

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
OFFICE OF FIRE AND AVIATION
3833 S. Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

January 31, 2002

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To: State Directors

From: Director, Office of Fire & Aviation

Subject: Prescribed Fire On-The-Job (OJT) Training Program

The BLM Training Unit at NIFC created the Prescribed Fire OJT Program because managers realize that opportunities to become qualified can be limited. Last year was a pilot year for the BLM Prescribed Fire OJT Program. Feedback from the participants indicates it was well received. The program is providing an essential service for BLM organizations that do not have enough prescribed fire opportunities locally. The program focuses on facilitating quality prescribed fire assignments for BLM employees.

An important aspect of the BLM Prescribed Fire OJT Program is the networking that takes place for the trainee. When possible, trainees are matched with project locations and fuels programs that have methods, complexities, prescriptions and resource issues similar to those at their home unit.

Nationally, demand for prescribed fire opportunities is high. Organized programs such as the Fire Use Training Academy (FUTA) in Albuquerque and the Prescribed Fire Training Center (PFTC) in Florida are meeting BLM's needs to a point. It is obvious the BLM needs to augment these programs in order to position itself to meet its own escalating needs. In addition, the time commitment and cost of these programs is significant. The PFTC program has a four-week time commitment with a cost of approximately \$5,000 per person, and the FUTA program has a eight-week time commitment with a cost of approximately \$10,000 per person.

National Office funding is available to cover overtime and travel expenses when hosting units can not cover these costs. Without this support, many of the hosting units would not be willing to absorb the additional cost, thus making opportunities even more limited than they currently are. The average cost per person to the National Office has been \$1,657 and the average length of assignment has been eight days.

The BLM Training Unit at NIFC feels it is important to provide BLM employees with opportunities to become qualified for prescribed fire positions. This program leverages prescribed fire opportunities at the (relatively) local level, without having to sign up for a four- to eight-week commitment. Based on the success of the pilot year, the BLM Training Unit would like to encourage further participation for all qualified BLM employees as an avenue that builds more advanced prescribed fire qualifications.

Please provide any comments, feedback or questions to the program coordinator, Aitor Bidaburu, with the BLM Training Unit at NIFC, 208-387-5334, or via e-mail [Aitor Bidaburu@nifc.blm.gov](mailto:Aitor.Bidaburu@nifc.blm.gov).

Signed by:
Timothy M. Murphy
Acting Director
Office of Fire and Aviation

Authenticated by:
Pat Lewis
Supervisory Mgmt. Asst.
Office Services

Attachment:
Accomplishment Report for 2001

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BLM Prescribed Fire On-The-Job Training Program

Accomplishment Report for 2001

Name	Duty Station	Current Position	Trainee Position	Assignment Location	Purpose	Days	Task Book Status	OF&A Cost
Paul Lenmark	AK - AFS	Logistics Coordinator	RXB2	Lakeview BLM	Expand Quals	20	Completed	\$3,190
Kelly Hoffer	ID - Upper Snake	Engine Foreman	RXB2	Medford BLM	Expand Quals	5	Completed	\$1,200
Zachary Broutlette	ID - Upper Snake	Crew Leader	RXI1	Miles City and Lander w/SJ's	Expand Quals	7	Completed	\$1,570
Jay Parks	MT - Billings	Wildlife Biologist	RXB1	Butte F.O. BLM	Expand Quals	2	Completed	\$2,838
Richard Zimmerlee	NIFC	Smokeyumper	RXB1	Lakeview District	Expand Quals	4	Completed 75%, on-going	\$404
Tim Blake	NIFC	Training Developer	RXCM	Boise N.F. Idaho	Expand Quals	2	Completed	\$757
Todd Cordell	ID - Upper Snake	Range Technician	RXI1	Miles City and Lander w/SJ's	Expand Quals	10	Ongoing	\$1,470
Mike Ford	ID - Lower Snake	Fuels Operations Specialist	RXB2	Miles City and Lander w/SJ's	Maintain Currency	10	Completed	\$0
Pat Pacheco	NM- Taos	FMO	RXB1	Yuma District BLM	Expand Quals	5	Completed 80%, ongoing	\$1,369
Bob Hurley	NIFC - SJ	Fuels Program Manager	RXB1	Payette N.F. Idaho	Expand Quals	2	Completed 25%, on-going	\$793
Dave Whitmer	Tanana	Fuels Specialist	RXB1	Payette N.F. Idaho	Expand Quals	9	Completed 80%, ongoing	\$1,980
Trina Wietz	AK Fairbanks	FMO	RXB2	Albuquerque - BLM	Expand Quals	19	Completed	\$4568
Tim Caughlin	Boise-NIFC	Smokeyumper	RXB1	Uinta N.F. Utah	Expand Quals	8	First time out, ongoing	\$1,412