

Northern Rockies Dispatcher Workshop – Full Notes

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Northern Rockies Dispatcher Workshop

Best Western – Grant Creek, Missoula, Montana

March 5-7, 2013

All referenced handouts are posted at the Dispatch Steering Committee Website:

<http://gacc.nifc.gov/nrcc/dispatch/nrdsc/nrdsc.htm>

Tuesday, March 5, 2013

0830 – 0845 Welcome, Introduction – Kathy Pipkin

Welcome. This meeting is for you. If you have something you need answered, ask. Ask what you are concerned about so this can be about you. Thank you everyone for coming.

Attending:

Pam Jolly, Karla Luttrell, Tammy Stevens, Meri Gobert, Kerry Cassidy, Linda Naill, Jack Currie, Travis Collier, Ann Speer, Mark Conway, Steve LeFever, Susan Hillstrom, Bert Starr, Gary Weber, Maria Helterline, Mark Heppler, Julia Figgins, Kim Thomas, Julie Polutnik, Gaylen Yeates, Chris Accetturo, Sally Estes, Beth Palanuik, Judy Heintz, Kathy Pipkin, Kelly Forthofer, Kelly McKee, Ryan Hickey, Mark DeCaria, Amanda Hamman, Dave Johnson, Tim Bradley, Ned Winebrenner, Doug Caffee, Marie Smith, Randy Thomas, Ian Leigh, Dennis Sheridan, Karen Stewart, Roy Robinson, Tory Kendrick, Cobey Williamson, Alyssa Stewart, Carol Bienhold, Bobbie Bennett, Jim Clairmont, Byard Lame Bull, Kristine Salmonson, Jay McAllister

Attending by Phone: Amy Lancaster, Laura Rasmussen, Angie Pollock, Gail Thurston (retired AD), Shannon Bonney, Andy Randall, Tony Lubke, Patty Williams and David Mosher, Cristy Heaney, Kara Stringer

0845 - 0900 Dispatch Center Synopsis Overview – Alyssa Stewart

Everyone should have a Dispatch Center Synopsis. Read through it. It is valuable to know who's who and what movement there has been. It also asks for numbers of trainees if you have a need, or have room for them when your organization expands. If you have comments on how to improve the Dispatch Center Synopsis, please get them to Alyssa Stewart, astewart@mt.gov.

0900 – 0930 Predictive Services – Bryan Henry

Preliminary outlook heading into spring; we go back and conduct a post-season review to see how our previous season outlooks fared. Our 10-year averages are right around 560,000 acres, yearly averages are about 200,000. Heading into spring last year we knew there was potential. We were asking ourselves about the developing long-term drought, the standing tall dead grass, the impacts from the dry fall, but we had good snowpack. We expected to stay in neutral conditions, though El Niño came in late summer. All in all the outlook was okay. NR burned about 1,497,972 acres, the largest fire season since 1910. That brings us to the present. Factors that influence fire season severity; last fall we had about 10-20% of normal precipitation. Snowpack is rebounding at 85-100% of normal, but what is most important is how fast we lose the snowpack. The next factor is spring, which is expected to be neutral with neither El Niño nor El Niña expected. The most important factor is what is happening in July with temperatures, precipitation, and the convective factor.

- Fire sizes in relation to snow melt-off date - The earlier the melt-off date the larger the fires tend to be. The earlier the melt-off date, the more large fires develop.
- Effects of climate change on numbers of large fires - Once summer temperatures get 3/10s of a degree above normal then chances of large fire activity increases significantly.
- Surface temps across U.S. from 1980 to present - Surface temperatures have warmed by .5 degrees.
- Current drought monitor from last Thursday - Showing some improvement but still back. Shows a new area of severe drought developing over southwest Montana. Something we need to monitor. Other parts are central NM and eastern AZ which they think may be active early season. U.S. seasonal drought outlooks are showing forecast for improvement in southern Montana. Need to keep a close eye on it.

- Soil moistures - South central Montana showing good soil moisture deficits. Could be considered a strike against southeast and south central Montana. The latest one shows a little dry spot in southwest Montana as well.
- The image from the National Weather Service showing percentage of normal precipitation for the last 60 days - South central Montana has had significant precipitation. We are watching southwest Montana and northeast Idaho. Things continue to dry out in northwest Montana between Missoula and Libby. Plus areas in the Cabinets. Not an area of concern but keeping an eye on it. For early season, expecting an active fire year in the desert southwest. Over the past 30 days, temperatures have been above normal. Here we have had about 2 years without going below zero.
- Mountain snowpack is below to near normal. Areas of most concern are Colorado and southeast Wyoming, and these areas have shown improvement over the past 2 weeks. They are about 50% of normal. Also, mountains of eastern Nevada, though it is a favorable period of time for them to add to snowpack.
- El Niño/El Niña predictions – Looks to stay neutral but these models change. Tried to find a comparative year to look at but there aren't any as we've been in a unique pattern for the last 18 months. Been flat lined. In uncharted territory again, though less uncertainty this time around. Outlooks for March have been fairly warm; heading into cool pattern then could be snowy for last part of March. Should have a normal finish to our snowpack. We are not in bad shape considering where we started. One unknown in all this is what we will have from a convective standpoint. If we don't have lightning then our fire seasons typically aren't severe. Predict ENSO neutral thru first half of summer.
- Comparing last year to this year. Central Montana and North Dakota got some snow but not a lot. Showing a little improvement in the drought across Montana and a little in North Dakota. Springtime pattern more progressive and wet than last year so may have a normal start date this year. Expecting pre green-up grassfire activity across south central and southeast Montana though don't think as significant as last year. Expect a normal to above normal fire season across southern and eastern Montana. Will update again in early April as more info becomes available.

0930 – 0945 Northern Rockies Mobilization Guide Update – Pam Jolly

Also want to cover a few other things than what the agenda shows.

- Mob Guide - All comments & updates (except Chapter 50) are due by April 1:
 - Equipment/supply updates to Kelly (kforthofer@fs.fed.us)
 - Updates on crews to Roy (rorobinson@mt.gov)
 - Aircraft updates to Kim (kthomas@fs.fed.us)
 - Intel updates to Julie (jpolutnik@fs.fed.us)
 - Everything else to Pam (pjolly@fs.fed.us)
 - Chapter 50 updates due to Roy Robinson (rorobinson@mt.gov) by April 15th

There is a major push for a standardized product in government and we won't be going back to chapter and number.

- Wildland fire modules this year will have some changes. Requests were submitted to NWCG to change the modules and typing associated with such. The letter has been signed off on and guidance in writing is coming shortly. The national guide and Redbook will include type 1 and 2 modules and specifics of qualifications for each of those are coming as well, from the national level. A major change. There is a proposal to order the modules as crews from now on instead of overhead. If this happens, important for us to be aware and make sure we make a distinction to educate our FMO's and others about what constitutes a wildland module crew and a regular crew. This could be in effect for this fire season.
 - **Update 3/19** – Per Pam, the NWCG has not signed off on these changes yet. She will keep us informed on when and if these changes go into effect.
- Sent out a spreadsheet a few months ago for data conversion for new ROSS, with point of contact and the individual responsible for entering the data, for when the new version comes out. They also need the info for the 4th tier centers as well so will send it out again for you to add the 4th tier and who will be responsible for entering the data.

0945 – 0950 DNRC Update – Roy Robinson

- State helicopter stuff. Appendix S – everyone did a great job getting them filled out and sent to Northern Rockies every time they used the state ship on federal fires. Appendix Q tells you how to order the state helos and the steps you need. If ordering a state heli, you can go directly to Helena for that and do not need to pass the order thru Northern Rockies. There is direct order affiliation in ROSS to do that. Alyssa – A point of clarification, you have to use the direct order, so if it is a type 2 heli ordered on a state incident you will not be able to place it to HDC the

normal way, you have to use the direct order. Roy - We can practice it during ROSS practice. You can launch the state heli without a resource order in hand. We don't want to hold up the dispatching for a ROSS order.

- Sheet of many colors. Ray used to hand those out. I'm not going to do that. I sent the new one off to all of the managers and assistant managers yesterday. Not many changes that will affect dispatchers this year. Also there is a link to the sheet of many colors, <http://dnrc.mt.gov/Forestry/Fire/Business/Documents/2013FireNumbers.pdf>

0950 - 1015 NRCC Updates – Kathy Pipkin and NRCC

Kathy

- The selection for excellence in dispatch award, at the national level, went to Dave Quinn from the NW. Our selection for excellence in dispatch is awarded to Gary Weber. Gary was selected from a strong list of candidates. In his write up he is being honored for the leadership he brought to his center. With his background in operations and aviation, he truly enhanced operations at his center. Congratulations and thank you for your service!
- Evolving Incident Management stuff - emails are going around. Sat in on the national multiple coordinating group meeting. They are going ahead with it. Northern Rockies is taking a good look at what it all means and where it is going. They are looking at 2016 to implement. Will take all of the national teams (even getting T2 teams to the T1 level) and have them dispatched out at the national level. The path with that, trying to get T2 qualed up to T1, offers challenges. We have folks that don't want to be T1; we have teams that are truly state teams. There are many unknowns. Like me, keep abreast to what is posted on the website and I will share with you also. As our Northern Rockies Board talks about it, I'll share what comes out of it.
 - Bob Gilman – Don't get over anxious. It's a look at things. We have concern about it in Northern Rockies, just what it would mean. They are broke up in committees looking at stuff nationally and trying to get people engaged on their committees. It doesn't do a lot for recruitment, it makes assumptions that these teams will be available, the state is concerned about what it would mean for protection, it may affect staffing especially for state folks. Stay tuned.
- Kathy – Go on the NRCG website and look at the committees there. If you have an interest and they are still accepting noms you can put in to be on a committee. http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/fire/nrcg/committees_index.htm
- There are a few changes at the Coordination Center level in staffing. Barb Whiteman will go over to the aircraft desk and help Kim out. Kelly will become the equipment dispatcher for this year. Bryan will still be our meteorologist. Julie will be our intel and Rosie will be her backup from the Training Center. Roy will take over the crew desk. Pam will still be doing overhead. Each coordinator will do an update for their section. The status of Ray's position - it closed yesterday. They have a panel to review applications and start the process. John was hoping to have selection made this month.

Julie Polutnik

- 209s are due daily, by 1900 MDT or close of business, May-October. Nothing new.
- The Center Managers meeting last fall talked about reporting county fires and acres. It was discussed at NRCG fall meeting. A task group was formed to look at it. Members are Julie, a DNRC rep, an IDL rep, a North Dakota rep, and someone from the fire chiefs. Bruce Suenram also. There are county identifiers now for Montana and Idaho, though nothing in for ND. With the new sit-209 coming down in a year, we need to be proactive and decide. Trying to get a bigger picture of the fires/acres on the landscape and who owns it and protects it. Private land is protected by state or federal agency, so on the ownership side private land should be listed there instead of on the protection side. The east side has been beta testing. Julie is proposing to get the unit identifiers in the sit report. Will revisit the way Idaho is listed, as it is not license plates anymore. Judy Heintz – There are changes for data in unit identifiers. We have some clean up to do. Email any unit identifier changes to Judy (jheintz@fs.fed.us). It will be a little change in practices for some centers.
- The new program is still not ready. It times out, it is not saving appropriately, the blocks are not functioning like they should, ownership/protection reports are not matching up. The national intel coordinator has said we don't want the program yet. The plan is to put it in production the last part of December. The new 209 will be the new NIMS 209. Has many of the same screens though blocks might be different. Will have requirement verification screens to verify your data entry. Will try to get a PowerPoint out in the fall. It will have Cognos for its reporting tool.

