

# ROSS TIPS

ROSS TIP:    ORG-2004-2  
Date:        *April 12, 2004* – V3  
Subject:     **Entering Forest Service Organizations into ROSS**

The focus of this paper is to present data standards for entering Forest Service organizations into ROSS, and to show a few examples of typical USFS organizations and what information needs to be entered for each. In addition, we'll discuss the rationale for entering or not entering National Forest Districts and Detached Units as ROSS organizations, and we'll provide examples of each.

For an overview of entering organizations into ROSS, please see ROSS Tip #3. This, and other ROSS Tips can be found online at: <http://ross.nwcg.gov/rosstips.htm>. The ROSS Helpdesk is an excellent source of assistance and can be contacted at 1-866-224-7677 or via e-mail at [helpdesk@dms.nwcg.gov](mailto:helpdesk@dms.nwcg.gov).

## **Data Requirements and Entry:**

Entering any organization into ROSS requires some advanced planning. Forest Service organizations are considered **Government (Non-Dispatch) Organizations** in ROSS. Data requirements for each USFS organization may include:

- Unit Code (unit identifier/unit ID)
- Location (latitude and longitude)
- Address (type, street, city, state, zip, country)
- Contacts (numbers and contact methods)
- Radio frequencies
- Affiliations (managing, reporting and agency relationships) **MANDATORY**
- Financial code (agency, fiscal year)
- Subordinate organizations
- Whether or not the organization is a resource provider

# ROSS TIPS

ROSS TIP: #4  
Date: **DRAFT** August 29, 2002  
Subject: **Entering Forest Service Organizations into ROSS**

The dispatch organization that provides dispatching services (i.e. processes resource orders) for a given USFS organization is responsible for creating and managing that Organization record in ROSS.

Example #1: The **Virginia Interagency Coordination Center** provides dispatching services for the **Washington Office – USFS**. The Virginia Interagency Coordination Center enters and manages the Washington Office – USFS organization record.

Example #2: The **Mount Hood National Forest Dispatch Center** in Oregon provides dispatching services for the **Pacific Northwest Regional Office**. The Mount Hood National Forest Dispatch Center enters and manages the Pacific Northwest Regional Office organization record.

## **USFS Organization Data Entry Standards:**

The ROSS National Data Steward, a member of the National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC) staff, has established the following data standards for **Forest Service** Government (Non-Dispatch) Organizations:

### **Organization Name:**

- **Washington Office:** Data shall be entered as **Washington Office – USFS**. (Note: this organization has been entered).
- **Regional or Area Office:** Data shall be entered as Region or Area Name followed by a space (“ ”), a dash (“-”), a space (“ ”) and “USFS” in capital letters. For example: **Pacific Northwest Region – USFS** and **Northeastern Area – USFS**. The word “Office” should NOT be included in the name.
- **Research Station:** Data shall be entered as Station Name followed by a space (“ ”), a dash (“-”), and the location. For example: **Pacific Northwest Station – Portland, OR** and **Southern Station – Asheville, NC**.

A **Research Program Office, Research Work Unit** or **Service Center** under of one of the research stations would be entered as its Station Name followed by a space (“ ”), a dash (“-”), and the location of the satellite office. For example: **North Central Station – Grand Rapids, MN, Rocky Mountain Station – Lincoln, NE** and **Rocky Mountain Station – Ogden, UT**. Note: these offices should be entered in ROSS only if they are expected to provide resources for incidents or to host incidents themselves.

# ROSS TIPS

ROSS TIP: #4  
Date: **DRAFT** August 29, 2002  
Subject: **Entering Forest Service Organizations into ROSS**

- **Field Organizations of the Washington Office:** These are entered in the same way as the regional offices, but the “-USFS” suffix is omitted. For example: **International Institute for Tropical Forestry, , San Dimas Technology and Development Center, , Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, National Advanced Resource Technology Center, etc.**
- **Supervisors Office:** Data shall be entered as National Forest Name. For example: **Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest, Flathead National Forest, etc.** Any reference to an “office” or “unit” should NOT be included in the name.

