



Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

Minnesota DNR Forestry, MIFC

402 SE 11th Street

Grand Rapids, MN 55744

January 24, 2017

Mr. Ross Hauck

Fire Management Coordinator

Kansas Forest Service

Subject: Advantages to States in Forest Fire Compact Membership

Dear Mr. Hauck,

I am writing to outline some of the advantages realized by the states who are members of Forest Fire Compacts. In addition to the ability to readily share suppression resources, coordinate high level hard to find training and prevention efforts that deliver synergy from state to state and lower costs, Forest Fire Compact membership also provides other advantages to the states involved.

I have served as the representative of the Northeast Forest Fire Supervisors to the Western State Fire Managers, a subcommittee of the Western Governors Association. Attending and taking part in each other's meetings allows the state members to voice common problems and issues and propose solutions. We have often found that similar issues face our state fire programs. Often, other states have found full or partial solutions to common issues that can be shared. These type of solutions can then be brought back to the respective Forest Fire Compact where they can be shared across state boundaries regionally.

The Forest Fire Compacts play an important role in this process as they work on local coordination and solutions to common issues on a compact level. Through communication with other compacts common concerns are identified and solutions are shared. This can be of great advantage to Forest Fire Compact members as they can utilize work already accomplished saving time and effort.

The Minnesota has been a member of the Great Lakes Forest Fire Compact since it's inception in 1984. We would highly recommend that the state of Kansas join the Great Plains Forest Fire Compact so that it can readily take advantage of membership in a Forest Fire Compact.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me directly at 218-322-2682.

Sincerely,

Ron Stoffel

MN DNR Wildfire Suppression Supervisor

Great Lakes Forest Fire Compact, Chair

NAASF Northeast Forest Fire Supervisors, Chair

Great Lakes Forest Fire Compact • Minnesota
402 SE 11th Street, Grand Rapids, MN, 55744



January 23, 2017

Mr. Ross Hauck
Fire Management Coordinator
Kansas Forest Service

Subject: Benefits of Kansas being a Member of a Forest Fire Compact

Dear Mr. Hauck:

I am writing to explain some of the benefits the states of Minnesota, Michigan and Wisconsin, along with the provinces of Manitoba and Ontario, receive by being part of the Great Lakes Forest Fire Compact.

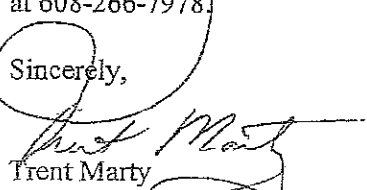
The compact has provided many tangible and intangible benefits to our organizations. Some of the tangible benefits include a coordinated and comprehensive forest fire prevention program for the Great Lakes Region; training programs conducted as a compact, especially the higher level courses; exchanges of resources for technology transfer between organizations; and the sharing of fire suppression resources during times of need.

Some of the intangible benefits we have derived from these direct actions include the understanding of each other's fire programs; the willingness to assist each other in times of need; along with the strengthening of relationships between our organizations and the respective personnel. There is nothing like developing a working relationship between staff prior to having to work together in an emergency situation.

I whole heartedly endorse the state of Wisconsin's participation in the Great Lakes Forest Fire Compact and would encourage the state of Kansas to join the Great Plains Forest Fire Compact.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this letter, please feel free to contact me directly at 608-266-7978.

Sincerely,


Trent Marty
GLFFC Treasurer

Cc: Ron Stoffel – GLFFC Chair



Wyoming State Forestry Division

THE FOREST RESOURCE AGENCY OF WYOMING



*Wyoming State Forestry Division
5500 Bishop Blvd.
Cheyenne, WY 82002*

*Matthew H. Mead
Governor*

*Bill Crapser
State Forester*

Larry Biles
State Forester
Kansas Forest Service
2610 Claflin Rd
Manhattan, KS 66502

Dear Mr. Biles,

The Great Plains Interstate Fire Compact, GPIFC, is pleased to have extended a formal invitation of membership to the Great State of Kansas.

Pursuant to Kansas' efforts to join the GPIFC, we encourage the drafting of a bill that would permit the State of Kansas to participate within the compact. While there are many benefits to being a member state of a compact, it is important to note that the compact is free to join. Kansas will pay no fees to join and no membership dues are required after successfully becoming a member state.

