



**GREATER NAPLES FIRE RESCUE DISTRICT
BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
Action Item Worksheet**

NEW BUSINESS

Agenda Item: III. C.
Subject: Florida Forest Service Operating Plan
Meeting Date: March 12, 2025
Prepared By: Chris Wolfe, Fire Chief

Background

This is a cooperative agreement between the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the Collier County Fire Departments/Districts to outline and clarify the operating procedures between Florida Forest Service and the participating fire agencies. This agreement is to be reviewed and updated annually.

Funding Source/Financial Impact

N/A

Recommendation

Staff recommends authorizing the Fire Chief to execute the Florida Forest Service Operating Plan on behalf of the District.

Potential Motion

I move to authorize the Fire Chief to execute the Florida Forest Service Operating Plan on behalf of the District.

Attachment

1. 2025 Florida Forest Service Operating Plan

OPERATING PLAN BETWEEN FLORIDA FOREST SERVICE AND COLLIER COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENTS / DISTRICTS 2025

PURPOSE

The purpose of this plan is to outline and clarify the operating procedures between the Florida Forest Service (FFS) and the participating Fire Departments of Collier County. The respective departments have always responded to a mutual aid call; therefore, this Operating Plan is not a new concept. It is a document with written guidelines that more completely addresses the type and extent of cooperation between the FFS and the Fire Departments.

This plan is a written document that will outline policy and procedures, as well as response zones / capabilities of the individual departments. The cooperation and coordination policies between individual departments will also be discussed.

This plan will be reviewed and updated annually.

EXISTING AGREEMENT

As a Cooperative Agreement between Collier County and the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, this agreement provides for the Florida Forest Service's protection of 299,330 acres of forest and wild land in Collier County.

Mutual aid agreements for loaned equipment are in existence with: City of Marco Island Fire-Rescue Department; North Collier Fire Control and Rescue District; Immokalee Fire Control District; and Greater Naples Fire Rescue District.

The term fire department and district will be used hereafter to refer to all the departments/districts that are a part of this operating plan.

MUTUAL AID ZONES

The Florida Forest Service as well as the individual Fire Departments/Districts, will respond to any mutual aid request in any part of Collier County, provided equipment and manpower are available.

The 911 system is in place and the individual Fire Department/District will be dispatched, through Collier Control dispatch centers, as first response units.

Control will notify the Caloosahatchee Forestry Center Office as soon as a Fire Department/District crew is dispatched to a wildland fire. Upon confirmation of a wildland fire a Florida Forest Service unit will be dispatched.

The FFS will notify Control and Fire Departments / Districts when fire danger is critical.

Along local roads, county highways or other major roadways, the Fire Departments and the F.F.S. will provide all mutual assistance necessary to do 100 % mop-up where the highways are prone to fog, smoke related accidents, or fires that require large amounts of water.

BURNING AUTHORIZATIONS

The Florida Forest Service is responsible for the enforcement of Chapter 590, Florida Statutes. An inter-governmental agreement between the F.F.S and Department of Environmental Protection (D.E.P.) has delegated a portion of the D.E.P rule enforcement to the F.F.S. to include Chapter 62-256 Open Burning and Frost Protection fires. The FFS has adopted Chapter 5I-2 Rural Open Burning.

The Florida Forest Service is exclusively responsible for the issuance, enforcement, and administration of burn authorizations for all agricultural, silvicultural, and land clearing operations in Collier County. The FFS will handle complaints and enforcement of open burning laws and rules related to this type of burning. The FFS will provide Collier Control a daily listing of such authorizations by section, township, and range.

The Florida Forest Service will work to coordinate authorized open burning with each respective department/district, and all agencies/entities will utilize, at a minimum, the setbacks for open burning as set forth in F.S.590, F.A.C. Rule 5I-2, and Rule 62-256. Inspections by departments/districts should enhance their jurisdictional authority for fire prevention, safety, and landowner interaction under their authority through the Florida Fire Prevention Code.

The following departments conduct inspections of burn sites and issue permits within their respective districts, in addition to the authorization required by the FFS for non-agricultural and/or silviculture burning.

No Collier Departments will be conducting inspections.

The following departments do not inspect burn sites, but burners are required to notify the department after obtaining authorization from the FFS prior to beginning the burn.

