



ROCKY MOUNTAIN COORDINATING GROUP

Bureau of Indian Affairs (Southwest, Rocky Mountain and Great Plains Regions)
Bureau of Land Management (Colorado and Wyoming)
Fish and Wildlife Service (Mountain/Prairie Region)
Forest Service (Rocky Mountain Region)
National Park Service (Intermountain and Midwest Regions)
State Agencies in Colorado, Wyoming, South Dakota, Nebraska and Kansas

Rocky Mountain Coordinating Group Fall Meeting
October 17th thru October 18th, 2006
Cody, Wyoming

Those in attendance: Ross Hauck, Jim Fletcher, L. Dean Clark, Bill Ott, Chuck Russell, Ray Weidenhaft, Tom Corbin, Bill Wallis, Joyce Feeley, Darrell Ausborn, Dave Carter, Cal Pino, Joe Lowe, Claire Brown, and Beth Hermanson.

Guest: Sheldon Wimmer

Darrell called the meeting to order. He asked for any items that needed to be added to the agenda.

Discussion was held on the Vice-Chair position:

It was decided that since Bill Wallis was retiring at the 1st of the year and his replacement would not be ready to take the vice-chair position at that time that Dave Carter, US Fish and Wildlife would take the vice-chair position for 2007. A motion was made by Ray W. to bump Colorado BLM to US Fish and Wildlife for the vice-chair position. All agreed – motion carried. Dave Carter will be the 2007 Vice-Chair.

Discussion on 2007 meeting schedule:

The calendar was gone through with Joyce reading the schedule of events for 2007. Each month was gone through and discussed. It was decided that Ross Hauck, Kansas would host the winter meeting in January in Kansas. Exactly where will be announced in November. At the January meeting all committee chairmen will be asked to give a report to the RMCG committee. Bill Wallis and Dave Carter will work on location of the spring meeting. They will try to have location locked in by the end of November. Committee's will not meet during the spring meeting. The spring meeting will focus on the teams. The meeting should not need to be any longer than 1 ½ to 2 days long. We need to allow the IC's input on the spring meeting agenda. They may have something they would like to have brought up. Idea's from the IC's for the spring agenda needs to be to Dave Carter by December 20th. It was also decided that all committee chairs should be invited to RMCG meetings, especially the Operations Committee and the Incident Business Management Chair. May's MAC Exercise will be arranged by Jim Fletcher. This is also when the Executive Board will meet. Everyone felt it was important to have the exercise with the Agency Administrators. Discussion was held on how the exercise will be handle this year. Jim will follow through on scheduling it.

Academies:

It was decided that as many as possible RMCG Committee members should try to go to the wildfire academy that is held in Sterling, CO. in January. Dave Carter said they appreciate RMCG showing up. It was also decided that the committee members should try to show up at all the academies or colleges within the region. When the Business Manager is hired, this person will be requested to make up a calendar of these academies or colleges so RMCG members can try to have at least one committee member show a present at these events.

Finalize rotation on Chair and Vice-chair:

After much discussion a motion was made by Dave Carter to include Kansas in the rotation of the Vice-Chair and Chairmen positions. 2nd by Dean Clark, carried by all members. Kansas will then follow US Fish and Wildlife.



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Evaluations on Teams:

Bill Ott gave background as to why evaluations were created. All agreed that the evaluations of the teams were successful and want to carry on with the process. There was discussion as to whether the operations committee should be part of the evaluation team? It was decided that one member from RMCG Committee and one member from the Ops Committee should be doing the evaluations. It was also recommended that Bill Ott look at recommended changes some of the teams have made. Bill will work on the evaluation forms with the ops committee involvement and have a draft copy for the December conference call. With final approval of evaluation form being made at the January meeting.

Pueblo Dispatch:

Ross Hauck wanted to discuss with the committee his meeting with Pueblo Dispatch. They feel that their work load is too heavy with the wide area of response they cover. It was decided that Ross, Jim, Dave, and Alan will meet and try to sort out the issues.

Wyoming Dispatch Review:

Bill Ott covered the Wyoming Dispatch review with the committee. He stated that the final report would be out in the next couple of weeks. He just wanted to give the committee a heads up as to what was coming out in the report.

Don Artley's report:

Darrell read parts of a letter from Don Artley. He has enjoyed working closely with the Rocky Mountain Coordination Group and wanted all the members to know this. Don will be retiring at the first of the year.

IC's reports to RMCG Committee:

Team A: Marc Mullenix, IC

Team responded to six incidents with 56 total days spent on incidents. No injuries and the team throughout the year and no real lost of time. Team was evaluated on all six incidents by RMCG. Had an incident with two members of the team needing to take refuge from a fire in a house (no injuries reported), and one cost containment issue on the Predie Fire. Don was asked if he like the evaluations by RMCG and he reported that the team did appreciate them. Issues for the team this year; team members should be hosted by RMAC instead of individual dispatch centers, ordering resources became an issue, logistical support for teams by RMCG, teams need support, shirts, computers, printers, and so on. RMCG needs to figure out a way to make their teams successful.

Joe Lowe's Type II Team: Joe Lowe, IC

Team responded to 5 incidents this year. Joe handed out evaluation letters for each incident the team was on. He discussed team assignments, what went well, challenges on each assignment. Zone team concept worked well for team members and the zone. Joe feels that the fact that the team can support itself logically is a real plus for the team. Five people were signed off as trainees on the team. One issue the team had was getting resources, the team changed their planning cycle by compressing it to accommodate dispatch in hopes of getting resource orders process before dispatch shut down for the night. Another issue was not having people available even though they committed to being on a team, if people are committing to a team they need to be available to that team.



