



# Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

Federal, State, and Local Government Agencies Working Together In Emergency Response Management

## **Board of Directors Conference Call Minutes**

**Tuesday, February 21, 2017**

**Participants: Board Members** – Steve Heppner, Avery Thompson, Bryce Rogers, Ken Schmid, Mike Granger, Kevin Benton, Marschal Rothe, Bruce Suenram, Bill Colwell, Patrick Lonergan, Vern Burdick, Ryan Melin, Michael O'Dell, Brent Woffinden, Greg Morris.

**Deputies and others** - Mike Almas, Tim Murphy, Kathy Pipkin, Judy Heintz, Aitor Bidaburu, Mike Richmond , Steve Zachry

**Purpose and Welcome:** This is a public meeting for the purpose of conducting government business.

### NMAC Update: Aitor Bidaburu

- NMAC met last week and went over recommendations by CGAC
  - Type 3 rostering and management – unanimously supported – memo to come out soon
  - National Buying Teams – supported recommendation
- Training analysis is going on, long term study on how NWCG looks at taskbooks.
  - Multi-year project, starting with Aviation

### Predictive Services update: Mike Richmond

- Mild period for the last 7-10 days across the region, lots of snow pack and flooding.
- Heading back into a cold spell for a couple weeks. Moisture that we have received will be locked in by the colder temps.

### National & NR Updates: Kathy Pipkin

- Movement of suppression resources – modules and OH (IC's, Rx positions, suppression mod.) Southern Area went into PL2
- NR is quiet w/a few Rx's

### Operational / Contracting Updates: Tim Murphy

- Equipment committee had a CC this morning, long term chair of that committee will be retiring next month – Warren (from the flathead) will fill the gap until someone is selected.
- Talk of merging Logistics and Equipment Committees into one
- Proposal meetings in contracting will be next week
- Incident contract project inspector class is going on now

### Safety Update: Steve Zachry

- Moving forward with revision to saw training: proper fueling techniques
  - Posters and stickers will be coming out shortly
  - STIHL and Husqvarna are still not working with us, believe it is our problem
- National group looking at redoing 215A and 215R across the nation

### Follow up on Old Business

#### **1. Executive Conference Call Report Out - Ken Schmid**

- Call with Agency Administrators on Feb 3 discussed:
  - Easter Area decision – agreed to support our decision
  - Agency Administrators are looking to come to our spring meetings as they have in the past

- Team plan was sent to Agency Administrators in draft form – stressed the need/desire for Agency Admin to be more involved in Team support

## 2. Eastern Area Letter – Mike Granger

- Received response from the Eastern Area – FWD'd letter to the board
  - EA will not be surge capacity
  - Stated in the letter that they want to continue to be part of providing people to our NR Teams. People from EA applying to be on NR teams will be priority over other outside GACC applications.

## 3. NRCC Dispatching All IMT's – Kathy Pipkin

- Type 1 & 2 Teams will be dispatched out of NR.
  - Has been working with IC's and Section Chiefs to get them ROSS access so they can be masters of their own Rosters

## 4. Montana Cooperative Agreement – Ken Schmid

- Has been signed by everyone – final form should be coming out in the next couple weeks.

## New Business

### 5. IMT Selection – Mike Almas/Judy Heintz

- IC group met Feb 7/8:
  - Primary focus on 2017 Team selections – all 8 teams are rostered up for 2017
  - Granger gave IC's board expectations
  - Priority Training Process
    - New National Standard – each team is allowed 16 trainees which will come from priority training slots
  - Team Plan
  - NRCC dispatching for all IMT's

### 6. NRCG Team Approval Process – Mike Granger

- Last fall the board agreed to take a larger role in the management over our IMT's
  - Granger drafted and sent initial guidelines
  - Process is targeted towards next year, want IC's to be fully aware of the big changes coming for NR Teams and give them opportunity to comment.
  - What we do on Thurs. will not much different than the IC's have already done. Opportunity for us to see what goes into the rostering how hash out what our future role will be.

### 7. NRCG Team Guidelines – Mike Granger/Judy Heintz

- Secured actual document on Team Plan/Guidelines on what they should look like nationwide. Plans to have it finished and up on NR website by team meeting in March

### 8. Changes to MOB Guide – Kathy Pipkin

- Kathy sent out proposal to the board that we no longer publish the MOB Guide in hard copy, will instead be on NRCC's webpage
  - Saves \$2500 in publishing and shipping
  - Allows changes to be made throughout the year as it would be a working document
- **VOTED** on by board – **no opposition**

### 9. NR/EA and NR/RM dispatching across GACC boundaries – Kathy Pipkin

- Have been working for a couple years to do a MOU
  - NR/RM – in the past allowed adjacent centers to dispatch resources between geographic areas.
    - RM stance is that they don't need a formal MOU as long as it is published in both their and our MOB guides.
    - Kathy drafted verbiage for the MOB guide; with the addition of defining the term "adjacent" i.e.: sharing a boarder
  - NR/EA – would be between ND and MN
    - Eastern area is more comfortable with having an MOU in place and basing their MOB guide verbiage off of the MOU
    - Ran through F.S. grants and agreements; they feel it does not require a formal grants and agreements # as it is more of a gentleman's agreement
  - Need to have the approval in time for publication on March 1

#### **10. MAC plan out for comment – Marschal Rothe**

- Marschal needs comments back ASAP

#### **11. Spring Meeting Update – Mike Granger**

- Mike will put together and send out Agenda
- Kelly will hopefully be on board and can help with arrangements

#### **12. Team Meetings Update – Mike Almas**

- At the IC meeting we worked on IMT meeting plans: March 28-30 in Missoula at Holiday Inn
  - Agenda will follow last year's template
  - Hot Shots have a Main speaker in the works
  - Carpool if possible as parking is packed
  - NRCG Agency Administrators would like open dialoged during the session
  - For 2018 - Move meeting to April 9-13

#### **13. NRCG Executive Assistant – Ralph Rau**

- Kelly will be on next month to facilitate and take notes

#### **14. Preventing Aquatic Invasive Species Transport by Wildland Fire Operations – Mike DeGrosky**

- Will have these documents as part of the 1<sup>st</sup> session of the Team Meetings

### **Round Robin – Updates from agency participants**

**Steve Heppner/BIA NW:** Record Rainfall for Feb. FMO selection has been made. Grants and Agreements person starting shortly.

**Avery Thompsom/BIA GP:** Fully Staffed at the RO. Floods and extreme fire danger on the same day.

**Bryce Rogers BIA RM:** Nothing to report.

**Ken Schmid/BLM:** Fire position freeze was lifted Friday. Sent out note regarding Kitty's retirement gift contributions to NRCG.

**Mike Granger/FWS:** Hiring freeze has yet to be lifted.

**Kevin Benton/IDL:** Seasonal recruiting.

**Bruce Suenram/MT DNRC:** Discussion on Aquatic Invasive Species transport, sorting out process for deploying our buckets. Legislative Bill on county commissions allow IA on fire anywhere, it is not a good deal – will keep board apprised.

**Bill Colwell/MT FCA:** Nothing to report.

**Patrick Lonergan/MT CFW:** Nothing to report.

**Vern Burdick/MT S&PO:** Nothing to report.

**Ryan Melin/ND FS:** Nice weather, no snow pack in some areas. 200 firefighters currently signed up for Wildland classes. Waiting to hear back on cooperative agreement.

**Brent Woffinden/NPS:** Hiring freeze lifted for seasonals. Large fire review in Yellowstone. Will be doing our National Glacier fire review in Glacier.

**Greg Morris/USFS:** Fire positions are exempted from hiring freeze; includes seasonals and AD's. Looking to fill base manager at Missoula Jump base and Air Quality position. 30 folks or so supporting Wild and RX fires outside of region.