Greater Naples Fire Rescue District
Immokalee Fire Control District
North Collier Fire Control and Rescue District

The Florida Forest Service shall retain concurrent jurisdiction to assist Fire Departments/Districts or to intercede in any manner, including revision or cancellation of any authorization or delegation, if the FFS deems that the Fire Department/District is not performing its obligations. Complaints and enforcement will be handled mutually by the FFS and representative Fire Department/District.

INCIDENT REPORT

Each agency currently completes an incident report for each incident response. A copy of this incident report is available to any cooperating agency upon request.

FIRE CAUSE INVESTIGATION

A preliminary fire cause investigation is to be done by the initial attack crew, either the Fire Department or the FFS. If evidence obtained is sufficient for possible criminal prosecution, the responding agency will notify an appropriate Law Enforcement Agency. The Florida Forest Service will provide Fire Department personnel training in wildland fire cause and origin investigation.

The local Arson Task Force will be kept updated on all suspicious or arson fires; and may be called on for assistance.

FIRE PREVENTION

The Florida Forest Service will maintain a Fire Prevention Committee and have solicited members from cooperating fire departments. The committee will keep an updated annual Fire Prevention Plan.

The Collier County Arson Task Force is also involved in Fire Prevention and may be utilized when necessary.

WILDLAND FUEL MANAGEMENT

The Florida Forest Service, cooperating Fire Departments and cooperating Local, State and Federal agencies may conduct hazard reduction burns or mechanical vegetation treatments in high hazard wildland/interface areas to reduce fuel loading. Cooperating agencies will supply manpower and equipment necessary to successfully complete the burning and/or mechanical treatment as available. Areas of high fire occurrence or problem wildfire behavior will also be prescribed burned or mechanically treated to reduce the frequency of large fires.

The FFS updates an annual mitigation action plan that describes wildland fire risk for specified areas, and the method(s) to reduce wildland fire risk in at risk communities and areas. The FFS works with each fire department to address specific fuel concerns within their jurisdiction as funding and equipment allows.

TRAINING

The Florida Forest Service will develop an annual training plan. Many of the training courses sponsored by the FFS are made available to local Fire Departments.

The FFS and local Fire Departments cooperate with Emergency Management to develop and maintain a local Incident Command System (ICS) Team. This team has periodic training and additional personnel from cooperating agencies that will be trained in all command positions to facilitate emergency response and coordination.

COMMUNICATIONS

As an entity on this operational plan, the Florida Forest Service – Caloosahatchee Forestry Center is providing the ability for cooperators to use of our radio frequencies as indicated in the communication plan that is detailed in the table that follows in this section. This authorization is applicable only during mutual control burn activities, statewide emergency and coordinated NIMS events and when life and limb are in danger or other safety concerns are experienced by members of your agency during their field duties.

The rules and policy of the Federal Communications Commission and the FFS must be strictly observed when operating on these frequencies. The FFS reserves the right to amend or cancel this authorization at any time with written notification to your agency.

Florida Forest Service Channel Plan for Cooperators

Channel	Description	RX	RX tone	TX	TX tone	BW
1	Mobile to Mobile	159.3150	156.7	159.315	156.7	N
3	Tactical 3	151.2350	csq	151.235	156.7	N
4	Tactical 4	151.2950	csq	151.295	156.7	N
5	SE Compact	151.2950	csq	151.2950	156.7	N
6	Alpha Repeater	151.2350	csq	159.2850	123.0	N
7	Bravo Repeater	151.2950	csq	159.3750	123.0	N
170	Lee North	159.4500	141.3	151.4225	141.3	N
171	Hendry South	159.4500	141.3	151.4225	162.2	N
172	Collier	159.4500	141.3	151.4225	179.9	N
173	Lee South	159.4500	141.3	151.4225	192.8	N
174	Hendry North	159.4500	141.3	151.4225	225.7	N
190	Tactical channel	151.2725	csq	151.2725	156.7	N
191	Tactical channel	151.2875	csq	151.2875	156.7	N
192	Tactical channel	159.2475	csq	159.2475	156.7	N
193	Tactical channel	159.2925	csq	159.2925	156.7	N
201	VFIRE22 (Red Ch.)	154.2650	csq	154.2650	156.7	N
202	VFIRE21 (White Ch.)	154.2800	csq	154.2800	156.7	N
203	VFIRE23 (Blue Ch.)	154.2950	csq	154.2950	156.7	N

All the cooperating Fire agencies are encouraged to use the VFIRE22, VFIRE21, and VFIRE23 tactical channels (formerly red, white, and blue) for incidents that require communication between the FFS and any cooperators. The FFS has provided hand-held radio units to cooperating fire agencies on request based on the availability of the units.

