

News Release

National Interagency Fire Center
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Military aircraft equipped with Modular Airborne Firefighting Systems (MAFFS) mobilized to assist with wildfire suppression efforts

Boise, Idaho – The USDA Forest Service is activating two Department of Defense C-130 aircraft equipped with MAFFS to assist with increased fire activity in several western states. The aircraft, from the 153rd Airlift Wing, Wyoming Air National Guard, from Cheyenne, Wyoming, and the 302nd Airlift Wing, Air Force Reserve Command, Peterson Space Force Base, Colorado, will join the USDA Forest Service and other state and federal agencies fighting wildfires across the west. The two aircraft are available from the Klamath Falls Airtanker Base in Klamath Falls, Oregon, beginning today.

Having military C-130s that can be converted into airtankers provides a critical “surge” capability that can be used to bolster wildfire suppression efforts when commercial airtankers are fully committed or not readily available.

The C-130 aircraft are equipped with the U.S. Forest Service’s MAFFS, which can drop up to 3,000 gallons of fire retardant in less than 10 seconds across a quarter-mile line. The system slides into the back of the military aircraft, and retardant is released through a nozzle on the rear left side. In addition to the 153rd and 302nd Airlift Wings, the 146th Airlift Wing, California Air National Guard, and the 152nd Airlift Wing, Nevada Air National Guard are also part of the national MAFFS program, which includes a total of eight C-130 aircraft.

On July 21, the National Wildland Fire Preparedness Level was elevated to 3 (out of 5), reflecting increased wildland fire activity across the U.S. The level was raised by the National Multi-Agency Coordination Group, composed of wildland fire representatives from each wildland fire agency based at the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) in Boise, Idaho.

For more information on MAFFS, visit: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/fire/planes/maffs>.

For photos and videos of the MAFFS program, visit: www.dvidshub.net/feature/MAFFSAEG.

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The National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC), located in Boise, Idaho, is the nation's support center for wildland firefighting. Nine different agencies and organizations are part of NIFC including, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, Department of Defense, U.S. Fire Administration, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, USDA Forest Service, National Association of State Foresters, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the National Park Service.