**No Call in March – Spring Meeting March 27-28**

<b>Board Member (or Works for the Board)</b>	<b>Representing</b>	<b>Remarks/ Possible Alternate</b>	<b>Agency Administrator</b>
Steve Heppner	Bureau of Indian Affairs-NW		
	Bureau of Indian Affairs -GP		Diane Mann-Klager Chris Mursu (3/28)
Rob Miramontez	Bureau of Indian Affairs -RM		
Ken Schmid	Bureau of Land Management – MT/Dakotas		Jon Raby
Mike Granger –Chair	US Fish & Wildlife Service - RM		Paul Santavy
Kevin Benton	Idaho Department of Lands		
Marschal Rothe	Montana Disaster & Emergency Services		Delila Bruno
Burke Honzel	Montana Disaster & Emergency Services		
Mike DeGrosky	MT Department of Natural Resources & Conservation		Bob Harrington
Bruce Suenram	MT Department of Natural Resources & Conservation		
John Monzie	MT Department of Natural Resources & Conservation		
Bill Colwell	Montana State Fire Chiefs' Association		
Patrick Lonergan	Montana County Fire Wardens Association		
Vern Burdick	Montana Sheriffs & Peace Officers Association		
Ryan Melin (P)	North Dakota Forest Service		Larry Kotchman
Brent Woffinden	National Park Service		
Ralph Rau	US Forest Service		Melany Glossa (P)
<b>Those who work for the Board/Others</b>		<b>Those who work for the Board/Others</b>	
Kelly McKee – Business Manager	USFS / NRCG	Mary Fields	Logistics Committee
Mike Almas & Tim Murphy	NRCG Operations	Tracey Nimlos	Business Committee
Kathy Pipkin	NRCC	Crystal Beckman	Prevention/ Education Committee
Dave Soleim	NW MT Zone/NPS	Anthony Krause	NRK
Scott Schuster	E MT Zone/FS	Melissa Wegner	NRTC
Greg Morris	FS		
Maggie Doherty	FS/Aviation Committee		

Monday, March 27

## WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS (ATTENDANCE LIST ON PAGE 1)

### IMT General Session Structure

The group briefly discussed the IMT Meeting agenda on Tuesday, March 28. The NRCG will attend the general session at 1:00. There will be tables set up in the front for the Agency Administrators and the Incident Commanders; the intent is to have a panel-type discussion from that group. The NRCG Executive Session on Wednesday, March 29 will provide an opportunity to discuss any issues/subjects that arise as a result of the panel discussion.

### Initial Bin Items

- Private Resources Letter (DeGrosky)
- Providing clear intent to Operations Committee (Granger)
- Spring MAC Group Exercise (Almas)

### National Report - Aitor Bidaburu

NWCG Chair has changed; John Glenn (BLM) retired, Vice-Chair (Dalan Romero/BIA) is acting in that capacity.

Established new Sub-Committees for Radio Standards & Use and Logistics.

The Interagency Aircraft and Pilot's Sub-Committee was tasked by NAIC, via NWCG, to develop a new aircraft and pilot standards and approval document. This will become a NAIC document and will become the MOU for Interagency Helicopter Standards.

The Coordinating Group Advisory Council (CGAC), with support of NMAC, is working on the following taskings:

- Risk Management Communication Strategy to Incident Management Teams – several reports to CGAC regarding inconsistent methodology used by IMT's to convey risk to Agency Administrators. Task is to gather information on various methods used, make a determination on the best management practice, and make a recommendation on which method best communicates risk and risk management to Agency Administrators.
  - The question was asked of how that risk is being relayed to AA's at this time – there is quite a bit of variability depending on the IMT.
- Buying Teams – CGAC is looking at National Buying Team use over the last 5 years, and what are the best management practices going forward. To clarify, issue is that National Buying Teams are over-tasked.
- Type 3 IMT Composition for Out-of-Area assignments – NMAC is accepting the CGAC recommendation for standardization of Type 3 IMT's mobilized across Geographic Area boundaries. This will be implemented in 2018, but it is strongly encouraged for 2017. Some members felt that this should also be within the Geographic Area, but the decision was for Out-of-Area, internal operations are left up to the GACC. **Bin Item:** How are we going to operate in the NR?

## NRCC Spring Report - Kathy Pipkin

Handout with Spring Report (projects & taskings)

**Bin Item:** Kathy would like a plan in the event a Continuing Resolution is not passed by April 28; requesting each agency to consider who they feel is essential to the NRCC operation, or come to an agreement within the group to have a list ready if/when needed.

New Fire Family Plus will hopefully be out in a few weeks; they found some glitches at the Advanced NFDRS course to work out. Kathy and Melissa will work together to figure out how to best deliver training and refreshers to the Region.

## AGENCY UPDATES

### Paul Santavy - FWS

2018 budget came in with 12% decrease for DOI; not sure how that will affect the FWS or the Refuge System. Other budget cuts as a result of 2013 sequestration. Right now, FMO's are attached to a project leader – the plan was to separate and have them directly report to the Regional level, but that has been put on hold. A lot of refuges could be complexed, right now they are looking at service first agreements in the Jordan area. A lot of vacant positions, trying to work through alternate ways to function and accomplish the work.

### Larry Kotchman - ND Forest Service

Also dealing with budget cuts for ND State Agencies. Budget is in Legislature right now, passed an 11.5% reduction. Closely monitoring President's budget, Department of Agriculture is of most interest. Thanked all of the agencies for their role in the Cooperative Fire Management Plan/Stafford Act Response.

### Ryan Melin - ND FS Fire Manager

Partnered with the ND National Guard, to help boost capacity. Able to certify NG Helicopters through the DOI. Did a compact order state-to-state to New Mexico (in conjunction with South Dakota and Colorado) to help move resources. Same response capacity for 2017 as last year.

### Steve Heppner - BIA Northwest Region

Darren Williams – New FMO. Planning for budget reductions. Coming out of a record wet winter.

### Brent Woffinden - NPS

National FMO meeting week of March 20; centered around the budget situation and how the NPS fire program will have to change/adapt as a result of budget reductions. Stressed that it is difficult to get militia involved on the NPS side to help support IMT's. Brought up fire scars from the Yellowstone fires, and how they have evolved from a fire barrier to now being receptive to fire – this will change how they move forward in that area.

**Ralph Rau - FS**

Completed 3<sup>rd</sup> year of R1 Fire Hire, 168 actions. Hiring freeze lifted for seasonal employees. Same budget situation as other agencies, have not received 2017 PR budget yet, not expecting any major changes. Nationally, 6 Type 1 Helicopters taken off Exclusive-Use contracts and moved to CWN. 2 of those in R1, Helena and Hamilton bases. Expecting 1 from R4 to move to Helena. Attended a Large Fire Review in R5, purpose was to identify lessons learned and bring back. Will have a small team coming around to forests in R1 to review and look for improvements/changes; will also work with IC's and AA's this year.

**Kevin Benton - IDL**

Budget is the same as last year, has passed Legislature but has not been signed yet. Revising Fire Protection Standards within forested areas of Idaho. There will be a committee formed within R1/R4, consisting of all agencies that handle wildland fire response, to come up with a more coordinated response.

**Jon Raby - BLM**

Ken Schmid will be filling in behind John Glenn at NIFC for 4 months. 2<sup>nd</sup> year of Veterans Crew. Has sent out a message encouraging more participation in IMT's/Fire.

**Mike DeGrosky - DNRC**

Legislature in session. Asked to submit 5% budget reduction scenario, planning for that in fire budget. Avoided any personnel reductions. HB481 is still in committee. Shared same concerns about affect of Department of Agriculture budget reduction.

**Marschal Rothe - Montana DES**

John Monzie working on MOU, also working on EAC (Emergency Assistance Compact). There will be a new centralized services division. Marschal will be leaving in July, there will be a replacement to the BOD identified around that time

**Patrick Lonergan - Montana County Fire Wardens Association**

Wildfire Leadership conference coming up (will have a discussion about standardized system and language for evacuation process). There may be a Fire Warden change if Rick Seidlitz retires.

