



File Code: 2000
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Subject: Executive Order 13855 titled “Promoting Active Management of America’s Forests, Rangelands, and other Federal Lands to Improve Conditions and Reduce Wildfire Risk”

To: Regional Foresters

As you are aware, on December 21, 2018, the President signed Executive Order 13855 titled “Promoting Active Management of America’s Forests, Rangelands, and other Federal Lands to Improve Conditions and Reduce Wildfire Risk”. This ordered the Secretaries of Agriculture and Interior to actively manage federal lands to address forest health and improve resiliency.

The Executive Order includes the following direction in Section 3:

(b) Streamline agency administrative and regulatory processes and policies relating to fuel reduction in forests, rangelands, and other Federal lands and forest restoration when appropriate by:

- (i) Adhering to minimum statutory and regulatory time periods, to the maximum extent practicable, for comment, consultation, and administrative review processes related to active management of forests, rangelands, and other Federal lands, including management of wildfire risks;*
- (ii) Using all applicable categorical exclusions set forth in law or regulation for fire management, restoration, and other management projects in forests, rangelands, and other Federal lands when implementing the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.);*
- (iii) Consistent with applicable law, developing and using new categorical exclusions to implement active management of forests, rangelands, and other Federal lands; and*
- (iv) Immediately prioritizing efforts to reduce the time required to comply with consultation obligations under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).*

Consistent with this direction, Regional Foresters are to ensure that the Agency meet minimum statutory timeframes for completion of National Environmental Policy Act documentation and consultation with regulatory agencies. Categorical exclusions to complete this work should be the first choice and used whenever possible. I encourage you to explore creative methods and set clear expectations to realize this priority effort.



Please ensure that all Agency line officers and staff are cognizant of the critical need to accomplish forest health and hazardous fuels work in the most responsible and expedient ways possible. Thank you for your commitment to improve shared stewardship of our National Forests and Grasslands.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CBF', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

CHRISTOPHER B. FRENCH
Acting Deputy Chief, National Forest System