

Staff Ride

Resources



Wildland Fire Leadership Development Program

Cerro Grande Fire / Upper Frijoles Prescribed Burn – Tactical Decision Games

TDGS #1: (Strategic Level)

You are the Prescribed Fire Burn Boss:

Throughout the spring you have been busy conducting numerous prescribed burns with your Fire Use Module. You are now assigned as the Burn Boss for a prescribed fire below Cerro Grande Peak. As the Burn Boss you recognize it's been a dry winter. However, in March and April at least three snowstorms passed over your project area. Based on previous experience gained from burning the same unit in 1993, you and the Park Staff recognize that portions of the project area are inherently moist and fire behavior rather than weather drives your prescription.

On April 28th dead fuel moistures were collected, weighed, and recorded in your burn unit; they are in prescription. Your spot weather forecast, requested the day of the burn is favorable. You review the burn plan one last time and determine all elements in the plan are met.

It is the afternoon of May 4th and you are responsible to brief the Park Superintendent on the prescribed fire burn plan so that it can be approved for implementation. What are your responsibilities as the Burn Boss in an agency administration briefing?

TDGS #2: (Tactical Level)

You are the Prescribed Fire Holding Boss:

You are responsible for the holding operations down the east flank of the burn. Progress down this flank is moving slower than anticipated. The Ignition Specialist approaches you concerned that the black line operations will not be completed in a timely manner.

Given this scenario, discuss ignition and holding options with the Ignition Specialist. Communicate your decision (s) to the burn boss, ignition personnel, and holding personnel.

TDGS #3: (Operational Level)

You are the Prescribed Fire Burn Boss:

It is 0300 hours on May 5th. You have minimal personnel, (6) remaining on the prescribed burn, who are serving as the holding crew. Resources on-site are supposed to be your holding forces for day operations. However, under the current circumstances they are forced to become your holding forces for night operations as well. They have already worked 16 plus hours. You recognize the need to order additional resources for day operations. You leave the prescribed burn and return to Bandelier Headquarters to order contingency resources. You call Santa Fe Zone Dispatch at 0315 hours, and are told the supervisory dispatcher will not be on until later that morning.

How do you convey a sense of urgency to dispatch in order to ensure that critical resources are ordered? Who else might you update on the current situation? What information do you pass on to them?

TDGS #4: (Operational Level)

You are the Prescribed Fire Burn Boss:

It is approximately 1300 hours on May 5th. The sequence of events presented in the previous TDGS has occurred throughout the morning.

Do you declare your prescribed fire an escaped fire? Explain the rationale behind your decision.

Brief all resources assigned to you.

TDGS #5: (Integration)

You are you and it is today!

Given this information, discuss policy changes that have been implemented resulting from the Upper Frijoles Prescribed Burn and the subsequent escape that became the Cerro Grande Fire.

Describe one specific learning point from this event you will pass on to those you work with and supervise.