**Bill Colwell - Montana State Fire Chiefs Association**

Retiring in September.

**Vern Burdick - Montana Sheriffs and Peace Officers Association**

Legislature in session, convention in June in Helena.

### NR Operations Spring Report – Mike Almas

Helping with IMT Meetings/Team Plan, LFXML, ICS400. Working with Patrick Murphy to create a business model for getting Collector out to the IMT's and will present proposal at IMT meeting. Operations position is classified, but waiting for firefighter retirement coverage to be reflected. Will have to detail in behind Almas, would not have it filled until mid-fire season.

**Bin Item:** Feedback on the Operations position and how it can better serve all the agencies. Also need to work on better meeting planning/flow (i.e. not having NRCG/IMT meeting same week). It was pointed out that the IMT meeting will be held the second week of April in 2018 and venue will change, this may help with some of that.

### Predictive Services Update – Michael Richmond

Power Point Presentation

### IT Update – Patrick Murphy

Waiting for approval for iPad's, but should have late-April/early-May. Target amount is 15/team and they can be used for Collector/ArcGIS (details at IMT meeting). Equipment replacement is taking up a lot of the budget. MTDC is working on a design for a smaller battery powered router that could be used at spike camps, etc. Could transfer info quickly via USB device (upload maps, etc.). Minimal cost - ~\$100/device. 2/team for this year (1 for ICP, 1 for spike camp). Share position between IT and NRTC is held up, current detailer will be going back to home unit, will look to detail again for fire season.

### NR Contracting Update – Tim Murphy

Passed out solicitation schedule. Attended contractor's meeting. Seeing a lot of damage on rental vehicles with no documentation to back it up (i.e. no accident investigation, poor job on release inspections).

### Structure Protection Plan – Bill Colwell

Proposal is to change the date on the 2016 plan, and finalize. No changes. **Bin Item** – finalize and sign.

## ZONE UPDATES

### Kevin Benton - North Idaho

Issue from BOD meeting, agencies wanted to bring forward that if they had a completed task book, they would have selection priority for S420. Concern with strategy of sharing ATGS – possibility of individual getting pulled or not returning to IMT. NIZ would like to hear NRCG plan to resolve issue of overall recruitment process and succession planning for IMT's. Zone is working on engaging agency personnel within the zone to outreach for participation (i.e. job fairs, road show).

There was a discussion about setting aside some time at the IC breakout to discuss mentoring/succession planning and the NRCG taking a more active role in identifying the gaps and helping draft a plan. **ACTION ITEM:** Kevin Benton will draft out what we discussed and a plan, due May 1.

#### Dave Soleim - Northwest

New Center Manager at KIC, Mike Gibbons. Dispatch Zones working on building up militia/Type 3 IMT support. Decided to not have Agency Administrator workshop for 2017. Talked about NRCG's intent for local zones to take more ownership in building support. Continuing Resolution (CR) has been impactive, affecting agreements.

#### Marty Mitkus - Central Montana (P)

Updating Zone Charter, personnel changes. Brought up addressing expectation from NRCG in terms of local zones taking a more active role in succession planning, getting people involved. Granger brought up meeting flow again, ideally all the zones/committees would have met prior to Fall/Spring NRCG meetings. Need to take what the NIZ comes up with, and provide that information/direction – redefine expectations and get a letter out to the zones (Schmid). **ACTION ITEM:** Schmid/Granger, by May 1.

#### Ryan Melin - North Dakota (P)

NPS has 900 acres planned to burn, FS has 5500. Flying 13/13 PSE firefighting jobs. State-to-State compact with NM to provide multi-agency strike teams and OH support. Got involved in the Pipeline protest situation, activated EOC. Had National Guard involved last year, provided FF training for them. Have the final signature on their 6-party Cooperative Agreement.

#### Scott Schuster - Eastern Montana

A lot of movement in Billings Dispatch, also talked about getting more interest in team positions. South Dakota had a question for the BOD about their draft of the charter, he will send to Granger to look at.

#### Mike Gagen - South Central (P)

No issues or concerns since fall meeting. Spring meeting scheduled for April 11, updating operating plan. Good luck with restrictions coordination last year. Bozeman Dispatch moved out to the Bozeman Ranger District.

#### NRCG Board Contacts to Zones Update

If Rick Seidlitz retires, Patrick Lonergan will take his place.

Bill Colwell will also follow up with a successor when he retires in September, will confirm during their April meeting.

#### Team Member Recognition Process & Expenses – Mike Almas

Mike would like the group to agree on a planned schedule for NRCG-related expenses. Facilities usually run around \$2,500 each year and awards are approximately \$1,000. **ACTION ITEM:** Mike will work on a draft plan, and present on the May NRCG conference call.

#### Leader's Intent for 2017 IMT Members

The group discussed verbage in Safety section, specifically driving regulations. Agreed on change, which was incorporated into the final signed copy.

### EFF Training – Mike DeGrosky/Melissa Wegner

There was concern that EFF's were not getting selected for training. Point from DNRC is that they are not AD's, and are playing a role in boosting capacity during fire season. Nominations that come in are not always complete and accurate, so there is no way for the NRTC to interpret. If they are clearly associated with a local Fire Department, then it is no problem. Need to have clarification on this and update in the training operating plan. **ACTION ITEM:** DeGrosky/Wegner will bring to Training Committee on April 19 and update.

### Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) – Mike DeGrosky/Bruce Suenram

AIS issue brought to the table; NWCG has published a Guide to Preventing Aquatic Invasive Species. The reason NRCG did not initially adopt the NWCG guide was due to an issue with the way Bambi Buckets were directed to be treated. This has since been resolved via a technical bulletin (Monzie). It was suggested that the NRCG put a response together, supporting the NWCG guide (Schmid). **ACTION ITEM:** the NPS and DNRC will put this together by May 1.

Tim Murphy would like the Equipment Committee to take a look at the guide, and identify ways to mitigate with ground-based water handling equipment. **Tasking from NRCG → Equipment Committee.**

[Tuesday, March 28](#)

## COMMITTEE UPDATES

### Aviation – Maggie Doherty/John Harris

John presented 2 Power Points, Hands Across the Border and Update on the Helicopter Operations Program.

EGP program will start showing location of short-haul ships (interagency). Ralph asked if the short-haul capability could be used for all jurisdictions – yes, after we have exhausted all other resources. Dispatch offices will have updated source list. Two Bear is an approved aircraft.

Based on AAR's, it seems as though calls are being made simultaneously for short-haul and ground ambulance, so message is getting out that the tool should be used as a transport to other medical transport (i.e. ground ambulance).

Guard AFRCC – part of source list for Guard capable units. If Guard is tasked through AFRCC, there is no charge to the incident agency/jurisdiction, but if called directly, it is billed differently.

Maggie addressed the issues that came up last year regarding ordering of CWN needed aircraft for Initial Attack (i.e. aircraft could be available within dispatch area for immediate response, but fill is from out-of-area); NICC uses the model for large fire support when determining the aircraft fill. Working with Operations and Contracting to work through the issues.

UAS – considered aircraft (anything about .55 pounds). Need to establish airworthiness requirements; Roth/Flesch working on this issue. Subcommittee will be tasked with determining operational procedures when a project is in place. Currently, a UAS is considered an unapproved aircraft (for FS) and must go through the proper procedures to request use. The BLM is looking at hosting a training session in Billings.

### Business – Tracey Nimlos

All agency leads recently participated in a National Incident Business meeting and were able to work with the NWCG and FEMA.

