**MINIDOKA COMPLEX INCIDENT COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

The complex consists of the Cave Canyon Fire, the Deer Hollow Fire, the Eight Mile Fire, and the Hotwell Fire on lands administered by the Sawtooth National Forest and the Twin Falls District of the Bureau of Land Management. Two Delegations of Authority were issued to GB team one on August 7, 2012 and a second on August 10, 2012 adding the Hotwell Fire.

**SITUATION / UNIQUE INCIDENT SOCIO-POLITICAL CONCERNS**

* The Delegation of Authority for this incident places information under the Incident Commander.
* The complex is approximately 15 miles southeast of Twin Falls, Idaho.
* Lightning strikes ignited the fires on August 8, 2012.
* The national drought maps indicate that most of eastern Idaho is abnormally dry. Fire danger is much higher than normal. Fires are burning with high intensity. Fire behavior is characterized as extreme.
* Residents of Oakley and the surrounding area are most impacted by evacuations, area and road closures, and smoke.
* A fire closure is in effect for Cave Canyon which includes residents along Rock Creek Area
* 127 homes are threatened and three out buildings have been destroyed.
* Approximately 60 Rocky Creek area residences were evacuated. Road and area closures remain in effect.
* Some evacuees were sheltered in area motels, some self-sheltered in motor homes, and others went to homes of relatives or friends. An evacuation center was not established.
* Stage 1 Fire Restrictions are in place for area lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management, the Sawtooth National Forest, and Idaho Department of Lands.
* The PIOs will coordinate with Forest PAO Julie Thomas, as well as BLM PIOs Kylie Gough and Heather Teal-Nelson

**AUDIENCE**

* Local communities/businesses
* Cassia County Sheriff; Twin Falls County Sheriff; Oakley, Burley, and Rock Creek Fire Departments, and partner agencies
* Media
* Elected officials (county commissioners excepted)
* Stakeholders
* Visitors/recreationists
* Summer home residents
* Agency Personnel
* Incident Personnel
* Area Command

**OBJECTIVES**

Incident Information Objectives are listed in the Delegation of Authority: Maintain or enhance relationships with all cooperators and stakeholders by maintaining inclusive communication strategies and providing timely and accurate information to all interested parties. Coordinate information with Forest Service PAO Julie Thomas. The Agency Administrator retains responsibility for coordination with county commissioners.

* Keep internal and external audiences informed with accurate, timely information.
* Coordinate fire information with the Cassia County Sheriff, Oakley and Malta Fire Protection Districts, the Idaho Department of Lands, and the Twin Falls District of the Bureau of Land Management.
* Be the first and best source of information about the fire; update information frequently.
* Accommodate media requests for team-related information, interviews with the Incident Commander, and camp tours. Fire line tours are coordinated through the Incident Public Information Officer (PIO).
* Communicate consistent messages about the risks associated with wildland fire.
* Address rumors to prevent confusion.

**STAFFING**

On August 11 PIO staff includes two PIO1s, two PIO2, one PIO1 trainee, and one PIOF.

The team is staffed to address primary media and public interests including evacuations, area closures, road closures, and general fire information including maps and statistics. The team will work with the forest to ensure the information need is met when the incident downsizes.

**KEY MESSAGES:**

* Safety is our number one priority. Ensure firefighter and public safety
* Protection of greater sage-grouse and Yellowstone cutthroat habitats is a high natural resource priority
* Suppress wildfires before they reach structures
* Minimize fire effects to recreation infrastructure – Bostetter and Rock Creek Areas
* Fire danger is much higher than normal. Fires are burning with high intensity
* We are closely cooperating with Cassia and Twin Falls county local Fire Departments
* We are working closely with the Cassia County Sheriff’s Office to keep the public updated on firefighting progress and safe re-entry

**PLANNED EVENTS**

* Oakley Community Fire Meeting August 10, 2012 at Howells Oakley Opera House
* 3 p.m. briefings daily with evacuated homeowners

**DAILY INFORMATION TASKS AND PRODUCTS:**

* Provide a daily fire overview, including map, current situation/fire statistics, resources, and weather
* Provide information on the status of road closures
* Provide fire updates to evacuees
* Provide information on future planned events and actions, such as media and citizen briefings, special event, and VIP visits
* Provide special incident messages including mop-up, rehabilitation, special aircraft use (CL 215s and DC-10), wild animals/rabies, etc.
* Coordinate with area command
* Other related information of interest

**NATIONAL TALKING POINTS:**

* Keeping the public and firefighters safe is always our first concern.
* Fire is an essential ecological process and a natural change agent.
* Teamwork and cooperation are essential in managing fire.
* Fires are managed in different ways. The same fire may have several objectives which can change as the fire spreads.
* Fire seasons are influenced by several factors including weather, the amount and condition of fuels and sources of ignition.
* Firefighters count on the public to help reduce risk.

**TACTICS – Used as needed\***

* + Daily Briefings\*
  + Daily Update\*
  + News Releases\*
  + Internal Notification Phone Calls\*
  + E-mail\*
  + Inciweb\*
  + Handouts\*
  + Fire Info Boards\*
  + Traplines\* (Cassia County – Rock Creek Store, Spike Camp at Magic Mountain; Malta – Bennett’s Serviced, Bake Central and Malta Fuel Depot; Declo – Country Store and Fire Department; Burley – Smith’s, Mr. Gas, Fire Station, and City Hall; Albion – Creekside and Albion Stakehouse
  + Roving Contacts\*
  + Community Meetings\*
  + Media Escorts\*
  + Camp Boards for Fire Personnel\*
  + Info Updates for Spike Camp\*
  + Community Events
  + Tours of Camp
  + VIP Briefing Packets

**EVALUATION**

Feedback from the host unit Agency Administrator, the Bureau of Land Management, the Mayor of Oakley representing residents, the Cassia County Sheriff’s Office, and direct feedback from media and community.