modified fire behavior;
- 46% of fuels treatments allow for direct attack in the treated areas; and
- 31% of fuels treatments result in cessation of further fire spread.

**Manual/Handbook Sections Affected:** This IM supersedes guidance in the Fuels Management and Community Assistance Manual (MS-9214) and the Fuels Management and Community Assistance Handbook (H-9214-1).

**Coordination:** This IM was coordinated with BLM's Fire Planning and Fuels Management Division (FA-600), the Interagency FTEM Steering Committee, and the BLM Fuels Management Committee.

**Contact:** For questions regarding this IM, or for support regarding FTEM monitoring, success story development, or training, please contact Doug Havlina, Fire Ecologist (FA-600), at [dhavlina@blm.gov](mailto:dhavlina@blm.gov) (208-387-5061).

Signed by:  
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#### Attachments

- 1 – [Bureau of Land Management FTEM Policy and Frequently Asked Questions](#) (3 pp)
- 2 – [Fuels Treatment Success Story Template](#) (1 pp)

#### Distribution:

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