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Fire Use Team: Bill Hahnenberg, IC

The Fire Use Team went on 3 assignments, with a total of 53 days. Bill presented a power point on each assignment, giving details of each assignment. The team worked on task- books for six people, with three more people having taskbooks signed off. Team put together a field operations guide which worked well. Bill would like to change the configuration for initial call out of the Fire Use Team. He would like to add some positions. Darrell will take this request to the NMAC meeting. Challenges for 2007 include; how the team is mobilized, the pre-order, availability and roster management, funding for needs logistical needs.

Team B; Pete Blume, IC

The team had six assignments for a total of 63 days. Team had a good evaluation by RMCG. Team shared some ideas with Bill Wallis on what should be listed or looked at when evaluating the teams. Team carried 18 trainees with 14 of those trainees getting their taskbooks signed off, 3 still working on their taskbooks, and 1 needs reviewed on weather should continue as a training or signed off. Team feels RMCG made a good investment by allowing teams to carry trainees. Challenges for the team included; being able to fill overhead position for aviation on the team, availability of people to fill positions on the team during the busiest part of the season. The team is anticipating vacancies in the following positions; Air Branch Director, Division Supervisors, and Safety Officer.

Type I Team; Kim Martin, IC

Team wanted to thank RMCG for all the support they have shown this last fire season. Once the decision was made on team members it was decided that the team would have a team building exercise, in the middle of the exercise the team was asked to take an assignment. With RMCG's buy in the team did take the assignment. During the assignment the team did face some issues but overall the team did very well. Each assignment had challenges; the one being the most prevalent was the lack of resources. Team did well sharing resources with other teams that were out on assignment. Sharing resources came to be a necessity due to the lack of resources that were out there. Kim gave the Operations Committee and the Chair of RMCG the suggestions for the team configuration for next year. He would like to see some changes in positions on the short and long team. Challenges the team faced included; lack of resources and logistical support (shirts, name tags, computer equipment).

Issues needing addressed by RMCG for the teams:

Logistical support (Team shirts, trailers, computer equipment and programs, etc.)
Name requests – getting name requests thru dispatch centers when teams request them
Aviation overhead shortages
Team configurations – take a look at the team configurations
Give criteria for holding a team within the region during busiest part of fire season

Operations Committee Report:

All teams are asked to make a list of positions they will either need to fill or want to add to their rosters for next year. This list needs to be given to Dave Clement as soon as possible. The Operations Committee had lots of discussion in the meeting on vacancies on teams, they went through the applications for the S420 course coming up. They have chosen enough candidates to put 3 teams through the 420 course. The only place they are short is in finance. Will need to come up with individuals to fill the finance role. The concern is that at some point in time Rocky Mountain may not be able to field a Type I team due to lack of qualified people. The suggestion came up that we may want to consider



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working closer with Great Basin in fielding a Type 1 Team. By combining our resources together we should be able to come up with enough qualified individuals.

RMCG will start considering this suggestion. Sheldon will take this idea back to Great Basins Operations Committee.

It was suggested that this issue be brought before the Executive Board, all agreed that was a good idea. Darrell will take this issue to them. Nominations for the 2007 fire season for potential team members will be opened up starting as soon as possible. Trainee slots will also be included in the nomination process. S520 candidates were discussed and three out of the four nominations was accepted. 2008 candidates were also discussed. The five individuals who have filled out applications all come from Marc Mullenix's team. 2008 candidates who wish to be considered need to send their applications into Kim Bang as soon as possible. RMCG feels that are major shortage of team members will be in finance. They are asking all members to go back to their offices and see if they can find candidates interested in going into the finance field on these teams. Plans is also becoming a problem, there is no depth within the region in either finance or plans.

Procurement of IT items for the teams:

RMCG has asked if there is a way for the states (South Dakota or Wyoming) to buy computer equipment (computers, printers, software, power point projects, etc.) for the teams to use while on assignment. The money would be provided by the federal agencies; the state would buy the equipment and monitor its use. Joe and Ray will check into this. John Glenn is also going to check into leasing the equipment, loaning it to the teams, then charging the leasing fee to however many fires the teams respond to. This would require setting up a special account with the BLM. Teams are asked to put together a list of items they feel they need. Individuals are asked to have this information available by the December conference call.

NMAC:

Tom Corbin asked if the Rocky Mountain area was asked to give a daily status of their Type II Teams to NMAC, and if sent on an assignment if Rocky Mountain Duty Officer had to contact NMAC before assigning the team. Rocky Mountain did not do this and neither were they request from NMAC to do this. Tom stated that Great Basin area was and that they chose to ignore this request. Tom just wanted to see how Rocky Mountain had handled this issue with them.

Bill Wallis brought up an issue with Predictive Services and NMAC. There appears to be an operating plan floating around that no one has seen. This operating plan calls for direct supervision to come from NMAC for the predictive services in the Rocky Mountain Region. This is not the way RMCG has setup the predictive services operation at the regional office. Darrell asked Bill to check into this and let him know what is going on and then Darrell will take it to NMAC. Bill agreed to do this.

Additional Short Team

The Operations Committee will send out a cover letter with the nomination letter asking if there are individuals that would like to be on a short team. This short team would then be used to help fill the gap for another Fire Use Team. After seeing what the interest is then RMCG will address whether to fill another Short Team or to allow Pete Blume's, Team B to respond to an order for a Fire Use Team, if our original Fire Use Team is on assignment.



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Joe Lowe's Type II Team:

A motion was brought before the board by Bill Ott: The Rocky Mountain Coordinating Group sanctions the Great Plains Zone Team on a continuing basis. The recruitment of this team will follow the current nomination process with provisions for team preference. The administrative procedures for the zone team will be reflected in the mob guide. The motion was 2nd by Dean Clark and Bill Wallis.

Motion was carried by all.

The fall meeting was adjourned.