The Forest Service has a large number of administrative units COMPARABLE to National Forests, but named differently. These are entered in the same way. For example: **Little Missouri National Grasslands, Saint Paul Field Office, Grey Towers Historic Site, Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area, Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area and Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit.**

- **Southern Region National Forest Groups:** In the Southern Region, the following administrative units have been created to administer SEVERAL individual proclaimed national forests or grasslands: **National Forests in Alabama, National Forests in Florida, National Forests in Mississippi, National Forests in North Carolina and National Forests in Texas.** Each **Southern Region National Forest Group** has an official Unit ID, is a resource provider and hosts incidents. Each should be entered as an organization in the same way that a typical national forest is entered in ROSS. The forest group would have a **Reporting Affiliation** with the Southern Region – USFS in ROSS.

**An individual national forest** within one of these national forest groups (e.g. the **Davy Crockett National Forest** or the **Caddo-LBJ Grasslands** under the **National Forests in Texas**) would NOT be a resource provider and would NOT host incidents. It COULD be entered as an individual USFS Government (Non-Dispatch) Organization in ROSS if more detailed ROSS reports are desired. The forest would have a **Reporting Affiliation** with its “parent” national forest group. These national forests would be entered in ROSS just like a typical USFS district would be entered. See the last section of this paper for instructions.

- **Ranger District:** Most national forests contain several districts (e.g. the **Boise National Forest** includes Boise District, Lowman District, and others). Districts DO NOT NECESSARILY have to be entered in ROSS. If the ROSS user needs the ability to differentiate and report resources from separate districts within a national forest, then districts should be entered. If a district is entered, data shall be entered as Ranger District Name followed by the words “Ranger District” (e.g. **Detroit Ranger District**). An example of how this is done follows this section.

# ROSS TIPS

ROSS TIP: #4  
Date: **DRAFT** August 29, 2002  
Subject: **Entering Forest Service Organizations into ROSS**

The following assumptions **MUST** be understood before entering a district as an organization:

- Districts **ARE NOT CONSIDERED** an **Incident Host**; the national forest is. Although incidents occur on the districts, the forest is the host.
  - Districts **DO NOT** have a **Unit ID**; the national forest does. In ROSS, the Unit ID of the forest is applied to the district through the district's affiliation with the forest.
  - The national forest is the **Resource Provider**, **NOT** the district. All **Resource Items** entered into ROSS **MUST** show the national forest as the **Resource Owner** and **Provider**.
  - If entered in ROSS, a district can be designated as the **Home Unit** for those **Resource Items** attached to the district
- **Units where detached employees are based:** Many Forest Service units serve as the office for employees who are detached from their home unit (e.g. an employee of the Washington Office - USFS whose duty station and office is the "National Advanced Resource Technology Center" in Marana, Arizona). There is no need to create a separate organization for detached employees.

If the person in the above example were entered in ROSS and designated as a "Resource Item," the "Washington Office - USFS" would be selected as the employee's **Provider** and **Owner**, and "National Advanced Resource Technology Center" would be selected as the **Home Unit**. A "Preferred Jetport" (Tucson) could be entered in the Resource Item screen to show that person's demobilization point.

## **USFS Organization Affiliations:**

The most important aspect of planning for data entry is determining where an organization fits within its agency structure and the dispatch channel. It's recommended that you first sketch out these relationships before actually entering organizations in ROSS. As with most federal organizations, the USFS is an agency that has a national office, regional offices and local units (e.g. national forests, national grasslands, etc.). Each organization is served by a dispatch center. Let's look at some examples of USFS Government (Non-Dispatch) Organizations and their Affiliations. A diagram follows the examples.

Example #1: The Washington Office of the Forest Service (Washington Office – USFS) is a Government (Non-Dispatch) Organization that falls under the umbrella of the Forest Service agency. The Virginia Interagency Coordination Center, which provides direct dispatching services for The Washington Office – USFS, enters the organization into ROSS. Thus, the Virginia Interagency Coordination Center has a **Managing Affiliation** with the organization in ROSS. Only that dispatch office can edit or delete the organization.