With the large fire taking place in Kansas this last spring we look forward to working with you in the future and if the Great Plains Interstate Fire Compact can be of assistance as your State works through this process please do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

Anthony Schultz
Chair, Great Plains Interstate Forest Fire Compact
Past Chair, Alliance of Forest Fire Compacts
Assistant State Forester – Fire Management Officer
Wyoming State Forestry Division



Alliance of Forest Fire Compacts

"Big Rivers, Great Lakes, Great Plains, Mid-Atlantic, Northeast, Northwest, Southeastern, South Central, Southwest"

Larry Biles
State Forester
Kansas State Forest Service
2610 Claflin Rd
Manhattan, KS 66502

January 24, 2017

Dear Mr. Biles,

We would like to encourage the State of Kansas and the Kansas Forest Service to pursue a bill that would permit the State of Kansas to participate within the Great Plains Interstate Fire Compact and within the Alliance of the Forest Fire Compacts.

Kansas experienced some major fire activity in 2016 and had this authorization been in place, this would have allowed for additional alternatives for the sharing resources from the other cooperating Compacts.

It is one of the goals of the Alliance of Forest Fire Compacts to encourage each of the states to be organized under and represented by a Forest Fire Compact.

Sincerely,

Gail A Kantak
Chair, Alliance of Forest Fire Compacts
Treasurer, Big Rivers Forest Fire Management Compact
State Fire Supervisor, Iowa Department of Natural Resources – Forestry Bureau – Fire Program



COLORADO

Division of Fire
Prevention & Control

Department of Public Safety

Wildland Fire Management Section
690 Kipling Street, Suite 2000
Lakewood, CO 80215



**COLORADO STATE
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January 23, 2017

Larry Biles
State Forester
Kansas Forest Service
2610 Claflin Rd
Manhattan, KS 66502

Dear Mr. Biles,

The Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control (DFPC) and the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) would like to add our support and encouragement for the State of Kansas to join the Great Plains Interstate Fire Compact (GPIFC).

The GPIFC facilitates assistance in prevention, pre-suppression, control of wildland fires, management of prescribed fires, training and mitigation and recovery activities between the member agencies of the Compact. There is no financial commitment to become a member of the GPIFC, and membership does not override or supersede any existing cooperative wildland firefighting arrangements, nor does it prohibit future cooperative agreements.

In 2016, resources from Colorado and North Dakota were mobilized via the Compact to assist the State of New Mexico during a time of high fire activity. This is just one example of why the State of Colorado believes that GPIFC membership is an important tool for effective prevention and management of wildland fires, and we look forward to working with our counterparts in Kansas on these issues.

Vaughn T. Jones
Chief, Wildland Fire Management Section
Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control

Kristin Garrison
Assistant Division Supervisor- Fire & Fuels Management
Forest Management Division
Colorado State Forest Service



Larry Biles
State Forester
Kansas Forest Service
2610 Claflin Road Manhattan, KS 66502-2798

Larry:

On behalf of the National Association of State Foresters (NASF) Wildland Fire Committee I offer our support for the Kansas Forest Service to join the Great Plains Interstate Fire Compact.

As you know, there are eight regional forest fire compacts across the United States with 43 states participating in those compacts. All of the compacts have enabling legislation that provides for states to help one another with wildfire prevention, wildfire training and wildfire suppression operations including sharing of resources between compacts. Compacts also cover fire billing, reimbursement, and liability.

The compacts provide a direct conduit among state forestry agencies for rapid mobilization of state fire-fighting resources which is an important benefit of membership. Compact member states have aviation assets, engines, hand crews, dozers, incident management teams and other resources available to assist each other.

The Great Plains Interstate Fire Compact is currently comprised of the member states of North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming, Colorado, Nebraska and New Mexico and the province of Saskatchewan. The Great Plains Interstate Fire Compact is also an active member of the Alliance of Forest Fire Compacts which is chartered and supported by the NASF Wildland Fire Committee. The Alliance establishes a more formal relationship among the compacts so that common issues can be addressed for the good of all compacts.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Jim Karels

Florida State Forester
Chair, NASF Wildland Fire Committee