- ROSS reports management – I’m your GACC business lead for ROSS reports. If you have issues or want to see a new report in the system submit a change request and cc Julie. A report index was created for all reports in the system right now. There is a link on the ROSS webpage. http://ross.nwcg.gov/RRMB/ROSS_Reports_Index.pdf
- Identified training opportunities for ROSS reports. Looking to offer training the first week of June. Class size limited to about 20 folks and we’ll talk about data relationships and queries. The basic is about 4 hours. Analytical reports is using query studio and can run 2.5 days. There is also analytical reports historical training that is 1.5 day. Looking at two different options for the week. Firstly, one person from each center, some folks from Northern Rockies so I have a backup, and maybe some priority training candidates from other areas. Basic to be held Monday, June 3rd beginning at 1230. Tuesday, 1200 thru Thursday 1200 will be analytical, and then Thursday afternoon go to analytical historic. If all’s good with option one and we can do all three in the same week then we’ll make it happen. The training will roll over to the new program. The reports don’t change and will still be in Cognos in 3.1. Send in your nominee and your center priorities. That will also show me if we need another class.
 - **Update 3/19** – Julie sent email with nomination form 3/13. Training set for June 3-7. Contact Julie, jpolutnik@fs.fed.us.
- New ROSS 3.0 – All standard reports, user community, will be rebuilt hopefully before it is deployed. If you have reports saved in you’re My Folder, take screen captures and figure out what you have in there because that will be wiped out.
- FTP site for hosting IAP and access to IAPs – I did post a link to the document on the Dispatch Steering Committee website. Will email it out to center managers for you to distribute (the one on the website does not contain usernames, passwords).
 - **Update 3/19** – Julie emailed out on 3/14.
- Looking at 2014 for an intel course.

Kim Thomas

- Thanks for all the help in our office. We had 16 folks rotate thru, only 3 from out of our area. If interested please contact me. I’m happy to keep folks coming thru. Barb Whiteman will be my assistant, coming in on a steep learning curve. Please exercise some patience.
- To the handouts – There is a chart showing FM frequencies as we’d like prioritized on the maps when they come out. Please get those to me. Air tanker handouts include FAQs. The “aircraft ordering ticklers list” was last updated 5/2012. It works across the board and is not specific to our GACC. There is the “releasing air tankers in ROSS correctly cheat sheet”. Another one to stick in your travel bag when on assignments and use while here. Both posted at: <http://gacc.nifc.gov/nrcc/dispatch/aviation/aviation.htm>
- Many of our aircraft dispatchers cannot be here. This year when air attacks have their refresher class in April, they have asked that you folks participate. I will put out a note to your centers. For any aircraft dispatchers that want to participate we will try to arrange for them to do so electronically as well. I’ll put out an invite to that meeting in April. Will consolidate dispatch related issues involving air attack and they will be addressed in one timeslot during those 3 days. Air attack refresher will be held at AFD at the hangar, April 23-25th. More information later.
- Has Windows 7 AFF compatibility been resolved? Linda - They are working on a new version of AFF based on Google Maps. Same username/password you have now. It is in beta form now and there are a lot more features to be added. Hoping it will be fairly intuitive and working on a training cheat sheet. Website is: www.aff.gov/development/maps.asp

Kelly Forthofer

- This year will be busy for the equipment desk at centers. Water handling is coming out with a new solicitation this year. This year there is no longer a zone boundary for award purposes. Vendors can choose their host dispatch center. Centers need to do performance evals on vendors who do not meet the needed date/time and are turning down assignments. We need to know if they are not being compliant. The correct eval form is posted at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/fire/nrcg/agree-contract/performance-eval.pdf>. They are projecting over 530 pieces of equipment for water handling. BLM is putting out the solicitation for T3 caterer, fuel tender, potable water, and weed wash, which is new this year. DNRC’s solicitations are the same as before; helicopter support trailer, rental cars, sack lunches, potties and hand wash stations.

- You can create a manifest for contracted equipment. You can use that as an option instead of putting people in the documentation of the resource order. We'll do it in ROSS practice and it might be a possible option. Similar to a roster.
- There is a rating scale on the performance eval. At times the comments didn't match the rating that was given. Do not give them a good rating if they aren't earning it.
- Hope to have NR Contracted Resource SOP out by June.
- Hoping to have a 2-day IARR workshop at the end of May, more info forthcoming from NRCC.

1045 – 1100 Break

1100 – 1115 ITEAMS – Kelly Forthofer

The ITEAMS portal link can be found on the Northern Rockies website under equipment/supplies.

http://gacc.nifc.gov/nrcc/dispatch/equipment_supplies/equipment_supplies.htm. When you click on ITEAMS it will take you to E-Authentication to login. It is a tool to help some dispatch centers out. When in the system click on the second app and the main tab to work with is the employee and vendor tab. Search by vendor name and it brings up a list of all vendors/employees that are entered in ITEAMS. The ones highlighted in green are verified. The person will be entered each time for each qualification. Clicking on them takes you to a more detailed screen. No one really uses this. Some maybe occasionally, but if employees show up without certifications you can go check. On the vendor tab, if you lost the vendor's info and can't get into Vipr, this is another option to find out vendor contact information. Go to update existing tab to see this. There are steps on the hand out showing you how to request access to the program. You can search by partial name with a splat. I don't believe we can do a search by equipment type. It is a good tool to use in case Vipr is down or you need to find employee info.

1115 – 1145 NRCG Committee Reps

Training – Fonda, no report

- Doug Caffee, course coordinator for D-311: Have 23 folks, have room for a few more. Have all cadre and coaches so unless something happens with the budget it is still a go for the 22nd.
 - **Update 3/19 – We still have space! Contact Doug (dcaffee@blm.gov) if you have students!**

Aviation – Gary Weber

- NRCG aviation committee met but didn't tell me so nothing to report.

Equipment – Ann Speer

- 2012 busy for getting contract equipment out. There were a few issues. The biggest was tracking of rental vehicles. One was missing and found in a field after the smoke disappeared. There was another with a claim cost of about \$18,000. They need to be tracked better. If you have a suggestion, contact Pam Okon (pokon@mt.gov). After inspection of equipment operators and training verified, the personnel changed on arrival at the incident and don't know why and how that happened. Maybe the manifesting will help with that. Inspectors say they are getting too old and would like to train new inspectors. If you know of any pass the names up to Kevin Erickson (kerickson@fs.fed.us). Tactical water tenders will be on a resource list this year. We are down to 3 MOUs inspecting equipment so turn around to get paperwork verified might be slower.

Prevention – Shannon Bonney

- There was an October meeting. There is a conference call March 13 so if you have issues let her know. Last summer they activated a fire prevention team and identified a higher number of human caused fires. Training: P-301 to be held in Boise April 26 and 27; S-203 to be held in California 4/29-5/3. The numbers of structures lost compared with what was on 209 wasn't correct. Talking with IC's about that number.

NAC Update – Kevin Weaver

- The NAC plan hasn't changed much from the last couple of years. Significant things - we've had a memo from NIFC, the BIA will no longer pay for drug testing so it will come out of the tribe's preparedness funds. Medical standards will be similar, with a change that arduous firefighters that haven't had an exam in 3 years must have an

exam. Another change we are waiting on is who's responsibility it is to manage AD hiring. Tribes have been hiring ADs and want more clarification whether this is an allowable practice. It may cut down on the number of crews we'll be able to send out. Waiting on NIFC. Hope to know next week. A question was asked if there was any possibility to supply T2 crews with more vehicles. The answer was it will have to come down to agency superintendents whether the tribe will want to take it on or not.

Business – Tony Lubke

- Tracey and Pam are on the agenda for tomorrow and will give a better update. A couple of things from last week's conference call. Regarding the buying team, they want to get ideas on ways to better in-brief when they first get to the incident to give them a better chance to be successful. Will send something out on questions they can ask when they come in to get an idea on what is expected of them. If you have any ideas on ways to make them more successful get them to Tony and he'll forward on (tlubke@fs.fed.us). Also there is an idea to put together some short buying teams. It is in initial discussions. Not sure if they would dispatch as individual resources or configure them and dispatch as a team. Having a call this afternoon to see if there is interest at the zones and hopefully look at how they want to dispatch, what kind of configurations. Not nationally. Looking at how to order, where to be hosted. Maybe in each of the acquisition zones. The application for short or national will be coming out very soon (next week) and we have a short turnaround time. Northern Rockies will only host one buying team this year. Focusing more on local procurement authorities and increasing those skill levels. A short buying team resource does not exist in ROSS. It is being discussed. Will support if they decide, but they will not go outside the Northern Rockies.

Operations – Mark Heppler

- Operations had a spring meeting. We'll have our normal Type 1 national teams, 2 wildland fire management teams (half the members are out of the southwest), and a complement of five T2 teams. The rosters are huge. It takes that many to put a team out anymore with job sharing. Will revisit the letter Northern Rockies sent out to NWCG to come up with a non-operational path for Planning Section Chief and Logistics Section Chief as well. A couple other GACCs have come to realize there is an issue so it may be a group effort. I only have 2-3 more meetings to go to so you may want to find someone to take my place after December 2014.
 - Judy Heintz – You'll still see in catalogs the short and long team rosters. We'll not keep those in? will have the entire roster and will fill how they want. The roster items will go away. Will make it easier as we'll only have to maintain the one roster.

1130 – 1300 Lunch

1300 – 1340 NICC Update

Jarrold Simontacchi

Updates for national mob guide for this year. There were not a lot of changes. I'll highlight a few from different chapters.

- Chapter 20, the gallon breakdown on air tankers changed to illustrate the new VLAT contract, which is 8,000 and up. Updated what FS would provide if MAFFS was activated by the governor. Updated the assignment extension request form to include statement that GACC signature are not required for single resource overhead.
- Chapter 30, updated names on INMAC chart to update current membership. Read the names.
- Chapter 60, smokejumper numbers updated. Added additional buying team for southern area. Still showing the added slot for Shill's in the mob guide as we heard too late that we're not having that second buying team. We do mobilize national ad-hoc teams once national teams are committed. (But Pam said we can't steal them.) Removed crew qualification typing because they are already in the blue book and red book. Added language to clarify IMT availability when members of C&G are not available. National MAC group will evaluate the situation and determine if they can be available without regular members.

Aviation Section - Scott Fisher

- FS Aviation Program review – we are beyond the last year of a 5 year contract for air tankers. Trying to bring on next generation, newer aircraft. Have not had a full award yet so we got a 6 month extension. We can bring on up to 9 through June. We have 3 on currently. The last 2 are scheduled to come on as needed. No more are anticipated until the first part of April. By then we hope to have resolved the legacy contract. Expecting award on 8 line items for that.

For next gen, we were asked to go back for clarification. We did, and it is in DC for review. There are 7 line items designated for award. We have the ability to add additional line items. The challenge is funding.

