

# MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES FOREST SERVICE

Operation Order 2009-211

Effective: **March 25, 2009**

## **Maryland Wildland Fire Crew Volunteer Program**

### **General**

This order establishes policy guidelines for the Maryland Wildland Fire Crew Volunteer program.

### **Objective**

This operation order establishes guidelines for use of Wildland Fire Crew Volunteer program crewmembers to assist the Maryland Forest Service in carrying out mission of the Wildland Fire Management Program.

### **Legal**

Pursuant to the Annotated Code of Maryland, Natural Resources Article, 5-701 (c) (4) the Department hereby recognizes a volunteer who may perform duties authorized by the Department or their agents. When performing authorized duties the volunteer qualifies as State personnel under the Maryland Tort Claims Act, Annotated Code of Maryland, State Government Article, 12-101 (a) (4) & 12-105 and the Courts and Judicial Proceeding Article, 5-522 (b), meaning the volunteer is immune both from suit in the courts of the State and from liability for acts or omissions within the scope of the volunteers authorized duties that are performed without malice or gross negligence.

The volunteer is a covered employee as defined under the Workers Compensation Act, Annotated Code of Maryland, Labor and Employment Article, 9-207. As such, if the volunteer is called upon by the Department or their agents to perform duties, the volunteer will be covered under that statute and will be eligible for workers compensation to the extent provided under the Workers Compensation Act when volunteer services are provided. The volunteer understands and agrees that the volunteer is solely responsible to obtain additional insurance to cover any injuries or illness that may not be covered under the Workers Compensation Act.

### **Registration**

Interested volunteers should complete a *Maryland Wildland Fire Crew Volunteer Application* and *Maryland Wildland Fire Crew Volunteer Registration* forms and submit it to the respective Regional Fire Manager or the State Fire Supervisor. The forms

will be reviewed and training records checked for the individual for completion of the basic wildland fire courses. An application may be rejected without cause.

If accepted, the registration form is to be signed by the Regional Fire Manager or State Fire Supervisor in the *DNR Use* block on the form. The applicants' information should be entered into the IQS database and a training file established.

The volunteer shall also complete a *Department of Natural Resources Acknowledgement of Rules* form. The Regional Fire Manager may issue the needed equipment to the volunteer for participation in the program and the items are to be tracked as state property on the *Maryland Wildland Fire Crew Equipment Loan* form.

### **Activation & Use**

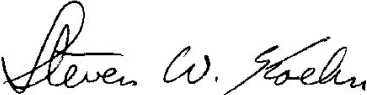
Crewmembers may be activated for use in region by the Regional Fire Manager or designated Regional Duty Officer. Request for use out of region will be coordinated and approved by the State Fire Supervisor or designated State Duty Officer.

Crewmembers may be used to augment Maryland Forest Service resources on large incidents, extended attack operations, high fire danger days, additional staffing for projects, and other situations deemed appropriate by the Regional Fire Manager or State Fire Supervisor.

Crewmembers may also be activated for training, preparedness, and pre-suppression activities. Activation includes time responding to and from an incident, rehabilitation efforts, and closeout and documentation after an incident.

All use of crewmembers is on a volunteer basis without compensation.

This operation order is effective immediately.

  
Steven W. Koehn  
Director / State Forester