The FFS has written permission from Collier Control to use the control channel.

The FFS has a facsimile machine available for use by all cooperating agencies. The Fax number is **239-690-8002**.

FACILITIES

Meetings for 20-40 people can be conducted and supported at facilities located at Collier Forestry Station, Greater Naples Fire Rescue District, North Collier Fire Control and Rescue District, Immokalee Fire Control District, and the City of Naples Fire Department. Immokalee Fire Control District, City of Naples, North Collier Fire Control and Rescue District, and Greater Naples Fire Rescue District, and Collier County Emergency Management also have lecture rooms that can hold up to 100 people.

Emergency Management has a Mobile Command Post, which is available on any incident occurring in Collier County.

PERSONNEL AND EQUIPMENT

A current mutual aid equipment list is on file with the Florida Forest Service. Cooperating agencies are encouraged to annually review their fleet and wildland fire needs and capabilities to work with the FFS whenever possible to fill needs through available grants and other programs.

Air resources are available for wildland fire management from Page Field, along with FFS aircraft from surrounding districts. The FFS maintains a fixed wing reconnaissance aircraft and a rotor winged aircraft for wildfire suppression. Coordination for the use of these resources will be through Florida Forest Service's Caloosahatchee Forestry Center dispatch.

Specialized equipment available for wildland fire response includes two swamp buggies, a soft-trac / bombardier style wildland engine, one airboat, and the Island Strike Team trailer.

OPERATIONS

The 911 system has been implemented throughout Collier County and thus Collier Control dispatches the respective Fire Department/District as a first call unit to many wildland fires.

The FFS will be notified by Collier Control of all confirmed brushfires.

The FFS will respond when notified by Collier Control that any Fire Department is on scene at a wildland fire that will not be immediately extinguished by the first unit on scene.

The FFS will respond to all wildland fires when requested by a Fire Department or when the FFS deems appropriate.

The FFS will dispatch a unit to any wildland fire request received by a FFS Duty Officer. If only one FFS Firefighter is available to fight a night fire, at least one individual from a local Fire department/district should be dispatched to the scene for safety reasons. After dispatch, the FFS will notify the jurisdictional Fire Department/district. The FFS will also utilize aircraft and fire towers for fire detection, as conditions dictate.

All agencies will utilize the concept of Unified Command when jointly working an incident. Reinforcement shall make contact with initial attack units through Collier Control or a FFS tactical channel. The incident commander will then assign a tactical channel and direct all crews to utilize that channel. The incident commander will continue to monitor the tactical channel and agency dispatch.

The FFS will not respond to hazardous materials incidents or to dump fires since we are not equipped to do so. In these instances, the FFS's role is support only.

In no instance should an agency be expected to commit to a tactic that is unsafe or contrary to agency policy.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

Each agency will support its own financial commitment to an incident.

SMOKE ON THE HIGHWAY

County Department of Transportation or Municipal Public Works Department should place appropriate "Smoke on the Highway" signs on county or local roads in the event of a smoke impact emergency the impairs public

safety due to road visibility impairment of less than 1,000 feet or there is a projected impairment due to smoke impact.

Smoke on State and Federal roadways will be managed by the Florida Highway Patrol through an existing statewide agreement with the Florida Forest Service, Florida Highway Patrol, and the Florida Department of Transportation. Florida Highway Patrol must be notified when smoke impairment is imminent or expected.

PLAN APPROVAL

BY _____ Date _____
Florida Forest Service

BY _____ Date _____
North Collier Fire Control and Rescue District

BY _____ Date _____
City of Marco Island Fire Department

BY _____ Date _____
City of Naples Fire Department

BY _____ Date _____
Greater Naples Fire Rescue District

BY _____ Date _____
Immokalee Fire Control District