4 sessions of S260/261 across the GA + full day breakout session with IMT Finance sections. eISuite held the last week of April, NR Business Webinars in May (open to anyone)

NR IIBMH supplements are ready to be posted and disseminated April 1. Added language to reflect reasonable accommodation (RA) requests – this was discussed at length, but anyone needing to request reasonable accommodation needs to go through their home unit (not the incident) prior to dispatch. No one at the host agency or IMT has authority to approve, nor do the IBA's. Those who have requested RA through their agency need to relay this to their dispatch. Tracey will talk about this to the IC's at the IMT meeting. **ACTION ITEM** – Ralph requested a briefing paper regarding this issue for the Line Officers, Tracey also requested this be added to the Out-of-Area IMT briefing letter.

Kathy requested this to be raised through dispatch channels – **ACTION ITEM**: Granger will add this as an agenda item on next CGAC conference call.

Finance section(s) have a good number of people on the GA Priority Trainee list – this was a direct result of Business Committee outreaching and soliciting interest internally.

Discussed timeframe for getting people qualified from Time Recorder → Section Chief; at best, 6 seasons to move through the channels and get quality assignments. DeGrosky brought up Recognized Prior Learning and its place in the finance world (and others). Has the business committee looked at RPL? Not at this time, but the pool is relatively small anymore (no Admin or SSS types locally anymore).

Making good progress on documents being 508c.

Rental Vehicle Task Group – added tire option to solicitation, removed compact SUV's.

Approved a very slight rate increase in Chapter 50.

Updated charter (Tracey will get back for signature).

### Dispatch – Mark DeCaria

Charter modified in 2016, extended tours to longer than 1 year to maintain consistency.

Dispatch Workshop last week of April at Fort Harrison. Significant topics include technology changes, IRWING, Cache/IMT expanded interface (subcommittee), dispatching EMS resources, changes to Idaho resources, succession planning/training within dispatch. Looking at potentially standardizing SOP's within GACC; this will not mean every dispatch office follows same procedures, but format would be the same.

### Equipment – Warren Appelhans (P)

Warren has taken over for Jim Reuter temporarily. Committee is short 4 members (ND/IDL/Fire Chiefs/Training Liasion) – have discussed combining with Logistics. The two committees work closely together. Recommendation is to combine, **Bin Item** for Executive Session.

Ambulance solicitation is out, award by mid-May/June.

Need to talk to Tim about the potential for a Best Value solicitation for masticators/chippers.

#### Fuels – Kevin Beck

Working with Ken as Board Liaison to drum up committee support/membership – looking for MT State, Tribal or BIA representative. Per Amanda Boatwright, can include Robert Jones (BIA RM Region), DeGrosky will task someone from the state and Diane will work on another BIA rep.

How can our interagency agreements help with prescribed fire/fuels projects (Granger)? The big issue is how federal agencies can pay states to come help. The 6-party agreement added verbiage to allow this, if solution is worked out, will cover DOI.

Group is looking for more clear direction and tasking from NRCG.

What is the avenue for bringing in resources via agency/interagency agreements and communicating what resources are available? Need to develop some sort of notification system. Steve Heppner suggest a Hub for resource sharing. **ACTION ITEM:** Heppner/Beck will work on a plan.

#### Logistics – Mary Fields

Mary took a new position and Dave Jones will take over as the new chair. Logistics will be meeting after IMT meeting. Also requesting tasks from NRCG. Support combination of Equipment/Logistics committees.

#### Fire Prevention/Education – Crystal Beckman

Updated charter – **Bin Item:** Review and approve at Executive Session.

All agencies are represented on the committee, Rita Chandler is vice-chair and will be taking over as chair in 2018. Terms are 2-years.

Started a discussion on standard evacuation language, committee is tied in, and will work with MSPOA. Also suggested a representative from an IMT to be involved.

Bruce Suenram and Chris Johnson are working on restrictions training for local government.

Discussion about how well the restrictions process is working, is it worth the interagency effort and are we accomplishing what the objective is? It is a major workload during fire season. More specifically, are we preventing fires and are we preventing public confusion? **ACTION ITEM:** Tasking from NRCG to Prevention/Education Committee → Strategic check-in, taking a comprehensive look at the strategy across the Geographic Area and report back on effectiveness.

#### Training – Jesse Best

Training season in full swing, Needs Analysis for 2017-2018 due soon. Training committee, along with Tim Murphy, was tasked with looking at RT130 for Equipment Operators and evaluating if what we are doing for tactical operators is sufficient. It was determined that it was adequate, but also encouraging improvements (encouraging private instructors to have Facilitative Instructor course, handing out IRPG's, having a workshop to talk about all the tools available).

Wegner – issue came up that 300 level courses are being put on by zones, and zones were under the impression that students did not have to meet the pre-requisites set in the FMCG at the zone level. Running into quite a few people NOT meeting the pre-requisites but still being given credit for course.

NRCG Board agrees that policy is already in place for students to meet pre-requisites (Field Manager's Course Guide) at ALL levels. There is also no guidance in the GA to foster coordination between the NRTC/RTO and the zones when putting on 300+ level courses outside of NRTC. NRCG approves of addition to Training Ops Plan to reflect requirement of coordination between NRTC and zones for 300+ courses, and re-emphasis that ALL students must meet pre-requisites for courses.

Melissa talked more about the Needs Analysis and how it relates to the coordination between the zones; cross-checked the Needs Analysis from this past year and it came very close to what the training curriculum looked like at NRTC. The point being if there is a large group of people needing a 300 level course, that was not reflected on the Needs Analysis, where is the breakdown in communication?

#### **Operations – Cory Buhl**

Reviewed charter, agreed to 2-year terms. Discussed voting and decision making within the Ops Committee; if not able to reach a consensus, will bring to the NRCG BOD.

Discussion regarding Ops Committee role in managing IMT's and zone oversight of IMT's; intent is unclear. Requested clear Leader's Intent to be presented at the IMT general session.

#### **Northern Rockies Cache Update – Anthony Krause**

Adding a couple positions – workleader (quality assurance duties) and accounting technician.

Continuing to improve efficiency, working with kits to improve and modernize.

Site visit requests are welcomed, and they are trying to get out to some of the units to communicate what the cache has to offer. Can offer saw/pump training as well.

#### **GACC Cost Share – Tracey Nimlos**

Referenced handout – first 2 categories are agreed upon pre-season, 3<sup>rd</sup> is decided at the time it is needed. In 2016, 3<sup>rd</sup> category was not utilized.

Need to come to an agreement pre-season for categories 1 & 2; the numbers are based on a 10 year average, so they may fluctuate a bit as the year range changes. No objections, Tracey will get the document out for signatures.

#### **NRCC Mob Center – Roy Robinson**

Roy asked the group to start a discussion about the possibility of a Mobilization Center, something that could benefit the Region as a whole. Need to define what a Mob Center is – a place to stage incoming resources (i.e. jetloads of crews, IMT's) that could support sleeping and eating arrangements, with a travel component included as well (rental vehicles, ground support). Also, when we bring in Canadian resources, they require additional training upon arrival and this could be a good place to facilitate that as well. Contract equipment inspections are a large workload that usually falls on Missoula Dispatch, with no real facility available. This could alleviate that problem.

Budget constraints were brought up if this was going to be a permanent facility; consensus was to look at more of a hybrid "pop-up" option, but with some basic infrastructure (bathrooms/showers/meeting area). Ideally we would have more than one in the Region.

Need a starting point and want to identify some possibilities ahead of time. Need something that can be set up within 24-48 hours. Additionally, there might be people out there who don't want to be assigned

to an IMT, but have the skills to help with this type of operation. **ACTION ITEM:** NRCG task → Equipment/Logistics, Business, and Dispatch Committees (Granger/Pipkin); report out by Fall meeting.

#### NRCG Website – Kelly McKee

Talked about options for re-design and movement of NRCG website to NIFC server, and management after that.

