



---

**File Code:** 5160 **Date:** June 7, 2015  
**Route To:** 2670  
**Subject:** Wildland Fire Chemical Use and Reporting on National Forest System Lands  
**To:** Regional Foresters

Forest Service policy regarding the use of fire chemicals is found in FSH 5109.16 and portions of this policy are included within the Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations (Red Book), Chapter 12. All products on the Qualified Products List (QPL) meet Forest Service specifications and have been evaluated for effectiveness, materials protection, stability, safety, and environmental protection and can be used by any federal wildland firefighting agency. The QPL can be found at <http://www.fs.fed.us/rm/fire/wfcs/index.htm>.

The Washington Office is responsible for wildland fire chemical policy, implementation of fire chemical use, and reporting requirements at the national level. The local unit is responsible for reporting any fire chemical misapplication into waterways and/or mapped avoidance areas.

The 2011 Aerial Fire Retardant Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), Record of Decision (ROD), Biological Assessments (BA) and Biological Opinions (BO) pertains only to environmental impacts associated with *aerially delivered long-term retardants* and implements additional reporting requirements associated with accidental or intentional application into mapped avoidance areas (class A foams and water enhancers were not part of the 2011 EIS and ROD). Mapped avoidance areas may include aquatic and terrestrial areas and are updated and provided to the field every year. Specific avoidance maps can be found at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/retardant/index.html>. The ROD accepted the terms and conditions as described within each BO with implementation at the beginning of the 2012 fire season. Additional reporting requirements or follow-up actions for other resources specific to an individual forest or region may be required for areas such as heritage or cultural resources, sensitive species or other resources specific to a region or forest. These requirements are managed by the local unit.

The Forest Service requires reporting of all accidental or intentional releases of *any aerially delivered* fire chemical within 300 feet of a waterway or ground delivered fire chemical into a waterway or potential to enter a waterway. If any release of a fire chemical not covered within the Aerial Fire Retardant EIS and ROD occurs within Threatened, Endangered, or Proposed species occurrences or designated critical habitats and adverse effects occur then the action agency must consult with FWS and NOAA-Fisheries, as required by 50 CFR 402.05 (Emergencies). Please refer to Chapter 12 of the Red Book for additional information related to reporting requirements and emergency consultation procedures.

Although reporting outside of waterways is not required for ground application of long-term retardants, foams, and water enhancers, it is strongly encouraged to report these intrusions to further understand potential environmental impacts if any.

Additional information regarding retardants, foams, and water enhancers is in the enclosure to provide a summary document for use by field personnel.

Contact Dave Haston, Branch Chief Fire Chemicals and Equipment at 208-387-5642, [dhaston@fs.fed.us](mailto:dhaston@fs.fed.us); or Shirley Zylstra, Wildland Fire Chemical with questions about fire chemicals.



Regional Foresters

2

Program Leader at 406-329-4859, [szylstra@fs.fed.us](mailto:szylstra@fs.fed.us). For questions about the ROD and reporting requirements, contact Julie Laufmann, Natural Resource Specialist at 970-226-2040, [jlaufman@fs.fed.us](mailto:jlaufman@fs.fed.us).

*/s/ James E. Hubbard*

JAMES E. HUBBARD  
Deputy Chief for State & Private Forestry

Enclosure

cc: Tom Harbour, Stephen Gage, Dave Haston, Shirley Zylstra, Julie Laufmann, Caleb Berry,  
Regional Fire Directors, Regional Aviation Officers