



## Memorandum of Understanding Wildland Fire Leadership Council

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) by and among the Secretary of Defense, Secretary of the Interior, Secretary of Agriculture, and Secretary of Homeland Security authorizes the Wildland Fire Leadership Council, an intergovernmental committee supporting the implementation and coordination for Federal wildland fire management.

### Mission

The Wildland Fire Leadership Council (Council) is an intergovernmental committee of Federal, state, tribal, county, and municipal government officials convened by the Secretaries of Agriculture, Interior, Defense, and Homeland Security, dedicated to promoting consistent wildland fire policies, goals, and management activities. The Council provides strategic recommendations to help ensure policy coordination, accountability, and effective implementation of Federal wildland fire management policy and related long-term strategies through a collaborative environment to help ensure effective and efficient wildfire management, promote fire-adapted communities, and create resilient landscapes to achieve long-range benefits for society and nature.

### Goals

The Council, through its members and pursuant to relevant statutory authority and within available appropriations, works strategically to review, monitor, and influence the development and implementation of:

- Federal wildland fire management policy;
- the Federal Land Assistance, Management, and Enhancement Act of 2009 (FLAME Act);
- National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy; and
- other policies, procedures, and program management activities to protect communities and natural resources from wildfire; reduce hazardous fuel; restore fire-adapted ecosystems; and assist communities in their efforts to reduce loss from wildfires.

To reach those goals, the Council will provide assistance to:

- establish a forum for discussion of wildland fire management issues and promote and recognize improvement and innovation in wildland fire management;



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- remove and/or mitigate barriers to successful wildland fire management;
- ensure consistent outreach and communication to other senior policymakers and senior leaders in related program areas;
- coordinate resources to address the highest risk areas and priorities across landscapes consistent with risk management principles; and
- promote the acceptance of short-term risk in order to achieve long-term objectives and meet the goals of the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy.

## **Organization and Operations**

Membership on the Council includes the following Federal officials:

- Department of Defense – the Assistant Secretary for Energy, Installations and Environment and the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Homeland Defense Integration and Defense Support of Civil Authorities;
- Department of the Interior – the Assistant Secretary – Policy, Management and Budget and the Directors of the National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and U.S. Geological Survey;
- Department of Agriculture – the Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment, the Deputy Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment, and the Chief of the U.S. Forest Service; and
- Department of Homeland Security – Fire Administrator, U.S. Fire Administration.

In addition to the Federal officials, the Council includes seven non-federal members, primarily senior elected officials of state, tribal, county, and municipal governments. These members, acting in their official capacities, include:

- a governor who is a member of the National Governors Association;
- a governor who is from the western United States;
- the President of the Intertribal Timber Council (acting in his or her official capacity as an elected representative of a federally recognized tribe);
- a county commissioner who is a member of the National Association of Counties;
- a mayor who is a member of the National League of Cities;
- a state forester at the request of his or her senior elected official; and
- a fire chief of a state or any political subdivision thereof, at the request of his or her senior elected official.

The elected officials making designations may delegate in writing alternates to attend in their absence.

## **Governance**

Responsibility for chairing the Council will alternate annually between the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture. The Department of Agriculture will chair the Council first beginning on the effective date of this MOU. The Department of the Interior will chair the Council

beginning on the first anniversary of the effective date, after which they will rotate the chair on an annual basis on the anniversary of the effective date. The Council will meet regularly, as directed by the Council Chair, to accomplish the stated goals. Additional business protocols may be adopted by the Council to facilitate its efficient operation.

The Council Chair will provide at least 30 days written notice to Council members of meeting dates, location, and preliminary agenda items. Council members are encouraged to bring strategic topics requiring intergovernmental coordination before the Council and to invite interested individuals to present information to help inform the Council's deliberations. The Council Chairs are responsible for ensuring appropriate and accurate recordkeeping.

The actions and obligations of the Departments, Agencies, and Bureaus under this MOU are limited to those authorized by each Department, Agency, or Bureau's statutory and regulatory authorities and are subject to the availability of appropriations. Each participant is to carry out its activities in a coordinated and mutually beneficial manner. In pursuing these objectives, the Department of Defense, Department of the Interior, Department of Agriculture, and Department of Homeland Security will manage their own activities; work within respective statutory authorities; and utilize their own resources, including the expenditure of their own funds.

This MOU will be effective on the date it is signed by all parties:

- Secretary of the Department of Defense;
- Secretary of the Department of the Interior;
- Secretary of the Department of Agriculture; and
- Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security.

It will remain in effect for 5 years from the effective date. This MOU may be extended or amended upon the written request of any of the Secretaries and the subsequent written concurrence of the others. Any Secretary may terminate his or her department's participation in this MOU with a 60-day written notice to the others.

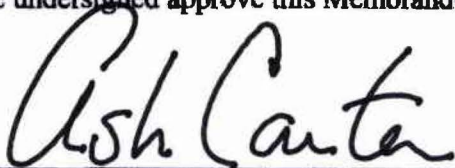
## **Collaboration and Public Participation**

The Administration and Congress have directed the Federal Departments and Agencies to work collaboratively with tribal, state, and local governments and citizens to develop and implement strategies to address wildfire preparedness and suppression, hazardous fuels reduction, landscape restoration, rehabilitation of the Nation's wildlands (e.g., rangelands, forests, and wetlands), and assistance to communities. In the collaborative spirit of this direction, and pursuant to provisions of law, including the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act exemption to the Federal Advisory Committee Act, the Council is an intergovernmental committee established to exchange views, information, and advice relating to the management and implementation of Federal programs in wildland fire management, hazardous fuels reduction, and natural resource management. To the extent practicable, the Council will also exchange information, views, and advice relating to the integration of these activities with other Federal, state, tribal, and local programs.

Meetings are to be open to the public. Exchange with individual members of the public in attendance will be encouraged through designation of public comment time on the agenda or by other informal means. The Council Chair, with the consent of the members present, may declare a portion of the meeting as an executive session. An executive session may include routine administrative duties, ministerial tasks, or discussion of highly sensitive or confidential matters. The Council will strive to keep its meeting open to the public and minimize the number of executive sessions.

## Approval

The undersigned approve this Memorandum of Understanding.



Ashton Carter  
Secretary  
Department of Defense

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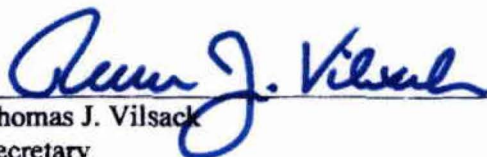
Date



Sally Jewell  
Secretary  
Department of the Interior

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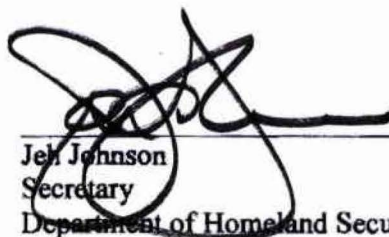
Date



Thomas J. Vilsack  
Secretary  
Department of Agriculture

NOV 15 2016

Date



Jeh Johnson  
Secretary  
Department of Homeland Security

Dec 12 2016

Date