# ROSS TIPS

ROSS TIP: #4  
Date: **DRAFT** August 29, 2002  
Subject: **Entering Forest Service Organizations into ROSS**

Since the Washington Office – USFS is at the top of its organizational hierarchy, it reports to no other organization in the agency. Therefore, the Washington Office – USFS has no **Reporting Affiliation** (one could say that the Chief of the USFS reports to the Secretary of Agriculture, but the Department of the Agriculture [USDA] is a different “agency” in terms of ROSS – therefore, no reporting affiliation). The Washington Office – USFS is part of the Forest Service agency, so its **Agency Affiliation** is the Forest Service.

Example #2: The Intermountain Regional Office of the Forest Service (Intermountain Region – USFS) is a Government (Non-Dispatch) Organization that is part of the Forest Service agency, and is headquartered in Ogden, Utah. The Regional Forester reports to the Chief of the Forest Service in the Washington Office – USFS. The Eastern Great Basin Coordination Center in Utah, which provides dispatching services for the Intermountain Region – USFS, enters the organization into ROSS. Thus, the Eastern Great Basin Coordination Center has a **Managing Affiliation** with the organization in ROSS. Only that dispatch office can edit or delete the organization.

The Intermountain Region – USFS has a **Reporting Affiliation** to the Washington Office – USFS. The Intermountain Region – USFS is part of the Forest Service agency, so its **Agency Affiliation** is the Forest Service.

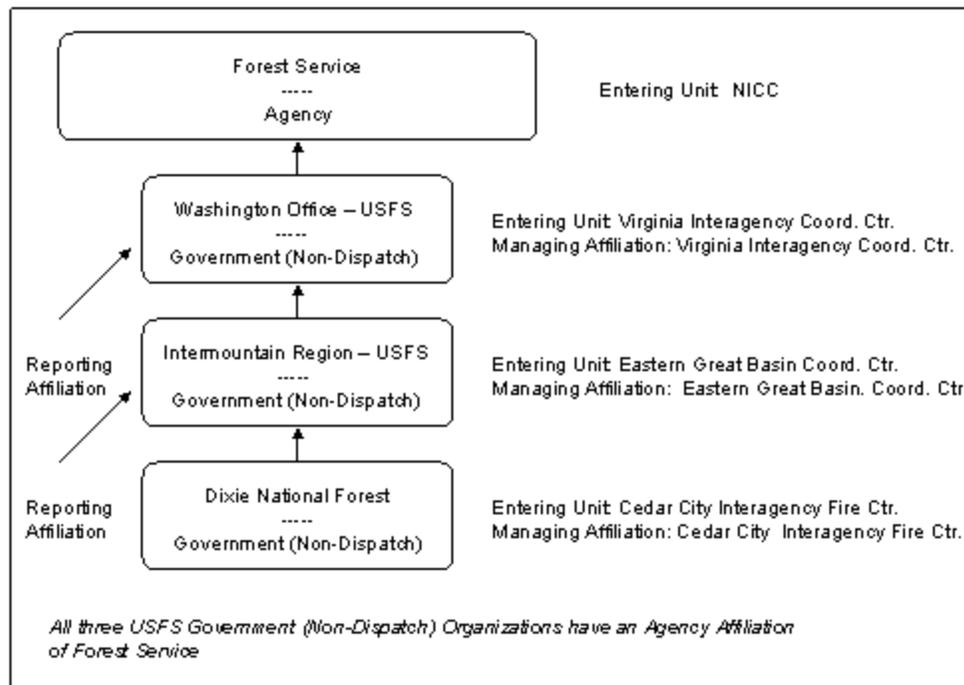
Example #3: The Dixie National Forest is a Government (Non-Dispatch) Organization that is part of the Forest Service agency, and is headquartered in Cedar City, Utah. The Forest Supervisor reports to the Regional Forester of the Intermountain Region – USFS. The Cedar City Interagency Fire Center, which provides direct dispatching services for the Dixie National Forest, enters the organization into ROSS. Thus, the Cedar City Interagency Fire Center has a **Managing Affiliation** with the organization in ROSS. Only that dispatch office can edit or delete the organization.

