

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Office of Fire & Aviation
3833 S. Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

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To: State Directors

From: Director, Office of Fire & Aviation

Subject: Wildland Firefighter Apprenticeship Program - Selection Process **DD:11/19/99**

The Bureau's participation in the Wildland Firefighter Apprenticeship continues to provide our Fire Management Program with quality trained wildland firefighters who desire to establish a career in Federal Service. Each year the National Office of Fire and Aviation provides funding for each state to participate. In view of budget reductions and Full-time Equivalent (FTE) issues, it is imperative that responsible planning is accomplished to fill these key positions.

The apprenticeship program has proven to be successful for both the fire manager and employee in achieving the following objectives: 1) for the agency, it provides an excellent opportunity to improve workforce diversity; 2) for the fire program, it provides a well-trained, skilled, quality employee; and 3) for the employee, upon completion of the program it provides a career position within the Bureau's fire program.

For a refresher, this training consists of a 4,000 hour (three to five-year) program to achieve journey level status (career appointment). Two resident academies (Basic and Advanced) occur in separate fiscal years which are academic as well as physical. Work Process Hours (on-the-job training) and Related and Supplemental Training Hours (local unit training) are accumulated. The apprentice requires direct supervision by the Field Office Fire Management Officer. Upon completion of the apprenticeship phase, the employee is converted to a Career Seasonal Appointment; **short term** (3 to 6 months) or **long term** (more than 6 months). Entrance into the program requires that applicants have a minimum of two seasons of wildland fire experience (to qualify for not less than a GS-3) as well as qualify for Firefighter Retirement under Public Law 93-350. If selected, a drug test is required. Employees are brought on duty under the Student Career Experience Program (formally known as the Cooperative Education).

Under separate cover the applications for the Wildland Firefighter Apprenticeship for your state have been forwarded to your State Fire Management Officer for coordination with the office of Human Resources (Personnel). For expediency and convenience for those participating in the selection, the applications have been rated by the California State Office. The DI-1935 forms which were attached to applications received for your state have been removed and are being forwarded to your EEO Manager in a BLUE envelope. A roster listing each applicant identifies location(s) where application was made. Upon review and subsequent selection of an apprentice, the local personnelist is to evaluate the amount of previous fire experience from the application and provide the data (which is a critical element of information used to determine the term of apprenticeship) along with the name of the selected apprentice to Lois Cunha, California State Office, Branch of Fire and Aviation Management, 2800 Cottage Way, Room 1834, Sacramento, CA 95825. There is a priority waiting list established for vacant slots based on workforce issues and related management objectives. Due to the limited availability of slots in the new academy and time required to coordinate selections, each state is requested to respond **not later than November 19, 1999**, with their selection. No response by this date will forfeit your opportunity for selection for FY 2000.

Basic Academy No. 12 will convene on February 27, 2000 and conclude on March 24, 2000. Location of the academy is Fort Hunter Liggett, California (upon selection, an information packet is mailed directly to the apprentices and selecting officials). If you would like further information on the program, please contact Lois in Sacramento at 916-978-4432.

Signed by:
Lester K. Rosenkrance
Director, Office of Fire and Aviation

Authenticated by:
Pat Lewis
Supervisory Mgmt. Asst.

Distribution

Jay Thietten, MIB Room 5627
Fire Program Manager
Aviation Program Manager
NIFC Administrator
External Affairs
Cyndie Hogg, NARTC
SFMO's