For now, **tasking from NRCG → Committee Chairs** is to clean up old material on the current site.

#### Discussion following IMT General Session

Following the IMT general session and panel discussion, the group had a lengthy discussion regarding succession planning and NRCG oversight to IMT's. The **action items** that came out of this were:

- 1) Compile data on workload to have the IMT application process be an annual occurrence.  
(Almas)
- 2) Schedule a workshop with the NR IC's, the NRCG BOD and Agency Administrators. The dates picked are May 23-25, venue TBD (Kelly). Will need facilitators (DeGrosky). Would also like the IC's to pick one additional person to bring with them who could move up to the IC role in the future (5 -10 years?). The end result of the workshop would be a Team Management Plan.

[Wednesday, March 29](#)

#### NRTC Update/Priority Trainees – Melissa Wegner

Working with Judy Heintz on how to implement team plan and rostering while incorporating Priority Trainee list. Not very many on the list came from IMT's, so will extend the application period for those individuals. The word is getting out; the numbers went from 80 in 2016 to 300+ this year. Will work with Judy to cross check rosters/list and clean up. One clarification is that Priority Trainees come from the IMT home Geographic Area, not the incident Geographic Area.

Other GA's mobilize teams with a Training Specialist, so implementing NMAC guidance is an easy transition. Only 1 qualified Training Specialist in Region 1, need to work with other GA's to help get more qualified. Also need to use Recognized Prior Learning (RPL) to help get others qualified (i.e. those who function as a Training Officer at their home units).

Discussion about taskbooks and speed to competency. We need to remember that the task book process is a competency based system. Sometimes the process can be unclear, and we need to educate people. Also need to provide some guidance and support. Suggested that we come up with a Leader's Intent on speed to competency draft letter, but make the intent clear. Letter needs to be prefaced with what the issue is, and encourage people to use all the tools available (i.e. RPL). **Action Item:** Larry Kotchman/Bob Harrington/Diane Mann-Klager/Melany Glossa (Ralph) – will come up with a draft by May 1.

Would like a list of shortage positions to reference. **Action Item:** Melissa Wegner will have by April 20.

Melissa discussed the alternative methods they are using to deliver courses; remote/satellite delivery, virtual reality. Also reminded the group that the NRTC has a "[15 on Friday](#)" learning series that covers a wide variety of topics.

### AFD Operating Plan – Ryan Patrick

Last year, fair share percentages changed to tie them back to 6 categories:

- 1) NRCC Workload (10-year average) – discussed at 2016 Spring Meeting
- 2) Operations (Self-Determined)
- 3) Contracting (NRCC Workload)
- 4) Smoke (Self-Determined)
- 5) Safety (Self-Determined)
- 6) NRTC (Based on attendance)

**Action Item:** Payment history across the agencies (Ryan)

Financial agreement expires this year; need to think about additional cost centers to bring forward to incorporate into the new plan. **Action Item:** For Fall NRCG Meeting.

For this year, each agency needs to make a decision on their respective contributions and report to Ryan. **Action Item:** Numbers to Ryan by April conference call.

Ryan can help work through grants/agreements process for payments.

Harrington – emphasis in Legislature this year was on Cooperative Agreements/Plans. Brought up other resources/programs (i.e. Smokejumpers, Medical Program, Cache, Aviation assets) that are not included in the financial plan, but support the intent as a whole.

**Action Item:** Draft a list of resources and the costs associated, across all 3 states/Geographic Area, numbers due to Kelly by May 1.

### MAC Plan – Marschal Rothe

Discussed protocol for distributing decision documents from the MAC group. Group consensus was they would be filed in a location available to those who need access, perhaps a password protected site. The final documentation package will be maintained internally within the MAC group at the time the group is deactivated.

Talked about FOIA requests for information related to MAC group decisions; if final package is held at NRCC, and all states/agencies are represented, each agency lead could go to their employee within the NRCC. Determined that any FOIA request would go through the NRCG, agency protocols will be followed.

The strictest records management protocol is followed, depending on the incident agency or agencies.

Marschal will send out the final draft document next week, comments due by the end of the week, and if no comments back, will be a final document.

### Mob Guide Updates – Kathy Pipkin

7-day outlook will be based on more current research done by Matt Jolly (will talk to FMO's at their meeting), incorporating new indices based on true, growing live fuel moisture. Michael and Kathy will run 7-day potential against Matt's calculations to see if it is a better correlation to actual field conditions.

Mob Guide defines adjoining units as those sharing a common boundary.

Position Update – Kathy would like to get an approved organization chart through NRCG, so that vacancies are filled in a timely manner. Each agency would decide on funding if/when a position identified on the org chart becomes vacant. Ralph emphasized that, for most agencies, it is necessary to have a position identified on the org chart to be able to fill or even detail into.

It was suggested that the role of the Direct Protection Coordinator at NRCC be clarified; that title is a classification from the state, but want to make it clear what that position does for the organization.

#### **IMT Selection, Configuration and Oversight – Mike Granger**

WHAT is management and oversight – need to define – and also identify how the Operations Committee fits into this. Operations Committee works for the BOD, so governance may be a better term than oversight.

Much of this discussion will be incorporated into the May Workshop.

Wildland Fire Management Team – Ken Schmid

The advantage when the FMT was established was the ability to order a short team; currently there are 59 people on the roster. It is recognized that they do not mobilize with everyone, and there could be people who prefer the FMT to a Type 1 or Type 2.

Work this discussion into the May Workshop as well, but provide more guidance from NRCG.

#### **Delegation of Authority for NRCC Manager and Operations – Mike Granger**

Reviewed and approved for signature.

#### **IMT Rotation Scenario – Kathy Pipkin**

Easiest and cleanest scenario is to not bump anyone up from 8-hr into 2-hr (assuming an IMT from initial 2-hr rotation gets assigned) until the rotation officially changes. NRCG BOD delegates decision to NRCC Manager.

#### **Agency Administrator Time – Larry Kotchman and Diane Mann-Klager**

Larry – will start the Letter of Intent on speed to competency issue. Will update Agency Administrator's on the May workshop, Diane can attend and maybe Bob Harrington.

There were not as many panel questions during the panel discussion at the IMT general session; suggested spending more time up front prepping for that next year (work with IC's) to have better engagement.

Suggested utilizing committees to do some more pre-work and bring final products to the meetings, increase efficiency.

Keep thinking of ways to have AA's engaged.

Diane – recognizes that some of the issues brought up are going to a national level (i.e. IMT recruitment) and will take back to the AA's. Need to have a hard conversation about what may NOT get done in order to meet the mission.

Larry – what are the expectation from NRCG to the AA? The expectation is that when issues come up that require direction from AA, the respective chairs (NRCG/AA) will communicate to reach a resolution.

Larry – looking for a good product out of the May workshop, better framework and recommendations for short and long-term strategies.

The AA group does not have a regular schedule of conference calls, but is heavily engaged during fire season. Usually one face-to-face meeting, in conjunction with the NRCG meeting, and intermittent conference calls.

### Bin Items

From Monday:

- Private Resources Letter (DeGrosky)
  - Will have ready for April Conference Call.
- Providing clear intent to Operations Committee (Granger)
  - Discuss further in May, but may need to provide better taskings in the future.
- Spring MAC Group Exercise (Almas)
  - Will replace with IC/NRCG/Line Officer Workshop for this year.

Added:

- Type 3 Quals in GACC
  - NMAC not looking to direct internal GACC operations, business as usual for 2017.
- Dispatch Center Consolidation
  - Fall NRCG Meeting agenda item.
- Essential Employees (CR Impact)
  - Kathy will come up with a list of who is essential and report out to the agencies.
- Structure Protection Guidelines
  - Reviewed and approved for 2017.
- Fire Prevention & Education Committee Charter
  - Reviewed and approved.
- Equipment/Logistics Committee Combination
  - Both committees concur, need to confirm on April CC.



# Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

Federal, State, and Local Government Agencies Working Together In Emergency Response Management

## **Board of Directors Conference Call Agenda**

**Tuesday, April 18, 2017**

### **Participants**

**Board Members:** Steve Heppner, Ray Hart, Bryce Rogers, Ken Schmid, Mike Granger, JT Wensman, Marschal Rothe, Mike DeGrosky, Bill Colwell, Patrick Lonergan, Ryan Melin, Brent Woffinden, Greg Morris

**Deputies and Others:** Kelly McKee, Steve Zachry, Mike Almas, Tim Murphy, Kathy Pipkin, Judy Heintz, Roy Robinson, Ryan Patrick, Melissa Wegner, Patrick Murphy, Anthony Krause, Michael Odell, Rich Cowger

**Purpose:** This is a public meeting for the purpose of conducting government business.

**NWCG Update:** None

**Predictive Services Update:** None

**National, NR, and Operational Updates:** SA at PL 3, NR Buying Team dispatched to SA last Friday (4/14), Fort Belknap had 2 fires for 26 acres.

Operations: Not much to report, next week Roger Staats will be over to start work on square chutes.

**Contracting Updates:** NPS closed Weed Wash solicitations, BLM has closed most of theirs, DNRC still has a few open, FS in week 2 of evaluation panel for Heavy Equipment, Faller Module, Mechanics.

**Safety Updates (Zachry):** Sending messages about fuel geysering, want to make sure everyone is getting them. Send him a message if not. Last couple weeks, two hospitalizations with Rhabdo in SE. May want to standardize our incident within an incident plans within the GA, board could look at. Seems as though some IMT's are adjusting the 206WF form, need to keep it to NWCG standard. In the MAC Plan, some Safety Officer's would like to see Steve's position come visit the IMT's and have that written in. Finished up Type 3 Safety Officer course last week, very successful, should definitely continue within the GACC, small class but opened up communication lines, variety of positions represented. Granger – wanted clarification on visits – per Zachry, priority has been forests/units.

Pipkin – will send IC's email list, ask for Incident within an Incident plans, Judy confirmed they were using 9-Line at IMT meetings.

### **Follow up on Old Business:**

***Recommendation and Decision to combine Equipment/Logistics Committees*** – move forward, will send out a letter.

***Private Resources Letter (DeGrosky)*** – had a good discussion about the letter last year, with input from State Fire Chief's Association, so recommending we just change date and signature for 2017. Greg asked if there were any incidents with private resources that would cause change in letter – no one is aware of any. Recommendation was accepted.

***NRCG Financial Plan – Agency Contributions (Ryan Patrick)*** – sent out a spreadsheet yesterday, still looking for what payments are going to be, but Ken will discuss further. Ken – meteorologist position that BLM funds, what if we did not include and how does that balance out? There is a lot of uncertainty in the federal agencies, so we need to have a good idea of what our budgets are before proceeding. Proposing holding off on meteorologist

position for now, but try and have someone come in to help in the summer. We can reevaluate when we know more.

Granger – how does that impact our organization this summer? Kathy – biggest impact is workload to Michael, but could try and order in when we go to 7-day coverage. Question was asked of how it was handled when Bryan Henry left; Mike Kreyenhagen was able to come in as an AD, but it has been a few years so not sure of his comfort level at this point. Kathy could work with Michael to see what is out there; there is definitely a shortage of meteorologists and they don't often take fire assignments. Concern brought up about workload on 7-day coverage and perhaps unintended consequences of not having position.

Granger - makes sense from a financial standpoint, it balances the financial plan out a little better.

Greg – asked if they could look at a detailer/temp promotion option without commitment, if budget works out.

Ken would be willing to work to find detailer, can work with Ryan to update sheet and distribution.

Proposal to fill for the summer (detailer/intern) was accepted, Ken will work with Kathy and Ryan to come up with alternatives and costs.

Ryan still needs the payment amounts from agencies for the fair share piece of the financial plan. It was brought up to use the agreements that are already in place, as states are on a different FY and getting something in place at this point to transfer funds might not happen. Do we need to have an agreement with all the BIA regions, or can we work with one to keep things simple? Agreed to work with the Rocky Mountain region when an agreement needs to be used for exchanging funds because they are contributing the positions for the BIA in the financial plan.

The decision was made that the DNRC will work with BLM utilizing the agreement in place for the payment they made to the BLM last year. As we determine the meteorologist position, and the costs associated with that position the amount of over contribution will change and payments from agencies may change as well. IDL and FWS will work together, as they did last year. Once the amounts of the payments being made by IDL and DNRC are known please contact Ryan on the numbers. Ryan will also send out an updated financial plan once an amount for the meteorologist position is determined. These are the final steps to getting the Annual Operating Plan ready for signature by the NRCG board members included in the financial plan.

**Operations Position (Schmid)** – still waiting on business office in Denver for final approval on retirement coverage (NIFC gave approval, hoping for this week). Cannot fly until that is in there. Hope to have it out as soon as they get confirmation on that component. Even if it is out in the next few weeks, a person would not be in place until 45-60 days after offer. Need to fill behind Almas (done mid-May). Greg Archie is interested, proposed to have him come in when Mike is done. Need a decision from the BOD to have Greg come in for 60 days or until position is filled. Will work with DNRC for funding and payment. BOD approves, will move forward with this.

**MAC Plan (Rothe)** - had to get off the call, but per follow-up email, he has no comments back from the draft he sent out on 4/17, will finalize by Friday, 4/21 if he does not hear anything else.

#### **New Business:**

**Type 2 Crew Mobilization Time (Pipkin)** – have issue with some agency crews mobilizing quickly, been some instances where they are waiting a full day, made phone calls to negotiate when there are other crews available to mobilize quicker. Would like to add verbage to the mobilization guide to firm up response time. Proposal from DeGrosky to task Ops Committee with coming up with a standard; Mike and Kathy will work with them to have a draft by May 1.

**NRCG/Executive Board/IC Workshop to develop IMT Guidance (Granger)** – DeGrosky is leading this, but had to get off the call. We need to send an invitation soon – will be including Agency Administrator's, NRCG BOD and IC's. Would also like to identify 2-3 "future" IC's and extend the invitation to them. Should be a group of 30-35. Board members are representing the needs of the zones, so group identified above should be sufficient. Kelly will send out facility costs when they are firmed up and ask for payment contribution from each agency.

**Automated technology for IMT's (Almas)** – looking for input, as an IC, how do we bring technology into the team. Put together a “task force” of some sort for ideas, presented briefing paper to IC's at breakout. IC's were in agreement to immediately implement. Also benefit to standardize, as each team is doing something different. Pre-season work to be done. Have come up with a couple options, preferred would be to have a pre-season task force come on in May/June to prepare some of this. Would have to ask people to use their own management code (Preparedness) to come to Missoula, need to identify agencies. 1 SITL, 2 GIS and 2 Trainee GIS, put together packages. 2<sup>nd</sup> option is to wait until we have fires to use support code. Not preferred. Southern Area has already done this so there are people out there that can help.

Granger – identify who you want to be part of this, find out if that agency would be willing to support. Also identify if there are OT needs. By next CC, firm up plan, identify people. Granger – need names/numbers, route it around to discuss.

**IHC Evaluation Form (Almas)** – Ops Committee tasked Almas with coming up with a draft, worked with Chris Smith (chair of IHC group). IHC group approves, has run up to Ops Committee and IC's, and talked to Greg. Would like to have this final by the time the IHC's are on. Form will be electronic and fillable, and will be a beta test for national use. Two small changes to include all-risk, and change “Northern Rockies” to read “Region 1” but this is likely 95% complete. All Northern Rockies IHC's will get evaluations, but will also be required for any IHC that comes into the GA. For FS crews, copies will be sent to Greg; for BIA crews, copies will be sent to BIA/Boise.

