



# **Understanding the Fire Management Assistance Grant (FMAG) Program**

**Supporting Local and State Response to Wildfire Disasters**



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# Agenda

- **FMAG Overview & Governing Framework**
- **Eligibility & Declaration Criteria**
- **Wildfire Impact Data**
- **Eligible Costs (Categories B, H, Z)**
- **Grants Management & Appeals**



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# Governing Documents

**Statutes (Law)**



**Regulations**



**Policies**



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# Key Governing Documents for FMAG

- **Stafford Act – Section 420**
  - **Authorizes FMAG assistance to state and local governments**
  - **Allows essential and hazard mitigation assistance (Sec. 403 & 404)**
- **44 CFR Part 204**
  - **Core rules for FMAG program operations**
- **2 CFR Part 200**
  - **Federal cost principles and audit rules for all grants**



# Key Governing Documents for FMAG

- **FEMA/State Agreement**
  - Legally binding agreement between FEMA & the state
  - Required before funds can be obligated
- **Types of Agreement**
  - FEMA/State
  - FEMA/Tribal
- **Key Features**
  - Valid for calendar year
  - Attachment C: Fire-specific grants terms



# FMAG Roles & Responsibilities

- **State**

- Submits FMAG request to FEMA Region

- **FEMA Region**

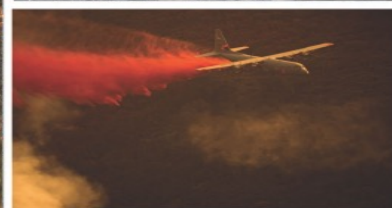
- Receive, evaluates, and decides on declaration request

- **U. S. Forestry Principal Advisor**

- Provides technical fire analysis to the region







# Fire Management Assistance Grant Program and Policy Guide

FP-104-21-0002 / June 2021



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# Eligibility Standards Under FMAG

- **Eligible work must be:**
  - **The legal responsibility of the applicant**
  - **Required as a result of the declared fire**
  - **Located within the designated area**







# FMAG Criteria

- **Threat Level**
  - Threatens to become a major disaster
  - Threats to lives and improved property
- **Critical Assets at Risk**
  - Critical infrastructure (power, water, communication)
  - Critical watershed areas
- **Resource Conditions**
  - Availability of state and local firefighting resources
    - High fire danger conditions
    - Potential economic impact



# Wildfire Impact Overview

- **Fire Scope & Threats to Community**
  - **Total acres burned, fire size and containment status**
  - **Name, location, and population of communities at risk**
  - **Number of threatened residences/businesses**
    - *Primary versus secondary homes*
  - **Mandatory or voluntary evacuations**
  - **Number of evacuees and shelter usage**



# Wildfire Impact Overview

- **Threats to Infrastructure and Facilities**
  - Buildings, utilities, roads and bridges
  - Critical infrastructure (power, water, communications)
  - Recreational areas, public-use facilities, equipment





# Fire Environment & Context

- **Land ownership breakdown (state, tribal, private)**
- **Percentage of fire on each land type**
- **ICS form 209 – Incident Status Summary**
- **Fire severity, topographical, or resource maps**



# Environmental & Resource Impacts

- **Watershed, flood control, and irrigation systems**
- **Wildlife habitat, spawning areas, and cultural resources**
- **Economic risks to agriculture, forestry, or tourism**



# Response & Conditions

- **State/local burn bans in effect**
- **Resource commitment across jurisdictions**
- **Current and forecasted 24-hour weather**
- **Known or suspected cause of fire (e.g., lightning, arson)**





# FMAG Categories



- **Category B – Emergency Protective Measures**



- **Category H – Firefighting Activities**



- **Category Z – Administrative Costs**



# **Category B**

## **Emergency Protective Measures**

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- **Evacuation and sheltering**
- **Emergency medical care**
- **Search and rescue operations**
- **Law enforcement and public safety**



# Category H

## Fire Suppression Activities

- **Personnel overtime and backfill**
- **Equipment use and repair**
- **Temporary repairs from fire suppression damage**





# **Category Z**

## **State Administrative Costs**

- **Grant application and documentation**
- **Audit and compliance activities**
- **Subgrants and coordinating with FEMA**





# Incident Period

- **The time interval during which the declared fire occurs**
- **The incident start date is the date that the request is approved**
- **The incident end dates are not usually established until the fire is controlled**
- **Established by the Regional Administrator, in consultation with the GAR and Principal Advisor**
- **Costs must generally be incurred during the incident period to be eligible**




# Individual Assistance

- **Individual Assistance (IA) for FMAG's is only provided in the event the state requests and receives a major declaration for the wildfire**
- **Costs for IA expenses will be reimbursed under the major declaration, not the FMAG declaration**



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# Adding Counties After Declaration

- **State may request to add counties**
- **Must justify need for assistance**
- **FEMA evaluates each request**
- **Denials can be appealed**



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# Appeal of a Denied Declaration Request

- **One opportunity to appeal**
- **Must be submitted by the State within 30 days of notice of denial**
- **Regional Administrator reviews the appeal and forwards a recommendation to FEMA Headquarters**
- **FEMA Headquarters makes an appeal determination within 90 days**
- **FEMA Headquarters decision is final**



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# Grants Management

- **All FMAG grants must follow grants management regulations, which includes:**
  - **Verifying eligible costs**
  - **Providing a period to appeal FEMA's determination**
  - **Audits**
  - **Closeout**







# Fire Complex

- **A State may submit a request for a FMAG declaration for a fire complex**
- **A fire complex is defined as two or more individual fires located in the same general area, which are assigned to a single Incident Commander**
- **Even though an entire complex may be designated in a declaration request, not all fires within the complex will automatically qualify for assistance**
- **Coordinated strategies**



# FMAG Summary

- **What FMAG does (and doesn't) cover**
- **Key responsibilities for local/state roles**
- **Where to find more guidance**



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**FEMA**