- EIS study about where people can and can't drop retardant - hoping to put something together for the pilots. There is an ongoing study to look at effectiveness of the placement of the retardant (Note – see Wednesday's notes for more info). They are looking at things such as if it was applied correctly and how effective the cost is for placing retardant. There's a question about how effective it can be in some instances.
- An air tanker strategy document was put together talking about where the FS will go with air tankers over the next 5-7 years. Need to have somewhere in the neighborhood of 18 to 28 tankers. What is the need on a year to year basis? There is an audit going on this year to look at how we make decisions to get air tankers. Looking for statistical data on how we place, how we use. There is also an evaluation for a small numbers of scoopers. We get 90 days after they start in MN then go to AK. It is in the 2nd year of 3 year contract.
- Had 2 significant tragedies last year. Both significant because T-11 and MAFFS were behind lead planes at the time. Looking at that use of lead planes.
- Aerial supervision – There is an effort to look at how we transform the program. Over 50% of ATGS are ADs. It is an item of discussion.
- Have fewer lead planes, they've gone down from year to year. There were 38-40 in the '90s and now we're down to 25-26. With retirements, we continue to have to train. We appreciate when you allow a trainee. The number is declining. Not just FS, but overall.
- Tanker bases that have been identified for use for MAFFs – see the graphic. They are tethered and have to go back at night. Been using the MAFFS for almost replacing our air tankers. Another graphic showing how they are to be brought on. There is a plan. The VLAT is 8,000 gallons. Contract is extended for 6 months. It is CWN. Final solicitation may take a little while to award. Their pricing is about 20% more on an availability basis and maybe 50% more on use. The challenge is many cannot operate from our bases. Great Falls and Missoula airports may be able to accommodate them but Missoula tanker base maybe not due to size. They are looking at the bases that have been identified for their use to evaluate ability to use.
- Helicopters – For large fire support 30 were awarded and added 4 more for a total of 34. For IA there are 33.

Bill Fletcher

- Equipment - Caterer contracts remain the same. Continue to use the correct form in the mob guide so we can get things going. Critical. http://www.nifc.gov/nicc/logistics/coord_forms.htm
- Southern area added an additional buying team.
- NICC positions - Assistant center manager on FS side and fire weather meteorologist changing over to FS side. The intel officer position is being reclassified to 9/10. Should see that flown early fall. Current situation is extremely light. No real draw for resources.
- Question: Wildland fire module typing coming this year? Bill – haven't discussed it. Know there was an effort to get approval from NWCG to Type 1 and 2. NICC perception is we're lumpers rather than splitters. The more specialization there is the more it clogs the ordering system. For the moment we'll likely see no change in ROSS category to represent that typing change. I hadn't heard it was approved by NWCG, but our stance is further typing/splitting clogs the ordering. Crews are crews. Wouldn't expect that we would shift to the crew catalog. A typing change does not force a change in the way we order.
 - Note 3/19 – Pam will let us know when/if the module changes go into effect.
- We got the red book committee to accept chapter 19, Dispatcher Coordination. For the BLM, which has gone thru preparedness reviews, there are now checklists behind those items. You'll see some changes in GACC and dispatch checklists which are now supported by supplemental policy in the red book. Use the appropriate channels identified in the front cover of the red book to make comments.
- Alyssa asked for and Jarrod said he had fill-able pdf forms which they will post to the website.
- Supplies - No changes. For radio supply requests we still get people that put bill-to and ship-to information in special needs. Don't need that. When it is a non-suppression event and you need radios for it, or if it falls under preparedness or hazardous fuels reduction, if it is one of those there is an agreement at NIFC that BLM can approve utilizing for the shipment of those radios without the need for the cost-share agreement of the past.

1340 – 1410 NIRSC Update – Jose Lopez

Geographic area representatives – We've established a long term relationship between the GACC, the zones and the communication duty officer (CDO). We provide communications coordinator support (COMC). We rely a lot on ADs to fill the role. If you request we would probably be the first ones out the door to fill the role. We assist in updating the national interagency aviation frequency guide, and have provided one location for you to go to get the info. We are available to assist the GACC in updating the mob guide. We are basically a four man shop, Mike Tuominen, myself, Al Kamowski and Gary Stewart.

- Type 3 support – Filling frequency requests when no communications personnel are assigned. The incident orders all frequencies through the dispatch process, dispatch places orders up thru ROSS, the aircraft resource order is filled at NICC. If there is no qualified COMT or COML, you'll just get hand held radios which don't require setup.
- NICC frequency fire support – We lost a bunch of frequencies. Will try every year to get them back. Have to roll with what we have, though we'll keep trying to get them. We can only support with 6 repeaters and after that we have to scrounge frequencies from some other agency. It is harder to get them back year by year.
- Frequency and interference – Challenging issues providing additional frequencies during multiple incidents include: incidents are larger and complex, incidents requesting 100% coverage including travel routes, reusing and/or reassigning frequencies without proper authorization or coordination. It was a big deal last year. It caused interference issues. Even though released in ROSS, folks were still holding onto those frequencies and reusing them without coordination.
- Frequencies were not going thru the COML. Every pre-order that we get if the COML is not in place we are only filling the air to ground until someone is in place. We do not have enough frequencies to go around. About 80% of the interference was caused by improper use of authorized and unauthorized frequencies. Need a COMT or COML. Folks get into trouble when they are not familiar.
- AM frequency assignments - When we order frequencies we are given one only good for 20 nautical miles and 5,000 feet AGL service ceiling. If the incident grows beyond engineered service in volume, a new AM frequency will need to be ordered/engineered. Violation of service volume could lead to FAA no longer supporting wildland fire frequency requests. FM air to ground frequencies have a serviced ceiling of 3,000 feet AGL. Use above the service ceiling is one major cause of interference. Service ceilings are designated in the radio frequency assignment (RFA). RFA's are authorized by the national telecommunications and information administration (NTIA). The CDO will request all frequencies from the FAA. Could take as much as 48 hours to get an AM frequency so the faster we know the faster it will get filled. Each AM frequency will be submitted to the NTIA by the CDO for a special temporary authorization (STA). Frequencies are valid for a maximum of 30 days. Extensions should be requested at least 5 days prior to expiration date. The FAA has the right to terminate or modify any engineered frequencies to support air-traffic-control at any time.
- Summary – Order early. If COMC is in place, they will usually start a request early with FAA through the CDO. Get FAA assigned frequencies in place before the team transition takes place.
- AM and FM frequency management for IA: The process involves both FS and DOI frequency managers as well as the FAA to determine assignments. We are still waiting for air to air AM IA frequencies for the Northern Rockies GACC.
 - **Update 3/19** – These are out as of 3/13
- 2013 Air to ground FM IA frequencies for Northern Rockies GACC – The A/G naming convention is being pushed up from the aviation side. Currently we have 73 frequencies identified as air to ground, and they can be preprogrammed into radios. They are identified nationally.
- Zone boundaries – If there are any changes anticipated for the zones, make sure we have a year in anticipation as this stuff has to go thru the approval process.
- Preposition equipment. Always try to put two or four starter systems in each GACC. Trying to preposition extra repeaters for faster access for fire activity. Sometimes the repeaters do not work throughout the whole GACC. Can't really clear them for the whole GACC. Hand held kits can be obtained from caches.
- Jose is our GACC representative so feel free to call him with any questions or concerns.
- Comments - With the lag time for discreet air to air frequencies, TFRs with discrete frequencies could be delayed for 48 hours. Order air to air frequencies early, even if there is just potential. Jose confirmed not to worry about ordering one and not needing it in the end, better to be extra cautious.
- For shipping purposes, all radio kit and repeater boxes are labeled with weight and dimensions.

- Regarding IMT preorders for multiple frequencies, get the word out to team members that we'll fill one of each and work toward the rest.

1410 – 1420 Break

1420 – 1530 IRWIN Update – Chris Markle

Will cover quite a few things today including IRWIN, Data Standards, Wildland Fire I&T.

- What are some of the challenges you face in regards to your CAD environment? Group answers: Entering data over and over; CAD from one environment isn't shared from center to center; have to have 6 different screens open on one computer; BLM is consistently 6-9 months behind on versioning; it slows down; requiring non fed personnel to conform to fed security policies; rolling out programs that aren't ready; GUI is terrible; no ability for sharing and interfacing with other systems for propagation.
- There are many servicing agencies that have to work together in this environment, so the challenge is how to come up with solutions when dealing with all the variables. An additional challenge is that it is a highly political environment.
- Attempted to develop a wildland fire information and technical process. We are one environment trying to attack one problem so we should have one solution. Administrators set policy. About 3 years ago, the fire leaders said they need help. It was tried in the mid '90s. It was transformed in the early 2000s then a fix was tried again. It failed every time and administrators didn't buy in to the end users' needs. They decided they would sit down at the same table and find a common solution. The Executive Board has the final decision about what we'll work on. You guys come up with a solution, the Executive Board listens to user areas, guided by fire leadership, and then the solution is provided by the techs. The Executive Board decides if there is budget space to do it. An MOU was signed last August. The governing board is made up of IT folks from your agencies: BLM, BIA, NPS, FWS, FS. These IT folks will try to come up with solutions to the problem. The Program Board meets once a week, and have been since last summer. They have a planning working group, a developing working group, and an operations and maintenance group. We want the business community to help us find the solution set.
- IRWIN – Integrated Reporting of Wildland-Fire Information. Designed to reduce redundant data entry, increase data consistency, provide authoritative operational data, speed access to data in diverse source systems. IRWIN is intended to fix the data exchange in the CAD services It is a black box that integrates the data you enter in CAD to all the other systems. It is not intended for anyone to interact with. You will operate in your CAD environment and the data you enter will move to the systems it is suppose to. Data governance has to be consistent in CAD, ROSS, WFDS, etc. It can't integrate if data is not consistent. It is very important to figure out what things are common. If we don't get this right, none of it will work. Have to have common data standards. The Executive Board has charged the Program Board to tackle the issue. They will take a look at the data that is out there, what is required, who needs it, and will make recommendations on what the standards should be. There are a lot of data standards out there but need to integrate them. The goal is to try to identify what those data characteristics common in the wildland environment are, and then we can have the concept and a set of standards we can apply.
- National Computer Aided Dispatch. Task team chartered. Fast track effort – recommended solution by mid FY14. Reviewing previous work (2008 dispatch study, etc.). Validating updating business requirements. Considering national standards or a single application.
- No matter where you go, it needs to look the same. One set of training. That is the desire. There are 22 fed systems identified to participate in IRWIN at this time. State and local are not being overlooked, they are on the table too. Will have one fire platform. It is not going to happen overnight. Currently analyzing all the platforms and trying to figure out the most economical way to reduce the footprint and get the users' needs met.
- The focus is on five systems first: WildCAD, WFDS, EGP, FireCode and Sit209. IRWIN is not meant to be interactive with people unless there is a conflict; for instance if a fire belonging to another ? becomes part of a complex. The desire is that it all starts with CAD, if CAD is determined to be the standard starting point. Data is first entered into CAD and it then propagates to the other systems that need it. Business practice standards should come from NWCG. The goal is not to change your business practices, it is to incorporate your business practices into all the systems. IRWIN is intended to make the data exchange happen so you are no longer entering data in six different places.
- Timeline – Currently scheduled in process are the five systems this year and for every out year, 5 – 7 systems. ROSS is huge and when they are working on that they may not be working on the others. The goal is to have IRWIN in place

by 2017, with the first five systems to be exchanging data in a production environment by the end of this year. Will be in testing by the fall of 2013.