#### **Round Robin – Updates from Agency Participants**

**BIA NW** – no update

**BIA GP** – Slow right now, rain.

**BIA RM** – Bryce attending local leadership first week of May, readiness reviews.

**BLM** – Ken leaves May 1, Cory Buhl will be filling in for month of May. Will send out personnel changes in an email.

**Mike Granger/FWS** - RX Burn season – 4200 acres accomplished in NE Montana. Will be burning for next month or so. Entering into Service First agreement with BLM for fire suppression response in Jordan area.

**IDL** - same aviation resources, issue for upcoming year is working out moving resources between Region 1 and Region 4.

**MT DES** – no update

**MT DNRC** – no update

**Montana State Fire Chiefs Association** - state chief's conference in October in Helena, will reach out for other attendees.

**Montana Fire Wardens** - conference a couple weeks, topic of evacuation standard within state, developed a recommended best practice doc that went to MSPOA, will be moving forward with that. Officially transitioned with Rick Seidlitz, Patrick will be primary, Rick will be alternate.

**MT Peace Officers** - absent

**ND FS** – pretty quiet, active weather pattern, not anticipating much of a spring fire season. Will be able to staff 5 Type 6 engines.

**NPS** – have the cert for wildfire specialist position, will be located either in Lakewood, CO or Montana.

**USFS** – smokejumpers have rookie training, no requests for R3 yet, supporting R8, working to fill smokejumper base manager position, IT specialist detail request came out, do not have an air quality person, finishing up IMS/EMT training, working through budget process. YWNSA training next week, Greg will be at National Fire Director meeting in OR, RLT/FMO meeting this week.

**The next scheduled Conference Call is Tuesday, May 16, 2017 @ 1000 MDT**



# Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

Federal, State, and Local Government Agencies Working Together In Emergency Response Management

## **Board of Directors Conference Call**

**Tuesday, May 16, 2017**

### **Participants:**

**Board Members:** Steve Heppner, Ray Hart, Bryce Rogers, Cory Buhl, Mike Granger, Kevin Benton, Marschal Rothe, Mike DeGrosky, Vern Burdick, Jeff Hickerson, Greg Morris

**Deputies and Others:** Kelly McKee, Tim Murphy, Harold Gemmell, Pam Jolly, Aitor Bidaburu, Ryan Patrick, Steve Zachry, Dave Jones, Warren Appelhans

**Purpose:** This is a public meeting for the purpose of conducting government business.

**NWCG Update (Aitor Bidaburu):** Predictive services review is wrapping up and the task team is presenting findings to Fire Management board in Boise on May 17, should be coming out soon. Nationally pretty quiet, PL1, supporting 2 large fires, there are a couple meetings going on this week (NWCG, NMAC).

**Predictive Services Update:** Absent

**National, NR, and Operational Updates:** Operations – sending a few miscellaneous overhead to the south, Judy & Mike are in Billings for meetings for the week. Mike Almas is transitioning with Greg Archie in the Operations position. Current jumpers are re-certifying, rookies going through rookie training; jumpers are also getting ready to set up in Silver City.

**Contracting Updates:** Finalizing new awards, new companies and equipment (with amount of equipment, decreased government ceilings). No concerns about amount of equipment, more than enough to meet needs. The NPS hosted the weed wash solicitation; doing government inspections on new weed washers. There are a few new companies and one that has produced 6 over the winter. BLM – MOU inspectors and government auditors are finalizing inspections on fuel tenders, gray water, potable water and tents. Government inspections being done on Type 3 caterers. The FS solicitations are in the final stages of price negotiations, inspections completed. All 3 agencies are in line to get info to dispatch 1<sup>st</sup> week of June. DNRC handling rental cars and Type 2 Crew agreement (DeGrosky – DNRC will meet on May 18 regarding this agreement).

**Safety Updates (Zachry):** 1 jumper got a staph infection in SE from bug bite and spent a couple days in the hospital. CRP report came out this week. Strawberry fatality CRP review should be out soon.

### **Follow up on Old Business**

**IMT Summit Update (Mike DeGrosky):** Facilitators are in place (Billy Phillips, Mike O'Herron, Mark Jones) and ready to go. Facility is confirmed and administrative team is also in place. Working on getting facilitators together prior to Tuesday – perhaps Monday afternoon/evening? Agenda is not put together yet, but it will have to be quite flexible. The desired outcome is a final team plan, or recommendations to NRCG to approve Thursday afternoon. Plan has been sent out, asked people to read and make comments. People will still have time to review first thing on Tuesday. Idea is to brainstorm ideas, break out into groups; will move back and forth between plenary and small group sessions.

Mike Granger – Paul Santavy will be representing the AA's, although there may be a few more that attend.

**Plan to share expenses (Facilities/Awards):** Vern Burdick/MSPOA did not get approval to support funding for awards. Will just rotate another agency in for 2019 and 2024. Kevin Benton/IDL – slotted for meeting facilities for

2019, but their budget has already been submitted; just need to move out one year, will swap IDL and USFS in 2019 and 2020, respectively.

**NR Dispatch Steering Committee Charter:** Per Kevin Benton, Holly Arnzen will be taking over the member slot previously held by Beth Palanuik. Otherwise, charter is approved by the BOD.

**AIS Prevention/Ground Based Water-Handling Equipment (Warren Appelhans):** Equipment committee met last week about AIS, emphasized that this is starting to be a major concern. There is the NWCG guide to prevention, not widely distributed at this time. Warren did talk with Julie Lockman from MTDC, will meet again this week or next, so may change some recommendations. Need to get draft recommendations out. Hope to have final draft recommendation by next week.

Tim Murphy – was there an official request requesting this be a top priority for MTDC/Researchers? Brought up the contractor side and needing to provide them with information and guidance.

Mike DeGrosky – this is a big issue to the Governor, anything NRCG can do to raise the priority to get professionals to work on this will be helpful.

Greg Morris – what about specificity for WH equipment – is it ALL, just engines, or water tenders, etc. In the draft document it references “avoid drafting from known infested waters” – what are we doing about that piece? Do we have good information on where those places are?

Mike DeGrosky – MT FWP publishes a map, should be easily attainable.

Tim Murphy - what about engines from other GA's that have a bigger impact? Also, it should be any apparatus that is drafting water.

Warren Appelhans – as long as they are not spraying into a live stream (portable hose and nozzles), it is OK. NWCG guide does talk about getting it mapped.

Kevin Benton – regarding chemical treatment, what is FWP recommending for chemical treatment? On the CC, they were using the chemicals set forth in NWCG.

Mike Granger – have Warren/Equipment committee come up with something by the end of next week, will have BOD review via email or another CC. Will help expedite process. Warren will meet with Tim/Julie/MTDC and have two letters of recommendation (one to the field on how to deal with this, and another on priority to research teams).

## **New Business**

Marschal Rothe – asked for date for **Governor's Fire Brief** – Wednesday, June 7 @ Missoula Rural FD HQ (corner of South and Reserve) at 10:30 MDT.

**Mobilization of Local Government Fire Forces Document (Mike DeGrosky)** – recommending approval for 2017, BOD concurs.

**Hiring Risa Lange-Navarro (Harold Gemmell for Kathy Pipkin)** – while Risa was still working, she produced 7-day, monthly and seasonal potentials. Kathy is hoping she can come in on a short-term basis to get those produced.

Mike Granger – just signed annual budget for NRCC (2017) – is this included?

Mike DeGrosky – seems like we have accounted for predictive services in the fair share agency contributions and one of them is actually vacant.

Ryan Patrick – FWS and BLM are covering each respective predictive services, is this an alternative to the previous discussion of having an intern/detailer?

Table for now – need Kathy to provide more information.