The Dixie National Forest has a **Reporting Affiliation** to the Intermountain Region – USFS. The Dixie National Forest is part of the Forest Service agency, so its **Agency Affiliation** is the Forest Service.

Here is a diagram showing the above organizations and relationships:

# ROSS TIPS

ROSS TIP: #4  
Date: **DRAFT** August 29, 2002  
Subject: **Entering Forest Service Organizations into ROSS**



## **“Add Non-Dispatch Government Organization” Window Entries:**

Let’s look at typical USFS entries in the “**Add Non-Dispatch Government Organization**” pop-up window.

**Name\*:** Enter the organization’s name as described in the above “USFS Organization Data Entry Standards” section (e.g. Dixie National Forest).

**Type:** For the organization type, select “Government (Non-Dispatch)” from the drop-down menu for entering ALL USFS organizations (the USFS Agency has already been created in ROSS).

**Resource Provider:** you will normally check this box UNLESS you are entering a USFS district (or a national forest which is part of a forest group as outlined in “USFS Organization Data Entry Standards” above). The Washington Office, regional offices, local units (e.g. national forests, national grasslands, etc.) and national forest groups would typically provide resources. Note: if a unit has been assigned a valid unit ID and has the

# ROSS TIPS

ROSS TIP: #4  
Date: **DRAFT** August 29, 2002  
Subject: **Entering Forest Service Organizations into ROSS**

POTENTIAL to host an incident (including hurricane, flood, event, etc.) then it should be entered in ROSS even if it does not currently have any qualified resources.

**Unit ID\*:** IF you checked “Resource Provider,” this entry is mandatory (e.g. UT-DIF). Unit IDs are assigned to administrative units that can host an incident and/or which administratively control USFS resources. Each Geographic Area Coordinating Group approves Unit Identifiers for organizations in its area, so please use the approved Unit ID here. If a national forest group provides resources, but does NOT have a Unit ID, dispatchers should request that their Geographic Area Coordinating Group designate one (e.g. NC-NCF=National Forests in North Carolina).

DISTRICTS ARE NOT ASSIGNED A UNIT ID. If a district is entered in ROSS, ROSS will recognize it as part of its “parent” administrative unit (e.g. a national forest, national grassland, etc.) for reporting purposes. The national forest or national forest group owns and provides the resources and hosts incidents, not the district.

**Add to my list of Incident Hosts:** you will normally check this box UNLESS you are entering a district (or a national forest which is part of a forest group as outlined in “USFS Organization Data Entry Standards” above).

## **Creating Forest Service Organization Records in ROSS**

To create a **Regional Office**, **Area Office** or **National Forest** organization, complete the following steps:

1. Open the **Organization** screen from the **Admin** drop-down menu.
2. Click the **Government (Non-Dispatch)** radio button.
3. Click the **New** icon (click the **Refresh** button if necessary).
4. BEFORE ENTERING A NEW ORGANIZATION, use the **Search Non-Dispatch Government Organizations** function to ensure that it hasn’t been created in ROSS previously. Keep in mind that USFS Regional Offices have already been entered. Please see ROSS Tip #3 **Entering Organizations in ROSS** for instructions.
5. In the **Name** field, enter the name of the organization (e.g. **Eastern Region – USFS, Gallatin National Forest**).
6. In the **Type** field, select “Government (Non-Dispatch).”
7. Click the **Resource Provider** check box.
8. In the two **Unit ID** fields, enter the official Unit Identifier for this organization (state and unit).
9. Click the **Add to my list of incident hosts** check box.
10. Click **OK** button. The organization has been created in ROSS.
11. To establish affiliations, for the new organization, click the **Pick Affiliations** button. The new organization will appear in the **Selected Organization** field. Your dispatch organization will appear in

# ROSS TIPS

ROSS TIP: #4  
Date: **DRAFT** August 29, 2002  
Subject: **Entering Forest Service Organizations into ROSS**

the **Current Managing Affiliation** field (since your dispatch organization just created the new organization).