- Group asked for it to be marketed better, for more information to be put out there. Chris invited anyone to send emails to him (christopher_markle@ios.doi.gov) and Rochelle (kimber_pederson@ios.doi.gov) regarding what your needs are.

1540 – 1600 Fire Incident Retention Guidance – Karen Rheinhardt - FS

Records management, both incident and day-to-day.

- New fire policy a decade ago realized a need for a standardized process. It was an interagency collaboration. If you created information, it is likely a record. Things such as official memos, receipts for equipment, timesheets, fire narratives, and email documenting business process and decisions. (ROSS outputs are not recognized as official records.)
- There are permanent records (20 years), temporary records (7 years) and non-record copies. Separate your permanent from your temporary records, maintain the incident file for 3 years then send records to Federal Records Center. FRC manages records for you though they are still under agency control. More information is available on the NWCG site: www.nwcg.gov/policies/records/index.html .
- The records schedule can be accessed thru the portal. There is actual U.S. code with specific mandates on where we keep our records and how we store them. Suggest records be sent to the FRC at 3 years. Can no longer send mixed series. Must separate permanent from temporary records. There will be new categories for the 5100 series. Work thru Karen to get transfers done. There is policy in place that all transmittals go thru the regional record manager. They will not destroy any records without first informing you. If you need retrieval, that can be done within 24-48 hours. They are pretty good. All permanent records go to archives (after 20 yrs) and are then under NARA management.
- New records – day to day – would include your dispatch log and WildCAD printouts. Personnel files – new direction for retention, a new category has been created and should be on the schedule when posted.
- We should not have to maintain duplicate records. If the incident is on DNRC protection, they keep the fire record.

1600 – 1755 Center Manager's Meeting

- Judy – At the national coordinator meeting there was discussion that D-310/D-311 be combined. It was suggested changing the qualification so that it is similar to FFT2, that once you complete D-110 you are an IA dispatcher.
 - Amy Lancaster - She is on the rewrite committee. We looked at units for D-311/D-312 and combining them. For example D-311 unit one and D-312 unit one are being combined. Unit 3 for D-311 and Unit 4 for D-312 are also being combined. The beta course will be presented in April 2014.
 - D-311 being offered in NR in April, cadre should get comments to Amy for rewrite.
- Training class prioritization: D-310 = 23 folks, D-311 = 21 folks, D-312 = 18 folks, Intel = 8 folks
 - Everyone was in agreement to hold D-310 next training season.
- Frequencies – dispatch was taken out of the equation for air to ground frequencies. Mark feels like the standard works well. Everyone knows the standard and it makes notes in CAD easier. Don't think it's going to be a big deal. The Ops Committee didn't make a decision. Grangeville is testing it this year. Agree it is likely too late for this year. Sounds like Kim has discussed it with the air attack group and there is buy in. Some pilots are confused because some centers put the frequency and others put a naming convention. Suggest we put both on the form. The letter says you should put both on there. Just have to get in the habit to do both.
 - Consensus is we are not trying for this year. Grangeville will do a hybrid implementation this year. Don't think it will be the big change people think.
- Carol - National Contracted Resources SOP?
 - Kelly is looking at having our Northern Rockies mirror the national as close as possible. Wants it done and posted by early June or as soon as she can.
- Judy – With vendors to place equipment in more than one dispatch center, Northern Rockies to input contractors and give access to various dispatch centers to attach equipment to the contractor.
- The new version of ROSS would make us re-enter all the data. Pushed back at national level on that and waiting for the outcome.
- Generally, if it is on a DPL, it should be in ROSS. Coach buses to be entered as a service.

- At the meeting last fall talked about using ROSS special needs to put in your comments of what you need, like a supervisory with experience in supply and equipment, etc. and if they can't meet that... , it was pre identified. need it addressed on the performance evaluation, and give feedback to help improve performance. If doesn't work, demob. Mark – We were selective as to who we brought in, in what category. We can't always be that picky. We appreciate the support we got from the centers in R1.
 - Amy - Nationally we can't fix it but we can in our own GACC. I do put stuff in special needs and it was taken into consideration. Some people are looking at it. We won't fix it nationally but we can create a good product in our GACC and help ourselves.
- Carol - People try to push to meet dates/times needed, but we need to inspect prior to sending or we are not doing any favors to those on the receiving end. Judy - Contractors are choosing their centers and they may not want to go to the center to get inspected. They are obligated to come. Debby, Tim, Kevin all support that. We need to remember to exercise our option to do the performance ratings when they don't meet the date/time needed.
 - Amy – I didn't mind if you brought in an inspector on the weekend and had to pay overtime. I'll give an O number any day for that.
- Sally – ROSS - last year at the fall center manager meeting we talked about when someone was asking for type-any, make sure you document in special needs the priority; a type 6, type 4, type5.
- Going to make passwords easier to synchronize and Karla said the current NAAP was an emergency fix so the new version of ROSS will hopefully improve, and we'll even have more time before we have to change passwords.
- The NRDSC charter was changed minimally just to show that the co-chair becomes the chair and the committee selects from amongst themselves. Amy was nominated for co-chair and accepted. Need two new members including a representative from Northern Rockies. We don't have a BIA, IDL or NPS rep. Hopefully we'll be able to finalize in a few days. Other than that if you see any changes you'd like to make to the charter let Alyssa know. It says in the charter that new members are identified in the fall, and then selected in the spring. Alyssa will remove the bullets if that makes it clearer.
 - **Note 3/19 – New charter and members will be announced by April 2.**
- Steering Committee – Carol praised the hard work of Judy and Alyssa and thanked everyone for making it work.
- Chapter 19 of Red Book – What do you guys think? Intent was to try to give the center managers an aid to run an efficient center. To give you something in policy to help you get the things you need. If you have any comments or questions, Judy can take them forward to the DEW group. DEW group meets again in April. Carol was concerned with it having expanded and business together. They are two separate things. Business was not mentioned beyond that. Expanded doesn't talk about business at all.
- ROSS practice – ROSS will become national, not just Northern Rockies. Especially with the new system coming on. Also new dispatchers coming on need it. We can try for the second Wednesday of April for the first ROSS practice and Northern Rockies will host.
- Timing of Dispatcher Workshop – Later in the spring may be better in regards to funding for travel and ability to bring other folks. Perhaps the third or fourth week of April. If we can fund it, think there is a need to do it every year. (Another suggested to let the agenda, or fire activity determine if we have a face to face, rather than a conference call.) Pass it around per agency to pay for the meeting room.
- For centers with hotshot crews – There is consternation in regards to mob guide dates. The dates need to be the dates they are funded for, versus when they want to be available.
- Sally – Is there any reason why FireCode activation takes until Tuesday/Wednesday to get active when it was entered on Friday, Saturday, Sunday? Answer: Yes. It has been pushed for years. And will keep pushing. For some reason the interface runs don't work right and you'd have to call.
 - Carol - Bobbie uses to do a daily push in the heat of the season. That needs to be done. Judy said she'd try to find who the person is in Albuquerque is that can do a manual push.
- Extension request form. NR had an idea for a fillable form that lived in the cloud that you could fill out and email to those who care, but that's been postponed for now. Northern Rockies will try to get forms to the host dispatch center if they can tell they haven't seen it yet.
- Only Grangeville potties will be on the DPL. Still use our DNRC agreements in our GACC.
- Kitty is creating a trainee priority list. Where is she getting that? Is it trumping ours? Judy thinks it's FS only coming out of workforce IFPM requirements. Priorities are set by the zone board, not by Kitty.

- Smokejumper protocols we identified and wondering if they are in the mob guide? Send Pam a note. Know that it has not been forgotten.
- Judy – National Dispatch Committee Charter discussion. Should that committee sit under NMAC or under NWCG? Day to day functions for dispatch and coordination work under auspice of NWCG. When in summertime mode fighting fire we are working for NMAC. Invited us to live under NWCG. Chuck foresees third tier center managers as being part of it. Right now, the coordinators are the only ones on the committee. And for those who brought the 3rd tier to the national meeting, Chuck publicly called it brilliant.
- Amy - FMO's comments on consistency in Wildweb. All 3 eastern dispatch centers agree. There is talk that it will reach you on the west side. I'll send it to you. Maybe don't want a standard but maybe we can come up with some basic guidelines. Not an expectation for 2013.
- Amy - We're trying to come up with an IMT briefing packet. If others have things to share please send to Amy.

Wednesday, March 6th

0800 – 0830 National Weather Service Update – Jenn Kitsmiller

Jenn is the Fire Weather Program Manager for western Montana and north central Idaho. Here to talk to you about some shifts of focus on priorities at the NWS and introduce you to some products.

- Decision Support Services - Designed to help people understand how the weather and changes are going to affect them. It leads to focusing on the impacts. For example, for wintertime we work with the road crews to let them know what's coming so they can appropriately adjust actions. We do this rather than just telling people the weather. This new focus led to new products.
 - First is Facebook. Found it to be a useful tool to communicate information to areas and populations that may not normally be looking at the weather. Each office in the Northern Rockies has a Facebook account. The main way we use it is to address longer-term weather information. We can talk about it well in advance and discuss our confidence levels. Facebook is an open line of communication; people can ask questions and we get back to them.
 - Also using Twitter. Addresses are @NWSMissoula or @NWSBillings, etc. It is used to announce short-term weather information – in the next 24 hours – such as developing thunderstorms, winds, low RHs, and it may include red flag warnings. It is quick bits of information that people can monitor, as maximum is 120 characters per message.
 - Another newer development is what we call Weather Story. They are graphical descriptions of what's going on weather-wise. We make it graphic, sometimes map based. Sometimes just an overall general message. Not necessarily issued every day, but as necessary. Lists the impacts like gusty winds and lightning potential, shows graphically the area impacted. We did one for fire weather and highlighted the things of most concern, such as RH, wind, areas impacted and temps. You can find Weather Story on the webpage, on the top right there is a graphic to click on.
 - Another development is recorded briefings. In Missoula we do them every Monday and Thursday beginning when spring burning starts, and then daily once conditions become critical for fire weather. The recorded briefings talk about our confidence levels, areas of concern, expected impacts, etc. These also have graphics associated with them.
 - At our website you can choose the fire weather tab and then if there is a briefing click on it. We're also starting to use YouTube, and it'll be like an archive for you to see all that has been posted.
- Spot Forecast – There are some changes coming to the spot forecast request program. It won't come out this fire season. Just trying to streamline and will change the forms somewhat. Just type in the lat/long of where you need the spot and it makes the whole process easier. Also using Google maps. Coming maybe this fall or sometime next spring.
 - The most important thing we can get from you guys is observations. If you can get observations and pass along that is really helpful. Especially if you can get observations from the burning period the day before. Makes a huge difference for us in the weather community. Any extra info we can get from across the area where people are working is invaluable to us. If we don't get any observations, you may get a call from us. When you submit a spot, there is also a remarks box for you to provide info that may be helpful to us.
- Good communication – if you have any questions or clarifications please call. We may be doing the same. It is never a bother for us if you call. Still working on the design of the website. Jenn will pass along a request for the ability to

save the spot check as a .pdf. Another request is to include the entire zone; north central Idaho and North Dakota are often left out. Jenn will pass that along. If you guys have ideas of what you would like to see, feel free to contact Jenn at Jennifer.kittsmiller@noaa.gov

0830 - 0905 Mobile Technologies/IT Support Update – Tyler Hackney

Esther Godson asked me to give this presentation, she is project lead for MTDC mobile tech project.

