

**Southern Area Fire Environment Working Team Charter**  
**Southern Area Coordinating Group**  
**Revised September 13, 2011**

I. Background

In 2001, several federal and state groups in the Southern Area expressed interest in a regional group to provide more focus in the use and consistency of fire danger rating in the Southern Area. At the 2002 Southern Area Center Manager's meeting a group met to discuss the possibility of a formal working team within the region. It was decided to move forward with the process of creating a formal regional working team. Later that same year a request was made by the Southern Area Coordinating Group to make fire weather part of the team. Near the end of 2002 the Southern Area Coordinating Group formally established the Southern Area Fire Weather and Fire Danger Working Team. At the December 2004 meeting of the SACG, it was decided to follow the NWCG model of incorporating the functions of predictive services, fire behavior, and smoke management. The commonality of these functions is focused on measuring and predicting the wildland fire environment. The fire environment elements to be included in the new Working Team are predictive services, fire behavior, NFDRS, fire weather and smoke management.

II. Name

The Southern Area Fire Environment Working Team; hereinafter referred to as the Team.

III. Authority

This Team is established pursuant to the charter authority granted to the Parent Group, the Southern Area Coordinating Group (SACG) through the respective regional Fire Management Officer's for the Department of Agriculture and the Interior, plus the Southern Group of State Foresters to accomplish SACG mission, vision, beliefs, and goals. The Team has the authority to develop and execute an annual program of work as approved by SACG. The Team, through its Chair, has broad authority to make contacts, assign work within the Team, make commitments on behalf of the Team and commit such resources that are available within the Team. The Chair may request further resources and authority as needed.

IV. Mission Statement

Promote safe and efficient use of fire management resources by advancing the science and application of the fire environment elements to local, state, federal, tribal and private customers within the Southern Area.

## V. Goals

The Team is committed to advancing the science and application of fire weather and danger rating.

The objectives of the Team are:

1. To provide leadership in wildland fire environmental criteria while following wildland fire policies & recommending and maintaining consistent regional policies, standards, and procedures.
2. To facilitate coordination efforts between fire weather, fire behavior, fire danger rating, predictive services, and smoke/air quality groups;
3. Provide leadership and promote communication within the interagency community using standard NWCG National Fire Danger Rating System in addressing issues such as system application, quality & standards of inputs & outputs, information flow & access, operational continuity, training, problem identification, technological advancements, and provide a forum for input into research priorities;
4. To ensure the capability and capacity to measure, predict and monitor wildland fire environmental conditions and provide customer products, if possible, beyond the scope of normal operations. These products will be coordinated within the SAFEWT.
5. Utilize standard NWCG Fire Danger Rating System information, practices, and analysis to support management decisions with emphasis on protection of life and property.
6. Provide oversight and input to Interagency Fire Danger Operating Plans and Pocket Card development.

## IV. Membership

Voting Members one person for each of the follow agencies:

- USDA Forest Service
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- National Park Service
- Southern Group of State Foresters
- Southern Area Coordination Center - Center Manager
- Southern Area Coordination Center – Predictive Services (1-Intel & 1-Met)
- Bureau of Indian Affairs

Non-Voting Members (advisors capacity)

- National Weather Service - Regional Fire Coordinators (Southern, Central, and Eastern)

- Southern Research Station
- Other resources as needed

Replacement members are nominated by the Chair voted on by the SAFEWT membership and submitted to SACG for final approval.

#### VI. Organization

The Team is under the direction of SACG. A member of SACG is assigned liaison responsibility for the Team. It is through this person that the Team relates to the Parent Group. The Team Chair as well as the members are appointments approved by the SACG Chair. The Team Chair shall serve for a two year period. At the expiration of the Chair's term, the retiring Chair may reassume member status, the present Vice-chair/secretary will assume the chair position and a new Vice-chair will be recommended. Following each changing term, the succession of Team leadership and the re-adjustment of the Team membership will be forwarded to SACG Chair for approval. The nominees for Vice-chair position shall be recommended from an approved SACG list.

#### VII. Cooperation and Coordination

Working team/task forces activities, products, projects, or recommendations that may affect another working team/task group shall be coordinated with the team affected. The concurrence of that team will be evident and documented prior to presentation to the Parent Group for approval or implementation.

It is one of the Team's objectives to reflect a spirit of cooperation and coordination with other teams especially on projects where cooperative input is required.

#### VIII. Meetings

Regular Team meetings should be held approximately every six months at a time and place determined by the voting members at the preceding meeting (virtual meetings are acceptable). This information will be forwarded to the Team's SACG liaison. It is expected that meetings will be held to the minimum necessary to accomplish the defined purposes of the Team and Group.

No scheduled meeting shall occur unless six of the eight voting members or their designated representatives (DR) are present. The DR will be "authorized" in writing to attend the meeting and vote for the absentee member who made the temporary appointment. This written authorization will be forwarded to the team chair.

Agenda and briefing papers will be distributed to all Team members two weeks prior to scheduled meeting. Minutes of the meetings and the executive summaries will be forwarded to the Team's Liaison and the SACG secretary. Executive summaries will be forwarded to the other Working Team/Task group chairs. These items as well as other pertinent information concerning Team activities will be posted on the Team's website.

Special meetings may be convened to address issues assigned the Team; meeting assignments shall be completed before the next scheduled meeting.

## IX. Responsibility

### Chair:

- Represents the Team in presenting recommendations to SACG.
- Serves as Team spokesperson when it is deemed appropriate especially with outside individuals or groups.
- Convenes meetings at such times and places as deemed necessary by the Team or Parent Group.
- Presides over the meetings.
- Recommends the need for further resources and authority when it becomes evident.
- Assigns work to task groups.
- Selects ad hoc subject matter experts to assist in issue resolution.
- Prepares and signs correspondence approved by the majority of the voting members.
- Works closely with the Team's SACG liaison.

### Vice-Chair/Secretary:

- Is responsible for the tracking of all on-going projects and the development and implementation of Team procedures
- Provides follow-up on assigned projects to ensure timely completion
- Documents all meeting agreements in the form of minutes
- Maintains the permanent file of Team activities.
- Sends meeting announcements, agenda items, etc., to membership.
- Distributes executive summary to Team, SACG, and other working teams chairs/task groups.

### Members and technical advisors:

- Solicit issues or agenda items from the constituents they represent for inclusion in the Team meeting agendas.

- Attend all regularly scheduled meetings.
- Provide the secretary, three weeks prior to the next scheduled meeting, any briefing papers concerning issues to be included on the upcoming meeting's agenda.
- Report team activities and developments to constituents.

Subject Matter Experts:

- Assemble data or other information requested by the chair into written documents (if warranted) for presentation and peer review by the Team.

X. Reports and Minutes

Annual reports may be either in writing or verbal and are made to the Team as a whole. It is not anticipated or desired that formal reports (for outside dissemination) be developed or submitted. The products of the Team should speak for its effectiveness; however, briefings to the SACG are appropriate as requested.

XI. Charter Amendments

Proposed changes to this Charter will be discussed and affirmed by  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the voting members and then submitted to SACG for approval. All modifications to this Charter will be filed as supplements to the original Charter.

XII. Charter Approval

This Southern Area Fire Environment Working Team Charter is effective on the date of signature by the SACG Chair. Charter revisions are made on the recommendation by the Team and with the concurrence of the SACG chair as described under charter amendments above.

  
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SACG Chair

9/13/11  
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Date