- Using the “Set Filter for Parent Organization” area of the “Pick Affiliations” window, filter and select the appropriate organization for the **Current Reporting Affiliation** of the new organization and click the **Select Organization** (“+”) button. Once you’ve selected a Reporting Affiliation for an organization, the **Current Agency Affiliation** field should be filled in automatically, provided the parent organization was correctly affiliated with the agency. If not, filter and select **Forest Service**. If the parent organization has not been entered in ROSS you should not create it. This should be done by the office that provides dispatch services to the parent. Contact the ROSS Helpdesk (866-224-7677) for assistance.

For example: for **Superior National Forest**, enter “east\*” in the **Name** filter field (or “WI” and “R09” in the **Unit ID** filter fields) and select **Eastern Region – USFS** as the **Reporting Affiliation** for the Superior National Forest. Since **Eastern Region – USFS**, which has an **Agency Affiliation** of **Forest Service**, has been selected as the **Reporting Affiliation**, the **Current Agency Affiliation** field for **Superior National Forest** will also show **Forest Service**.

- Click **Close** button to complete the affiliation entry.
- Finally, highlight each of the first five tabs (**Address, Contacts, Frequencies, Financial Code** and **Locations**) and click the **New** button to enter appropriate information on the new organization. The last tab, **Subordinate Organizations** is not edited here. The information on any Subordinate Organization would be displayed automatically if another Government (Non-Dispatch) Organization selected your new organization as its “Current Reporting Affiliation” on the “Pick Affiliation” window.

To create a **Forest Service Ranger District** (or a National Forest which is part of a Southern Region National Forest Group as described in “USFS Organization Data Entry Standards” above) complete the following steps:

- Open the **Organization** screen from the **Admin** drop-down menu.
- Click the **Government (Non-Dispatch)** radio button.
- Click the **New** icon (click the **Refresh** button if necessary).
- BEFORE ENTERING A NEW ORGANIZATION, use the **Search Non-Dispatch Government Organizations** function to ensure that it hasn’t been created in ROSS previously. Please see ROSS Tip #3 **Entering Organizations in ROSS** for instructions.
- In the **Name** field, enter the name of the organization (e.g. **Gunflint Ranger District**, or **Talladega National Forest**).
- In the **Type** field, select “Government (Non-Dispatch).”
- DO NOT click the **Resource Provider** check box.
- DO NOT enter anything in the **Unit ID** fields.

# ROSS TIPS

ROSS TIP: #4  
Date: **DRAFT** August 29, 2002  
Subject: **Entering Forest Service Organizations into ROSS**

9. DO NOT click the **Add to my list of incident hosts** check box.
10. Click **OK** button. The organization has been created in ROSS.
11. To establish affiliations, for the new organization, click the **Pick Affiliations** button. The new organization will appear in the **Selected Organization** field. Your dispatch organization will appear in the **Current Managing Affiliation** field (since your dispatch organization just created the new organization).
12. Using the “Set Filter for Parent Organization” area of the “Pick Affiliations” window, filter and select the appropriate organization for the **Current Reporting Affiliation** of the new organization and click the **Select Organization (“+”)** button. Once you’ve selected a Reporting Affiliation for an organization, the **Current Agency Affiliation** field will be filled in automatically.

For example: for **Gunflint Ranger District**, type “sup\*” in the **Name** filter field (or “MN” and “SUF” in the **Unit ID** filter fields) and select **Superior National Forest** as the **Reporting Affiliation** for the Gunflint Ranger District. Since **Superior National Forest**, which has an **Agency Affiliation** of **Forest Service**, has been selected as the **Reporting Affiliation**, the **Current Agency Affiliation** field for **Gunflint Ranger District** will also show **Forest Service**.

13. Click **Close** button to complete the affiliation entry.
14. Finally, highlight the **Address** tab and click the **New** button to enter appropriate information on the new organization. Do the same with the **Contacts** and **Location** tabs. Frequencies and financial codes are related to incident hosts and should not be entered for districts. All frequencies and financial codes should be entered for the parent national forest. As explained above, the last tab, **Subordinate Organizations** is not edited here, and most USFS districts would not have subordinate organizations.