- Mobile technologies in fire and aviation management - Started out working with the CIO group. Testing their new release of the iPads, their application in the field, getting them out to folks. Andy Trent is the program lead at MTDC.
- First question you'll have is when can you get the new iPads? Because of sequester they have put that on hold indefinitely. For the fire size-up application, we will be doing an initial test in the field this summer. Eventually we're going to be able to integrate the data coming from the field into WildCAD, FireCode, etc. We used InciMapper heavily last year; a program developed by Mark Slaten. It allowed them to tile info onto the iPad, cache the info when not connected, and when they were back in range it allow them to sync up. We will not be involved with the beta test with it this summer.
 - Note 3/19 – The DNRC is postponing the beta test at the CLO this season with a new implementation date of early Spring 2014. They are continuing development throughout the summer and fall, however.
- The initial test we did last year didn't have the support/security in place. So in conjunction with the state doing their beta test, we'll begin testing our application. One of the biggest things with the program is that they are not looking to define what is done in the field, but provide policy and security. One of the things they are looking at is maintaining the connectivity in the field and making sure the info can be consumed on another device. One of the goals is to look at what other partner agencies are developing that we can use, making sure the apps we are developing will be able to tie into something on the back end, etc. We are also working on getting better at getting information out to you. Members of the project include MTDC, FS-CIO, WFM RD&A, FAM-GIS, FAM-IT, DOI.
- In 2011 we didn't do much with the iPad pilot. We saw a big need in aviation and in 2012 Poncin's team took 6 iPads around with them. There will be an iPad report coming out and Tyler will send it out to everyone.
- ViaSat Satellite System – We tested a new military grade portable satellite system and hoping to bring more of them in. When a team comes and you cannot get local provider connectivity you call us and we bring them out and set them up. They provide the bandwidth and capability needed by a T1/T2 team. Costs are on a month-to-month basis.
- BYOD project – Bring Your Own Device - Don't know what it's going to look like. They may install a gov't management tool on your personal device and if anything happens they may wipe it, manage it, etc. There is a very big gray area.
- Mark's application, InciMapper, is completely separate from fire size-up. Fire size-up capture is a better way than pen and paper. It is a way to provide access to digital forms for them to capture information, and in the future feed the information into a program. Will still do size-up over the radio. It is in its early stages. Profiles and the back end stuff is not in place yet. After the IRWIN discussion yesterday, I would like for you to send me your questions or concerns (thackney@fs.fed.us) on WildCAD. I'd like to take that to the CAD conference in Reno. I want to keep the discussion open with them as it relates to this area.

0905 – 0910 IT Support Update – Tyler Hackney

- Regional support - Last year was a great season as far as what support we were able to provide. This year we have the kits ready, pre-packaged in Pelican cases, with profiles for expanded dispatch set up. If we set you up, you can have it all season. We have enough equipment now to leave it for the duration. We are utilizing new profiles so we ask you to please keep track of who's using the accounts. Keep the logs and send them to me on a regular basis. If you want to utilize your own accounts, we can set them up on the laptops before we send them, but either way keep track of those. We are getting push back on those accounts, so if you want to keep the accounts you have to keep up the log. The duration of an account is a month. The accounts will have access to the O drive, but you will have to request what part of the O drive and it may take a day or two to implement. If you have equipment like printers, please let Tyler know and he can get them set up.

0910 – 0930 Break

0930 – 1110 Contracting Issues and Updates/Best Value, DPL, RL, Choose by Advantage Contracting Panel

- Debby Wesselius, Tim Murphy, Kevin Erickson, Shay Clark, Pam Okon

Tim Murphy (timmurphy@fs.fed.us)

- Want to give you a quick tour of the internet, of the yellow box on the NRCG Contracting for Fire site. <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/fire/nrcg/agree-contract/index.html> . In the box, the first link is the 2013 Contracting Updates. For the last few weeks we were on a road show presenting the updates in contracting. All the questions received are under this 2013 FAQs, arranged by agency. This year the BIA will be hosting the weed wash solicitation. If you have someone with questions, send them to the FAQ's. The Solicitation Timeline schedule is posted. We try to get the priority list to the Coordination Center by the first of June. Some of the support equipment, like weed wash, by mid June. The Rollover Notice is where Debby gives contactors the opportunity to update things like contact info, etc. If they change their price, the priority lists will have to change. The Solicitation Plan is what the NRCG Board has approved. This year's plan and 2014 is posted. All agencies but the DNRC do 3 year agreements. DNRC does annual agreements. This plan also tells you if the equipment is on a resource list, or if on a DPL in Viپر.
- If you need to look at or print a hard copy of the solicitations, you can go to a solicitation and download it. It is arranged by agency. You can see what is hosted by which agency here as well. This is the place to go to get the official word on when the solicitations close, etc. For the BLM solicitation information, you can type in "NRCG" in the search field and the BLM's will come to the top.
- Inspections – March 1 we started inspections on engines, support water tenders, heavy water, fuel tenders and potable water. We currently have 3 MOU holders (we lost 2 in the last month), that are doing inspections. You'll probably see the MOU holders coming to town soon to do the inspections. You'll probably see Kevin or me on site to inspect the inspectors. If you get questions from contractors wanting to know where they can get inspections those 3 MOU holders are listed on the site as well. Inspections will end May 13 or 20 depending on what type of equipment. If anyone wants to go out and help be the gov't rep, let Tim/Kevin know.
- Training providers – We have almost 50 that are doing a combination of providing training, work capacity tests, task books, and red cards for contractors. It was just updated. if you get questions you can go there to find the answer.
- As of January 1, 2014, contractors are required to have P25 compliant ratings. We've been assured this won't present a problem.
- If you want to look at current in or out of GACC resource lists, you can go to the site, with the exception of the weed washer. We'll keep the current DPL's in place until we transition to the new agreements. So if you need to send someone out now, refer to the 2012 link. Again, new DPL's will be posted when Debby awards contracts.
- You can find an agreement if you need a price or phone number by clicking on 2009-2012 Agreements in the yellow box, but it only works for FS agreements, as those are the ones in Viپر. Just go to Viپر Preseason Agreements and put in search criteria. Page down for listings. <http://www.fs.fed.us/business/incident/vipragreements.php>

Pam Okon (pokon@mt.gov)

- We didn't change a lot on the DNRC solicitations. For Sack Lunches there are no large changes - complied with the national standard. For Heli Support Trailers - we asked for a separate rate for satellite and internet. For Rental Vehicles – we eliminated the mileage rate so it is included in the daily rate and added fueling upon return. Which is included in the rate. We reduced the classifications of the pickups down to 4x2, 4x4 etc. Also asked for special classification that has the tires that we want. We added a car carrier rate as well. We wanted to shift that burden to the rental companies. We changed the vehicle release form. We are requiring it this year. A lot of it is basic information. Fill it out for every vehicle you have and it goes with the payment package. Additionally, an inventory tracker spreadsheet will be posted on the website. A Toolbox thing for you; if it works use it, if not don't. Porta potties – for this year we added 2 rates. One is an unserviced toilet rate for when you don't need service every day. The only service it will have is at the end when they pick it up. If you need a service in the meantime then you use the additional service call rate for that day. Also added a remote road hourly rate. The gov't determines if the road is eligible for the remote hourly rate.

Shay Clark (mtclark@blm.gov)

- Potable water solicitation - 3 years still, due May 13. Type 3 Caterer - all vendors must have RT-130. They will be on the Resource List due May 20. Fuel tender – pretty much the same thing. Inspections to be done by May 6.

Debby Wesselius (dwesselius@fs.fed.us)

- This year is our 3rd go at water handling. Not a whole lot of changes though some changes for dispatch. Vendors are able to change dispatch centers. Will be interesting how they choose their dispatch center this year. It is the first time we did 100% rollover. Everyone was required to respond. Rollover is stuff still in their cycle and rollovers close February 28. Pricing does effect DPL. 2012 was a big year for us. Our goal was to identify companies with rollover who are no longer doing business. You may see a reduction in vendors.
- This is the first year of the new 3 year cycle for water handling. Solicitations close March 15. Inspections are due for engines on May 20 and heavies on May 13. I think we're still on schedule to meet our June first deadline for posting. The DPL's will give you assurance – as they will have passed inspection. Part of the specification requirement is past performance.
- In the past I have required vendors to locate equipment in dispatch zones. Courts didn't like that, felt it was an arbitrary line to hinder competition. The option no longer available to me. We are aware that a lot of companies want to play in the Northern Rockies, so there is a lot of interest outside our region. So we looked at what the cost is to the gov't for travel. When you see the DPL in June you likely will have resources that are not in the jurisdictional boundary of your center. It should be a list of folks who can logically meet requirements for incidents on your jurisdiction. For instance, equipment may be located in Dillon but might want to dispatch out of Helena. It is logical that they could meet date/time needed. We could incur a daily rate on the front and back end of the assignment. I'm calculating that in. what will fall to you is to better manage the negotiation of when you want them. You establish estimated time of arrival with the vendor, which starts their contract period. We need to start monitoring that. The book answer – we contact resources and when they do not arrive, that is non-compliance. It is a contractual issue for us to step in and address. If they are showing up 5-6 hours late get that info to Kevin, Tim, Debby and we'll step in and let them know. Debby will send a letter explaining that if they accept, they need to comply. If they can't, they need to establish a new date/time with dispatch that dispatch agrees with. The vendors need to be realistic and comply with their agreement. Need to clean up the DPL's and get rid of those folks that never meet date/time needed. The reality is they will likely be accepted even when late and you'll send them to the incident. Document that, even though they were accepted. It is still a compliance issue. Document those violations and we'll start addressing that so we can at least get an accurate date/time needed. We need to manage it better.
- Last year some vendors replaced their equipment. It is on the DPL that if the equipment breaks down it is not an option for the vendor to replace it. If there is a break down dispatch goes back to the DPL. Vendor can replace personnel, but not equipment.
- We did process quite a few terminations. We also had individual personnel terminations. Some had to do with the business side, their behavior in finance, behavior at dispatch, and some were operational issues. Your performance evaluations – you should expect appropriate business responses from these vendors. If you experience that, fill out a performance rating, general message, contact us. We will ask for documentation so start filling these things out. If dispatch has performance issues with vendors, contact the contracting officer that signed it. Tim and Kevin are good go-to men to contact generally. You can use a general message, simple documentation, full blown performance rating. Email is dangerous as we get thousands. Use snail mail or fax. The performance evaluation is on the Northern Rockies website.

Kevin Erickson (kerickson@fs.fed.us)

- Specification changes over last 3 years - Weed washer not a lot of changes. Weed washer shut down and was reissued this year. FS didn't want to solicit for it nationally, but Northern Rockies still desired it, so the BIA took it on. The state stuff is the same as it has been for the most part. The only update on the heli support trailer is radio requirements. Potable water has a few changes. The main thing is the equipment typing has changed. Water tanks have been given more value for more water so there will be a priority list set on price and water carrying capabilities. You can look at the FAQs that are out. Heavy with water hasn't changed much. We are requiring rollover protection systems on heavies. It will make the inspection process cleaner. The minimum standards stayed the same.
- In the solicitations, D.6.5 is the dispatch procedures. This gives you the teeth, and outlines what we're looking for. We need to weed out the habitual offenders. D.19 is workmanship. That is the teeth in our solicitation for performance. Read it over. D21.8.1 Driver time limitations is 10 hours. Make it clear to receiving dispatch if someone likely won't make it.

