



USDA Forest Service Intermountain Region FIRE & AVIATION MANAGEMENT



Director of Fire and Aviation Management



Ben Newburn is the Intermountain Region director of fire and aviation management. Prior to this, he was the Forest Fire Staff Officer on the Shasta-Trinity National Forest since 2014. He recently served as an Acting Deputy Forest Supervisor and previously as the Acting Deputy Director of Fire & Aviation Management in the Pacific Southwest Region. He was a member of the Senior Leader Program's Cohort 11 and participates in a number of national cadres and committees, including regular involvement with You Will Not Stand Alone and L-580, Leadership is Action and the National M-581 Course Management Sub-Committee. During Ben's tenure as Fire Staff Officer, he participated with incident management teams as an operations section chief, planning section chief and incident commander, chaired the Pacific Southwest Region's Safety FIRST committee and was an active member of the region's Work Environment Committee.

Fire and Aviation Management Priority Work

Our fire season tends to start early in southern Utah and Nevada (May and June) and end late in the mountains of Central Idaho and Western Wyoming (September and October). The national outlook for June and July indicates above normal fire potential due to drought in portions of Utah and eastern Nevada. Extreme to exceptional drought continues across most of southern/eastern Nevada/Utah and the Arizona Strip.

R4 FAM is committed to a safe and resilient workforce and has the expectation of a harassment free environment for employees. R4 will focus on Cohesive Strategy tenants of creating resilient landscapes, fire-adapted communities, and safe and effective risk-based wildfire response. We will use prescribed fire, mechanical treatments, and wildland fire to reduce hazardous fuels in support of the national commitment prioritizing fuels treatments in high risk areas.



The Intermountain Region (R4) Fire & Aviation Program (Continued)

Our Resources:

Wildland Firefighters	1160	Exclusive Use Helicopters	26
Hotshot Crews	7	Lead Planes	2
Smokejumpers	70	Infrared Airplanes	2
Wildland Engines	83		

Current Priorities for Fire and Aviation Management

The highest priorities for Fire, Fuels and Aviation in preparing for an active fire season include:

1. Hiring, training preparing our workforce. We completed our annual Fire Hire event in February, where we filled permanent positions, and have completed seasonal hiring.
2. Preparing our line officers to provide skilled oversight of fires and to practice risk-informed decision making regarding where and when to deploy our resources.
3. Working with forests, partners at the Great Basin Interagency Coordinating Group and Incident Commanders to develop and deliver consistent messages about risk management on all fires to create public support for our management actions.
4. Training for pilots, inspecting aircraft and carding helicopter vendors to ensure a safe and efficient aviation program.
5. Working with Natural Resources staff and state partners through shared stewardship agreements to significantly increase our capacity to reduce hazardous fuels, with a goal of a four-fold increase in fuels targets over a ten-year period.