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**To:** Regional Foresters

**REPLY DUE MARCH 15, 2010**

Thank you for your commitment on the Fire Program Analysis (FPA) effort this fiscal year (FY). All field units completed the required analysis on time and provided excellent feedback on system performance issues. As advertised, FY2009 has been a “learning year” for FPA. Your efforts identified system changes and data improvements that were needed prior to beginning year two. Those changes are ongoing with the support of project and field personnel and scientists (reference the enclosure for a summary of changes).

As we transition into the second year of FPA implementation, it is timely for field units to begin their preliminary work. Completed FPA field analysis, to support FY 2012 budget development, is due March 15, 2010. That date will allow adequate time for results to be summarized and for leadership and program managers to interact prior to submission of FY 2012 budget information.

The FPA interagency Executive Oversight Group has been reviewing the initial analysis process and system outputs from the 139 Fire Planning Units (FPU). Their conclusions are summarized in seven key findings:

- Fundamentals are sound, and while recognizing some data and model issues need to be corrected or improved, the system and underlying science look promising.
- We remain committed to improving the system which provides a common interagency process for analyzing programs and budgets.
- There is a commitment to improve, including: enhanced reports, data quality and consistency, and model performance via science reviews and field interaction.
- FPA is the foundation for a stronger interagency science based program for national scale strategic analysis with linkages to other planning processes and data.
- The FY 2009 analysis will help develop a strategic working model of an interagency budget process at the national level, but not to allocate FY 2011 programs or funds.
- The FY 2010 analysis will help support FY 2012 budget development based on improved model performance and data and a broader understanding of the system.
- We will develop, and communicate, a clear path forward that emphasizes learning, incorporates key lessons learned, considers field workload, and manages change.



Use of the FPA system to support the development of the FY 2012 wildland fire management program, and its associated budget, is a priority for the Forest Service and the Department of the Interior (DOI). To ensure our success, it is crucial that line officers are engaged, leading, and supporting quality interagency FPU analyses. One of the strengths of the FPA system is the interagency planning and analysis at the field unit level. It is also one of the challenges as collaboration takes commitment and time. The DOI agencies are releasing a similar memo to their field units.

Over the next few weeks, the FPA project will provide parameters for the FY 2012 budget analysis to the FPU representatives. These will include a specific set of preparedness and hazardous fuels options based on incremental budget changes which will be paired into alternatives. We are following closely with the FY 2011 budget analysis and limiting the number of options to manage the workload on the field personnel and establish analytical consistency.

While we anticipate additional challenges, each year FPA will produce increasingly reliable information. Your continued feedback will help us improve the system and its future application. As system performance improves and our experience base increases, we will gain confidence in system outputs to help us make critical program and budget decisions.

Please direct related questions to Joe Frost, Acting Forest Service FPA Business Lead, [jfrost@fs.fed.us](mailto:jfrost@fs.fed.us) or (208) 387-5961; or Gary Biehl, Acting Fire and Aviation Branch Chief for Fire Planning, [gbiehl@fs.fed.us](mailto:gbiehl@fs.fed.us) or (202) 205-0996.

***/s/ James E. Hubbard***

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Enclosure

cc: Deputy Chiefs, Tom Harbour, Rick Prausa, Richard Kvale, Joe Frost, Gary Biehl, Bill Breedlove