- Water handling engines and tenders - The only major change is that we are not soliciting for tactical water tenders in the region but the operational committee wants tacticals available. They are going to be a chapter 50 tool, with our cooperators at the fire department level. Kevin still has to make the determination. Attributes are not given points. Everything has been figured in. They can be ordered by dispatch if operations wants it.

Personnel issues

- Tim - We had several questions by contractors regarding who needs RT-130. The bottom line is if you have to stay in fire camp or go to the line you have to have it. For things like the potty vendor, there is no requirement as they don't stay in camp.
- ITEAMS and personnel verifications - It is the contractors' responsibility to have with them their verification form for the current year. Inspectors should be asking to look at personnel verification forms for qualifications of personnel for support tenders and engines. The backup is the ITEAMS program. But it is the vendor's responsibility to have the documents with them.

Questions

- With the downsize of our fleet are we going to have an option to hire vehicles with driver? Debby – No change. Dispatch can identify those quickly and work with procurement to sign them up incident only. Use chapter 20 rates; preferred method of hire.
- Will we accept factory installed ROPS or after market? Kevin – Aftermarket can suffice.
- EFF inspectors want to be paid the higher THSP rate rather than EQPI. What is the process? Tim – In the blue pages, NRCG has four positions that are exemption positions to what NWCG has. The first is NRCG Equipment Inspector-EQPI. The rate is like \$15. The second is NRCG Lead Equipment Inspector. Kevin and Tim maintain a list of who is quailed as a lead inspector so get a hold of us if you don't have those names. They make like \$21. The EQPI and lead inspector work for dispatch or ground support. The third is a NWCG position adopted in the last couple of years, the ICPI. Those folks are at about \$21. They work for Kevin, Tim, and Gilman and go throughout the GACC helping with contract administration issues, or they work for finance. The last position is HETS, Heavy Equipment Technical Specialist. They work for ops out on the line to determine capabilities or limitations of equipment for the job. That position is at \$25. We met with the NRCG equipment committee last week, discussed the issues and job descriptions of the first 3. Kevin is currently adjusting those descriptions based on the committee recommendations. They put the 3 at the same level of pay. DNRC has agreed to hire all of these as EFF's. Pam – Kevin is working on job descriptions. They are only paid for the position they are working in. Period.
- Is there some way for us to give performance ratings when we know of something but it's not our incident? - If you know there's a problem, call to where the inspections are taking place and alert them. You, as gov't personnel, can inform us at any time. Anyone in the chain. It doesn't have to be your dispatch. If anyone notices issues, fill out a performance eval. They must have qualified current folks on the engine. Part of the determination is to provide the qualified personnel. If they don't it is a non-compliance issue. They should not be showing up with someone else's certifications. Company A cannot use certifications that were issued by company B. There needs to be permission. They can steal employees but not certifications. The company needs to provide its own certification for its employees.
- If you have a contractor on your DPL located in another dispatch center can you require him to come to your center for inspection? Tim - Bottom line, what makes sense? We're trying to put out the fire. You can have them come to you, go to another center or if they are set up on the fire, it can be done there. We have to pass the red face test. The negotiated date/time needed is the bottom line. Debby – Dispatch protocols remain. You guys manage it. It is not the call of the contractor. It is the government's call. They are not in control of it.
- Is there a minimum of what you need to make something happen? The minimum is a general message and the specific issue.
- If a rental comes back not topped off, but closed out by the team, will it require a payment amendment? Pam - The solicitation allows for including fuel if returned empty.
- Some incidents are not accepting "ugly" equipment. What do we do? Kevin - If it passes the pre use inspection it should be fine. We need to find out from whoever failed them the reason. Just because it looks bad is not a reason. Information on the minimum requirements for equipment are in chapter 20 and you can also look at OF-296.

There are no inspector workshops planned this spring, but there is one planned for ICPI. The list of inspectors is on the NRCG site: http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/fire/nrcg/Committees/equipment_committee.htm The attendees of the 2012 workshops also gives competency rating. Kevin will try to update it. Folks should attend the workshops about every 3 years. Since we only have 3, if you know of an upcoming inspector let Kevin know so they can be mentored this summer. Keeping inspectors current is basically as simple as them going out. The workshop's main focus is the changing paperwork. If you have feedback let Kevin know.

Debby – If you have a “call back” policy in your center just know that no one is entitled to a call back time. Just document that you called and move on. It is acceptable. They are not entitled to any kind of a timeframe. There is no reason why we can't move to incident specific agreements also. Be aware that you do have the authority when managing the DPL's. Just document that you called.

1120 – 1130 Agency Aviation – Maggie Doherty, Mark from BLM

- Mark - Provided a hand out earlier. The BLM will have two T3 helos; one in Miles City, and one in Lewistown. Starts in Arizona then comes to us. Miles City will have their normal two SEATs. Another air attack in Billings. The full retardant base contract starts June 1. Billings' airport runway will be undergoing rehab from July 12 – August 18. On weekends we will not have access to our runway. We'll have to depend on neighbors. Hoping to work SEATs out of Laurel. Very strong proposal to hire 20 exclusive use SEATs this year to add to the national resource. It is just a proposal at this time. We have a tandem 802 to use for training. On call SEAT contract - new rates are effective March 1. Bob is working with FS and OAS on getting approval letters for using DNRC ships.
- Maggie – Regional updates - A lot of contracts are in the works for both helos and air tankers. With the sequestration, a lot will be awarded only by periods we have the money for.
- Action items from last fall's aviation AAR - What worked was the sharing. The neighbor policy works. Airspace coordination assets helped us out. Provided a hand out, which is an operational guide to help you become familiar with the capability and operational use of CL-215s.
- Regional assets – This year we'll have T2 on the Beaverhead-Deerlodge and Lolo, as well as the Gallatin rappel ship. For T3, still have the Bitterroot ship, Panhandle, Clear-Nez, Flathead, Kootenai, Helena and shared with the tribe. Rappel capabilities still on the Gallatin, and there is a request for the Kootenai to start their program again. Hopefully set up by 2014.
- CL-215's are a part of the large fire support in the big 34 thru the interior contract. After they are finished in Alaska they work their way down to the lower 48 and depending on R5, R6 and R1, they'll assess fire needs in those regions and we'll finish out the contracts. They are an aircraft, but treat them like a T1 helicopter. They can do 4 hours on a fuel cycle but they return to the airport for their maintenance. Cost is commiserate with the sky cranes and turnaround times. Water source is at minimum a mile long lake and 6 feet deep. I passed out a booklet on them. They come with management and they take care of themselves, have their own purchase cards. Two week rotations. They work around boats and lake users all the time. It is pilot call; they'll pick and choose their water sources.
- Air to ground standard configuration was covered at the ops committee meeting in Helena. R1 is not going to it this year. It is not adopted by Northern Rockies for 2013.
- EHEL – There is a lot of discussion right now about extraction by heli or short haul. FS is providing a list of available aircraft, military and vendors that are capable. We do not have a policy for heli extraction other than what is defined in IHOG.

1133 – 1245 Lunch

1255 – 1325 Bob Roth – Aerial Firefighting Use & Effectiveness Study.

- Issues going on with Automated Flight Following have to do with Java. Been developing a new app for AFF. It will work on most platforms. A version will be released soon, though it won't be finalized. Also I would like to recognize and thank Linda Nail for all her hard work.
- Aerial Firefighting Use & Effectiveness Study - This is not limited to chemical drops or large air tankers. It is a broad look at the way we use aerial suppressants and ways to document effective use. Another group has been tasked to get the information also. We were told we could not look at the chemical issues; just how it is used, when, and measure the effectiveness.

- Scope and intent: The group is formally, nationally chartered and given specific tasks. It is not an ad-hoc local. We did use a form documenting when suppressants were dropped. The hope was to train folks on site to fill out the forms. We were in luck and found a dedicated ground crew to chase fires. They spent time in ID, UT, MT, and in MN for scooper data. It was difficult to find fires that used aerial suppressants, and timing it to be there when the drop occurred. We were able to do that 23 times last year. Had procedures on the info collected about fire behavior, fuel models, resources on scene, and what suppressant and how it was used. Had a camera mounted on a 209 with thermal capture capability. You might know how many gallons, and where, but on the form there is a place to document the objective, which you might not know. Through use of the camera we can document where the fire is relative to the drop, how long it took the fire to get to the retardant, and what was the result. Were documenting the fire behavior relative to the suppressant drop. So last year we were caught up in collecting data. Spent a bit of time going through it and looking at how to align it with a repeatable metric to apply to effective use. Wanted to consider all existing systems used to document aircraft use. Did data mining with WildCAD, ROSS, etc. We have data collected, but maybe not accuracy. We'll identify needed data, and the data capture in use today, to recommend how to move forward. Don't have good data to support use of the aircraft. Will do our best so support tweaks of our existing systems. Not sure how long the project will last. Not sure how well we'll solve the problem completely. There is an idea kicking around that we probably already have known conditions when retardant is not effective. May end up at a point when we're not able to answer the full question but can put some sideboards on when it is not effective. May be able to come up with methodologies to support decision making by having better documentation. The plan is to continue with it this season. Will focus on quality rather than quantity. Based on data mining, we're looking at FS fires only. About 80% of fires do not use aerial suppressants. Maybe we are too focused on trying to get suppressants, so why not get data on fires that don't use suppressants. Or on fires that placed orders for it but they weren't filled. Trying to imbed our crews on fires where there is a high probability suppressants will be used. And also put them on fires not using suppressants to find out what worked.
- Deploying this year an online form that will work both when connected or not. Defining a strategy on who we want to have access to the form. It runs on mobile devices as well as web based.
- We'll try to do pre-planning and pre-briefing when we know about fires and let folks know when the crews will be out to collect data. Crews can be used as resources on the fire if needed and data collected by aircraft can be used by the incident. Going to try to ensure filling out the form this year. We don't want to have a negative effect on operations while collecting data. Not trying to rush people to order, or not follow normal procedures on how they respond.

1325 -1400 CL-215 Operations & Logistics, Large Air Tanker Operation – Maggie Doherty

Loren Crea – Neptune Aviation

- We have 2 tankers on contract at the moment in Alamogordo. The contract is an extension of the last legacy contract, extended when it expired in December. We eagerly await the release of the new legacy contract and the next gen contract as well. We don't have a date.
- Offering five P2's this year and 2146 is tanker 40 and 41, still on interim approval by ITB. Tanker 10 in Missoula is being revamped pretty significantly to eliminate the weak areas brought up on 40 and 41. Working to make our system talk to the overhead when the door opens/closes so the drop can be mapped. By the end of the year hoping to have two additional 146's. That is the operational perspective regarding P2's and 146's, want to get out for the dispatch perspective that the 146 is no different than the P2's in order to integrate in the fire traffic area. It gets there faster especially if we can get above 10,000 ft.
- The biggest issue is when tanker 41 is dispatched late in the day to a place where there is nowhere for the crew to stay. A lesson learned was that maybe the dispatch could come in the morning, it could be just as effective, and there'd be no need to worry about logistical things that come up when arriving late at night.

Questions & Answers

- Q-Questions come up about overflying tanker bases to go to another one and who makes that call.
- A-We are asking crews to share with local dispatch or base manager why they made whatever decision. We are asking them to provide reasons. Can't speak for other companies. There may be more benefit to come out of a different base, further away, in order to deliver a full load. Speed gets us there in the same amount of time. There could be a host of

reasons why it may not come back to your location. Maintenance, lodging availability, etc. It is worked out with the ATGS, and they broadcast intent on FM. Hopefully it'll get from the tanker base manager or ATGS back to dispatch.

- Q-Can the BAE operate in the FTA at the same speed as the P2, and are there bases the P2 can't operate out of?
- Q-Depends. Maybe restricted to how much retardant we take off with, etc. so we can get performance. One of the good things about the P2 is we can get as much retardant to a location in the same amount of time.

Maggie Doherty

As part of the AAR we came up with an aircraft workshop which will include aircraft dispatchers, tanker base managers, vendors, and air attacks. Will try to do sand tables, run some scenarios. Will be a good opportunity for hands on radios. It is scheduled for April 22 in Missoula.

Mike VanderPas

- New aircraft contract that will be a 690. Passed out maps to help show how fast we get from place to place to help you out. Aircraft come on June 1 in R3 then move north as needed. Need to get trainees out. We are down to 7 agency ATGS's and 13 ADs for the region. There are about 25 trainees. We want trainees on every flight. Give me or Ken Wabaunsee a call if you have any concerns, questions. The best process to marry up a trainee with an aircraft if it is in Grangeville is to get with Kim. She'll be able to help you. Also to marry up a trainee with an aircraft on your fire, same thing. Get with Kim. There is a schedule of blocked times with trainees filled in.

1400 – 1435 NW Compact & Aircraft – John Monzie

- North West wildland fire protection agreement or NW Compact. We hold our meetings in the spring. Members are Alberta, British Columbia, Northwest Territories, Saskatchewan, Yukon, Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington. Types of resources shared include aircraft, overhead, equipment, and crews. Our compact allows for us to exchange for training opportunities. That works out well. It provides flexibility in exchanging firefighting resources, facilitates cross border IA between member agencies, and we only provide resources that do not affect the draw down plan at home. The compact isn't the only avenue to get resources beyond the national system, but it is one of them. It is very effective. Member agencies accept standards established by the sending organization. There is a large variety of use and personnel, like splash and dash or numerous crews. We've brought in a DC 7 and 580's.
- Successes and best practices - We always assign a liaison. That is important for dispatch. There's flexibility, lots of pre-planning, and multi agency resource coordination. The geographic variability of wildfire season hazards allows for greater resource exchange opportunities. When I bring them down they are basically a state of Montana resource. They are exclusively under my control. Personnel can be returned within 48 hours and aircraft as soon as possible. It is a very important component that we are flexible. They are not operating in any way close to what you are used to. Availability may change daily or by the hour.
- Aircraft, though not approved for federal use, can still load at federal bases but cannot operate on federal protection. There will be a DNRC liaison. Go to them to answer any questions. They will come to you and make contact, or you call me worst case. Also, they are an exclusive state resource with more caveats than our regular state resources. We'll make sure the caveats are given to you and you understand what they are. To help communicate, I put resource orders in ROSS so the info is there. As far as getting the word out on who is the liaison, we can do a better job of that. You can always call me as needed. The compact operation plan is posted on the NRCG website and DNRC website if you want to get into the nuts and bolts. It is also in the mob guide. It is just another way to gather resources when needs are not met through the national system.
- Ray's position was flown and has closed. Hope to have someone in there by the end of March.

1435 – 1440 IDL update – Gary Weber

Aircraft plans for IDL – Haven't heard anything different. The plan is still to contract for four SEATs (802s) and one fire boss; the boss and one SEAT in Coeur d'Alene, others in McCall. They are available to other places. There are no issues helping neighbors and going into other states. They can go, depending on the situation. Have 2 helos on contract as well.

1440 – 1500 Smokejumper Operations Update – Tory Kendrick

Showed a 5 minute video. <http://gacc.nifc.gov/nrcc/dispatch/overhead/UsersGuideSMKJ2.mp4> The video is designed for everyone. It is located on the Northern Rockies website under Overhead.

- The DC3 is up and running again this year. It holds 16 jumpers. We'll start rostering our jump loads so we can go straight from an A number to an O number. We'll catch up after the fact with that as we won't know until after who went. The step by step chain of events: when there is a request for jumpers, Kim calls us. We'll look at the request, print it, hand the pending request to the spotter, they'll jump and come back and tell us who jumped. We'll go back in and build the roster and the paperwork will go thru ROSS. Then dispatch releases the aircraft. Nothing that we currently do will change. We still have manifests. Everything has to go through Northern Rockies. We do IA using ROSS. Can use an aircraft order form faxed to Northern Rockies. Other bases are going to do this as well.
- The Smokejumper status page is updated when we have a change. The server is down often so it may not reveal the current situation. Always order, regardless of what the status page says. We can get more jumpers if needed. As for T3 team configuration, we make every effort to have an IC3 on the load. If you know you need overhead positions, ask for it up front. We'll change the load for specific needs. Commit messages that go out is great. Get on the commit mailing list. It is almost real time.
- We're single resources and designed to be split up if needed by twos. Multiple two man drops. If you order a load that comes with an IC3, you'll have a Type 3 team. Once we go to a fire we are your resource. We try to offer the service of pickup, if you don't want to retrieve us.

IMS Update was on the agenda. It was a handout. Mary Jo could not be here.

1515 – 1600 Incident Business Panel – Tracey Nimlos, Pam Okon

We'll go thru a few topics we've been collecting at various meetings since last season.

- The Northern Rockies Coordination Group Business Committee had an AAR with finance chiefs and buying teams, and there has been one business committee meeting since the fire season. Equipment inspections – paperwork-wise it was a nightmare last year. Things that can be done better: Unoperated equipment and rental cars have to have inspections every time. No exceptions. On the inspection forms, when noting a remark, make sure you put the date, and which fire. We had one where the same inspection was used on every fire it went to. The stuff needs to be documented so we can know where the damage gets charged.
- Rental car companies need the last 6 digits of the vin number in ROSS. Vendors were saying they never got resource orders when the vehicle was reassigned. Need to work on that too. You can reassign them but must close out the package, reassign, and start a new package. Some of it will fall to a team's ground support. There is only so much dispatch can do once the vehicle is out.
- By eliminating the mileage, if a team is in place they can close out the package at the incident. If it's a small fire that doesn't have a team on it whoever is responsible for the car will bring it back, close it out, and the responsible party or party's agency does the payment package. We added where the payment package needs to go on the cheat sheet for this year. In this case if the driver is an AD, dispatch will still see the car come back to them.
- Inspections – The inspection at the airport with the agent is better than nothing and a copy of that inspection needs to be in the packet. We prefer that we use our inspection form, but will take the company's inspection. Both parties sign regardless of the form used. Think about it as if you were renting the car yourself. Record every scratch to prove it was there.
- Closing out after each fire ensures the correct agency is paying. The shift ticket should be used to document it. For teams with vehicles going from fire to fire and not closing out, we will take the issue to the IMT's again this year and educate them on how to handle vehicles. If sending one of our rentals out of the GACC, don't be surprised if packages come back not completed.
- We had some issues with our EFFs/ADs getting dispatched to other regions and didn't have a gov't procurement card for the rental car. They were not being supported by the host side. Tracey will submit the issue to the national buying team meeting coming up. Applicable to FS employees – when you rent a car with a gov't card, insurance applies. If you have employees that do not have a gov't card, they need to tell the vendor they want to pay the GARS fee then they will be covered under the national contract. Remember, it still doesn't cover them for off road use.
- The buying team had a question come up last summer about who should be ordering national teams. They work for the host agency so the decision belongs to the host agency.
- Vpr agreements in relation to fireline rehab – They can be used for rehab but cannot be used for BAER work. If they are not in Vpr you can use a local agreement. Or if they cannot meet the date/time needed you can use a local

agreement. The same rules that apply to suppression, also apply to fireline rehab. But not BAER. From the stateside, we can deviate from the DPL if the resource is close and it saves money.

- Dispatcher charging base time and over time –
 - **Update 3/19** – The letter lining out dispatcher overtime was issued by NRCC on 3/18. Dispatcher time is not reimbursable between agencies, so FS employees should continue to charge overtime worked on state fires to the code in that letter. Tracey clarified her remarks at the workshop in an email on 3/14, and it is OK for FS dispatchers to charge base time to a p-code as directed by their fire staff even if they are not assigned to a fire.
- For FS, in fiscal year 2012 in R1, we had 82 fire codes assigned that had no charges assigned to them. It costs money to set up a job code. There is no need any more to set up a specific code for something like a tanker base unless we plan to cost share it. Do the best you can. Don't automatically check FS assist box. Think about it.
- Tactical tenders will be in chapter 50, maybe in chapter 20. Since you cannot multi type, you'll probably have a resource list of tactical tenders. Northern Rockies wants to order them, wants to have it both ways so that's why.
- We are short on finance folks. Have a pool of FSC-T. We have asked that they not be assigned to teams so they can go out. We'll try to place trainees when a team goes out so be aware, though it is a shallow pool. Both Pam and Tracey are contacts for that.
- Northern Rockies Buying Team - Northern Rockies will have one national buying team this year. Ron Shill will not form one this year. They will begin taking apps for the team at the end of this month. The business committee has formed a task group to work on issues. Will hopefully form 4 short teams. Should they be hosted by a zone or Northern Rockies? Much discussion ensued. It was decided that Northern Rockies will host them. Can build a BUYT in ROSS under team configuration and give it a mnemonic of NR1-GA (or the leader's name) and uncheck that it is a national resource. When you do the availability make sure it is GACC only and not national. Some members might have to be THSP. A team may only be available locally, another may be available in the GACC. Also they may only be able to support procurement, may not be able to do EERA's or LUA's.
- Galen has agreed to lead a task group with a BUYT member to work on a whole issue of how to keep fills updated in ROSS. Hopefully come up with some protocols.

Thursday, March 7, 2013

Julie Polutnik – Ownership protection clarification. Private lands in the sit report is a junk drawer. Trying to clean it up. Technically, under Montana law, mutual aid agreements identify the land management agency as the protection agency.

0800 – 0815 Northern Rockies Dispatch Steering Committee

- Carol Bienhold, Alyssa Stewart, Tony Lubke, Amanda Hamman, Amy Lancaster, Doug Caffee, Cobey Williamson
- The Steering Committee met briefly yesterday. We are trying to find ways to improve and get more involved throughout the year, other than organizing the workshop. Our task order activity has tapered off. The committee will identify things that were discussed this week and bring it back to you to see if we need to set up specific tasks.
- It is Carol's last stint with the committee.
- Alyssa is our Chair. Amy is our new Co-Chair.
- Tony – I've been working on a task order trying to get the dispatch zones contact information into AFF. Hopefully it will move forward quicker now if I can work directly with the coder. I tried to work with Bob but he was focused on higher profile stuff. (Kara said that Boise is working on this too.) I also heard that they are working on this nationally, so once that comes through it may be taken care of by other routes. (Kara will pass her info off to Tony.) NAFRI said they wanted a map for transient pilots so they would know what the frequencies are and the dispatch contact. We have a layer for frequency boundaries and but need to drill further down to the dispatch boundaries. If the information is compiled, Neal can drop it into the program fairly easily. Tony will pass the baton to Cobey and Cobey will be the point of contact.
- Amanda – The task order regarding ROSS Supply resource orders, requests and further guides didn't have a specific end product. Mark Heppler and I worked on how to fill supplies in ROSS. KIC has a good how-to guide and it is posted on the Northern Rockies webpage under the Steering Committee stuff. Unless there's something else you want from the task order, we've gone as far as we need to go. At the local level, each center will likely use their own SOP's, but know the guide is there and can be tweaked at your level. (All were in favor of closing the task order.)
- Doug – D311 is coming up and we still have room. Hope everyone can stay committed to that.

- Cobey – Regarding duplication of efforts. We really should try to market the things we are trying to accomplish, communicate it, spread it around. I encourage everyone to try to share what you do and try to bring things together to avoid duplication.
- Carol – Regarding the follow up on tracking P codes and base hours, I will take that on. Cobey will work with Tyler on IT. We'll review the notes and try to bring things to closure.
- Kim – We had the dispatcher stress study. I tried to get a follow up on that before the meeting but couldn't. I will get that to a committee member to distribute. It is still in the works. I am anticipating they will open it up nationally, decide what questions they are going to ask, and begin the dialogue.
- Alyssa – Thank you to Tony. He is an original member of the Steering Committee. And thank Carol for her hard work. We need two new members; one a Northern Rockies representative. I will send out some emails and try to finalize it in the next few weeks, then get it out to you. We'll go through the notes, follow up on things, and get them out to you.
- Carol – We will post the notes, handouts and a fresh copy of the agenda on the Steering Committee website. We'll let you know when they are there. Additionally the Steering Committee will help with the mob guide review and assign chapters for everyone to work on.

0815 – 0830 WildCAD Update – Kara Stringer

- As Tyler mentioned, the conference at Reno is coming up, with a new roll out of the WildCAD program. It appears there will be a huge turnout with many Northern Rockies folks coming. I will be passing the baton to Mark DeCaria who is taking over as the Northern Rockies rep to WildCAD. If you'd like us to put together some type of presentation to bring back for folks that are unable to travel, I am willing to do that.
- Carol – There are a lot of potential changes coming. You can be proud of this GACC taking it on. Talked about getting some standardization on Wildweb. A standard format will make it easier and we have one at KIC and the eastside dispatches. The committee will work on this.
- It is a good idea to put a PowerPoint together and we can show it during a Go-To-Meeting session. Travis suggested to them at the Bighorn to put together a how-to to present on video regarding the conversion. Kara is making a note. The conference is in late April. We should have good representation with IT.
- Judy - If anyone can come to Missoula, the Bighorn folks will be up here in April to help Northern Rockies get started. Anyone is welcome. I'll let folks know the date.

0830 – 0930 Northern Rockies Cache Update – Patrick Nooney

- Changes in the cache this year. Hot food container - The new system is coming into play, cardboard boxes and plastic bags. They will be in the vans, but we'll also have some of the older styles which will be available for individual issue (outside the van) until depleted.
- Will continue to use our stock of zinc $\frac{3}{4}$ " gated wye, then will switch to brass when the stock runs out. Same with the $\frac{3}{4}$ " shut off valve. Those will convert to brass. The new valve will be in the sprinkler kit and the mop up kit but will not be replaced in the light weight pump kit until we exhaust the supply. Coffee heating kit - The primary change is that the propane tank will not be part of the kit, but it will be added onto the cache van. Remember when you order the kit you have to order the propane tank. The technician taking the order will make mention of it when you order. Another change, the fuel line unit will be a separate refurb package, strictly a fuel line assembly. It should be straightforward out in the field. The 960 fly tent kit will be taken off the cache van but will be retained as an item. Instead of the 960 kit, will put in the 0070 fly tent kit. Those are the only changes as far as kit items go.
- One thing to pass along to folks is the attempt to redo the incident summary fire loss report to make it more comprehensible to the user in the field. It is a rush project, so hope to have some feedback on that. It is not entirely accurate as far as the fire loss part goes. The reason is how kits are handled. A lot of kits come back as components and the system is not designed to balance them out together. You'll see some negative numbers and it doesn't make sense. Not sure if they'll get around to addressing it. In Missoula, we take the info on the ICSR application in terms of fire loss and break it down manually, because it is more comprehensible. Last year we used ROSS. From my standpoint and from my staff's standpoint, if we can use ROSS that is the best way to do it. The accuracy is better. Orders are far more readable and generally speaking there is less need for a lot of communication trying to figure out what people are ordering. It is much quicker for us. If we have to enter the info straight into ICBSR, we have to type out every number. It involves a lot of keystrokes. When it comes from ROSS it auto populates the database and can

begin the process of it almost immediately. Generally speaking, R1 definitely has the best handle on how to use ROSS and it's interaction with ICBSR. The main problem we seem to have is with orders getting split up into multiple orders. Always bundle the items, make sure date/time matches. If you take the default date/time in ROSS, if there is any difference from page to page, it will split the order. The same with shipping address, contact info, abbreviations, punctuation, all of it. It has to match or it will split the order.

- The unit of issue, it is easy to get confused. Pay attention to that. Special needs gets missed. They are supposedly working on trying to improve that. We have the ability to view the special needs in ROSS orders but they do not come up automatically in our database. If the incident is being closed out to merge with another incident let the cache know. When the incident is closed in ROSS, it closes it for us so we cannot process it anymore. If we know it is going to happen we can get it reopened.
- Last year we implemented components of our national strategic plan. It was interesting in terms of how things were done and getting accomplished. Some worked but most didn't. For some we are starting to feel pay back. One of the things it is costing us... once the stuff goes out from the Northern Rockies to Prescott, it is going to stay in Prescott and not ever come back here. Even when we get back into redistribution the following winter.
- The redistribution didn't have anything on it and we are trying to get our inventory back up. One thing that came up that put a crunch in it was the dependence on the Great Basin Cache collapsed. There were many things we relied upon from them, which we now have to find new vendors for. Another thing that emphasizes the need to communicate with the cache is an issue that revolved around sparkler kits. Despite significant increase of systems last year we ran out the first part of August. There was a lot of discontent from the field about it. A lot of behind the scenes buying and so forth. A great deal of dissatisfaction was expressed to the Missoula Cache. They were being built and the only one building them for the U.S. was the Rocky Mountain Cache in Denver. As they built them they were sending them out. Even though we were in the process of getting more in, extreme dissatisfaction was expressed. The point is, talk to us. Understand that just because we were out we were always working behind the scenes to rebuild and pull things in from across the country.
- I've always had the Northern Rockies webpage but had about a year and half period of evolution with the FS portal and we were out of the loop. We are back in. www.fs.usda.gov/goto/r1/cache On that page we have everything we think people need, including forms, policies, procedures, shortages that are going on, safety news that pops up, relevant topics. So use that as a resource to get info on what's going on and if you have a question and it isn't there please call us. We are not changing any policies this year other than to update and put the primary emphasis on using ROSS.
- Relative to the pumps, and the cache strategic plan where it includes our pumps. Our pumps are high quality and the standard of maintenance is high. We are protective of having ours sent out to other GACCs for that reason.

Comments/Questions

- Comment –If something is not available it would be nice to get a phone call from the cache to let us know.
- Question – We tend to have more late season fires in the mountain areas and wondering if you'll have more cold weather items? Answer - Last year we introduced cold weather bags and think we'll start stocking that but have to talk to Bonny to see if anyone actually asked for them as far as UTF. Alaska has cold weather bags and a minimum 7 day delivery. We used to have them; up through the 70's and early 80's we had lots of cold weather stuff. We do have bags and heaters, are you thinking clothing? Group answered: Coffee pots, heavy sleeping bags, heaters.
- Comment – Definitely getting the explanation of why things aren't filled would be nice to know. We just got UTF's and knowing that you tried to go to a neighboring cache to try to fill, that would be nice to pass back to the incident.
- Comment – What we found, when you have special needs, the cache will not see it unless they go look for it. Call the cache and let them know. It will not help to put it in documentation. It is critical that the communication line stays open. Normally when there is frustration it always comes down to communication. Knowing that the cache has gone to other caches would help take care of some of the frustration. And for us, we need to keep the big picture that they are trying to support a lot of incidents across the entire GACC. Missoula Cache covers the central area and supports the caches for the east and west area.
- Question - Do you track UTF's that we can see where some of the changes are? Answer – No, don't really track UTF. Haven't provided reporting capability yet.
- Comment - Regarding team orders – I think it may be beneficial if we put some effort into building a pool of people with ROSS skills that can be assigned to the teams when they come and use ROSS for direct orders. Is that too far of a

reach? Discussion - KIC would have to look at ability to staff up to do that. In Helena we love doing it that way and have ordering managers with ROSS training. Others had trouble finding dispatchers and ordering managers. Maybe an option is to help bring along our OMs and when they are out there they can call back home for help. It is tough to get support dispatch to help in expanded and to get one out in the field with the team... some of this has to be pushed onto the teams to get their Ordering Managers in for the training. It is time for the teams to step up to the plate. Dispatch cannot always come to the rescue. There already was a task order a couple years ago. It has to go to the NRCG. Kathy will take that on. Maybe we revise the position description for Ordering Manager. Need to send this to the training rep.

- Thanks to Patrick and the cache for all the support.

0900 – 0915 IMT Update – Mark Heppler

Northern Rockies team update.

- We have two T1 teams (Poncin/Turman), five T2 teams (Kusicko, Pearson, Fry, Benes, Heintz), and two Wildland Fire Management teams: Hutton/McBratney. Most teams were out for 50 plus days except the WFM teams which were out for 23. Turman's and Fry's team had to reapply, and they used the ICAP process. There were 560 position applicants. They had asked folks to apply to no more than 3. All those that were non-selected are now in a pool that can be selected by a team. All trainees were selected except for 3 agency DIVS. We are hoping all team rosters will be mailed out by March 11. **Update 3/19** – the rosters have been mailed out. Still waiting for the final version from the IC. The team plan is due by April 1. Team meetings will be held April 16-18. The first day they will break out by function. The general session begins at 1300 the first day and all are welcome. The individual team meeting will be held the 17-18. Any ADs sponsored by BLM have to get approval by their sponsoring administrator.
- The CAT team had their meeting, hosted by Miles City. The roster will be finalized in next month or two. The team's pre-order will be updated and input in ROSS. The team had a discussion regarding expanding their response farther into the west. A lot of team members are from western Montana.
- ROSS orders – some DNRC team members may or may not have red card qualifications in the IQS system. We need to make sure they are in the IQS system and notify dispatch when they travel. We'll give the host dispatch a courtesy call. Miles City Dispatch will make sure to get the firm roster out and give a courtesy call to the host dispatch when folks begin travel. Any question on CAT team let Amy know.

Bin Items

Carol - Read synopsis. I tried to identify trainees and want to try to work with partners to get them out and signed off.

Kathy Pipkin – Thank you everyone. Hope it was beneficial. There are good action items.