### **Round Robin – Updates from Agency Participants**

**BIA NW** – quiet, has been a wet winter, getting through readiness reviews.

**BIA GP** – slow, were having a few fires but got precipitation and fire danger has moderated. There is a possibility that they will have a detailer going to RMCC, if so, might be asking BIA agencies in RM for detailer to fill behind.

**BIA RM** – couple people on assignment, one on way back got into a non-injury accident, under review.

**BLM** – Deputy Secretary of Interior has approved request to fill NR Operations position, waiting for firefighter coverage to be finalized. Finished up burning. Starting the first week of June, Justin Kincaid will be filling in behind Ken Schmid.

**Mike Granger/FWS** - Seasonal firefighters on board this week, doing refresher training. Burned ~6000 acres this spring. 12% budget cut directed and trying to figure out how that works with the organization.

**IDL** - quiet, a few IA fires over the previous week. Personnel being hired, finishing up readiness reviews over the next few weeks. May get drawn into disaster scenarios (flooding), working on Statewide Operating Plan.

**MT DES** – Will not be at IMT Summit, continuing dealing with flooding, will be having a call with the Oregon National Guard to prep in case they need aviation assets this summer, if there is a request would let DNRC and Kathy know. Marschal will be with DES through July 14.

**MT DNRC** – slow, few fires. Have some people out of the GA, continuing with training and inspections on county Co-Op equipment. Governor will be removing 24 million dollars out of fire suppression account.

**Montana State Fire Chiefs** - absent

**Montana Fire Wardens** - absent

**MT Peace Officers** - lost a deputy sheriff out of Broadwater County this morning.

**ND FS** - absent

**NPS** – Mike Davin will be attending IMT summit, Yellowstone ship starts June 1.

**USFS** – budget glitch has put hold on purchasing and spending for a couple weeks. There were a couple issues during smokejumper training, talked with base managers and WO yesterday. Continuing with Safety First engagement sessions around the GA, one last week in Helena which DNRC attended. Some RX burning completed across the region, but probably way behind due to weather. IHC's are starting to come on. IT trailers – 2 are ready to go, and the others are not, expecting a 12K bill to get up to speed, may be a bit delayed due to purchasing, likely will need to talk about as a group regarding maintenance. Melissa sent out a message about Priority Trainees, some response from IMT's, but lack of response from about 3, may need to talk about that process.

**The next scheduled Conference Call is Tuesday, June 20, 2017 @ 1000 MDT**



# Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

Federal, State, and Local Government Agencies Working Together In Emergency Response Management

## **Board of Directors Conference Call Agenda**

**Tuesday, June 20, 2017**

### **Participants:**

**Board Members:** Bryce Rogers, Justin Kincaid, Mike Granger, JT Wensman, Jake Ganieany, Mike DeGrosky, Bill Colwell, Patrick Lonergan, Vern Burdick, Brent Woffinden, Ralph Rau

**Deputies and Others:** Kelly McKee, Kevin Benton, Rich Cowger, Greg Archie, Tim Murphy, Kathy Pipkin, Michael Richmond, Melissa Wegner, Patrick Murphy, Anthony Krause, Greg Morris, Warren Appelhans

**Purpose:** This is a public meeting for the purpose of conducting government business.

**NWCG Update: (E-mail update from Aitor)** From discussion in NMAC yesterday: nationally still holding at PL2 but an uptick in activity with scattered lightning last, also a couple of large fires made big runs last night most notably the Highway fire in SOPS. The big story from the fire fighter safety standpoint is the persistence of the heat in the southwest quarter. Evidently one fire reported five heat illness evacuations per day, hence the NMAC note to all GA's regarding heat related injuries. The only pinch point so far has been lead planes and their scheduling to maintain coverage.

**Predictive Services Update:** Critical conditions today and tomorrow on the east side, from Great Falls east into the very western portion of ND. There will be isolated mixed wet/dry storms on the east side, temperatures will be in the low 90's, and RH 20-25%. Dry breezy conditions will exist tomorrow on east side until late evening hours, cooler on west side. Cold front will drop down late Thursday to give relief on east side, temps will be in 60's Friday/Saturday, some scattered showers but not a widespread wetting rain. Early next week, high pressure ridging will return, temps slightly above average. Fine fuels will start drying out in lower elevations, typical seasonal drying.

**National, NR, and Operational Updates:** From national call: GB had some lightning, 5 new large fires that didn't make SIT report. In NR, 5 new fires for 18 acres. 1 lead plane, EU helicopters, 2 rappel platforms available. West Yellowstone jump ship returning from Silver City, once it is back, the region will have one plane available. Sherpa still in maintenance. 3 Type 1, 9 Type 2IA crews available. Southern California may start to get busy, NR busy supporting other GA areas.

Operations – GA pretty quiet. Started visits to eastern part of GA, general consensus is that they are 1 week to 2 weeks out from critical fire conditions.

**Contracting Updates:** Everything is being finished up, on track for fire season.

**Safety Updates (Zachry): Greg Morris for Steve:** NMAC correspondence has been sent out regarding the heat advisories in the SW. Talked to Steve, who is working in R3 right now, and there have been 20 cases of heat related illness. Emphasize the need to get the information to crews.

### **Follow up on Old Business:**

**Equipment Committee Update/Draft Letter(s) on AIS (Warren Appelhans):** 2 draft letters, one to the field, and one a formal request from NRCG to MTDC/San Dimas to prioritize AIS issue.

Degrosky – letters will be extremely helpful, as this is a major issue and concern. There is one point to clarify; in PMS 444, the table makes it appear that chlorine bleach is an effective treatment for zebra mussels, but there is

also information circulating that states it is not effective. **Warren will follow up with MTDC** and add a bullet statement in the document clarifying this.

Granger – last bullet statement directs 30 day quarantine of equipment if infected. How will that impact cache?

Krause – with only 2 infected areas, not a big impact. Fittings will go through hot water wash, same with pumps. If hose came from those affected areas, will just sit on it for 30 days. Can order from other areas if needed. Needs to confirm with MTDC that washing/drying method is sufficient.

Change last bullet statement, allow flexibility. “30 days OR approved hot water wash OR another method approved by AIS specialist”.

DeGrosky – hoping for a quick turnaround. Warren will work on the clarification and edits this week, and send to Kelly to forward out.

**NRCG Website Update (Kelly McKee):** With quite a bit of help from Julie Polutnik at NRCC, the NRCG website can be moved off the Forest Service server to the NIFC server. This will allow the NRCG Business Manager to manage the site directly, updates and changes will be much quicker. Will send out the link to the new site once this is done (hoping by Thursday, 6/22). Template and look changed a bit, but all the same content will be moved over.

**IMT Summit (Granger):** Thanked everyone for their work during the Summit. Bob Habeck took on editing the draft document, did a great job. Notes have been circulated, BOD agreed upon some significant changes. Mike Granger has the document at this time, by the end of June, will have reviewed and will be able to circulate to BOD. Goal of having the final draft by fall meeting.

## New Business

**Tents (Tim Murphy):** The BLM CO and Tim are recommending not awarding contracts for tents this year. There were 3 reasons for this:

- Logistics personnel were wanting to move away from tents.
- Cache has 30 type 4 tents, which represents about 80% that we see in camps.
- Received unacceptable bids from vendors, \$1600-\$1800 a week for bigger, \$1200-\$1300 for smaller. Mileage rates are also high.

There will be a resource list for tents if the cache supply is exhausted, will go to incident-specific agreements.

**Fall NRCG Meeting Date (Kelly McKee):** Last year's fall meeting was the week of November 14; proposing the same week or one earlier. Will send out a Doodle poll and capture the majority.

**Michael Goicoechea ICT1 Recommendation (Granger):** Task book and documentation for Goke's Type 1 IC was sent out a few weeks ago; letter of recommendation from Greg Poncin was sent out this morning. As Greg is still in his tenure as IC, if/when the BOD recommends Goke, he would take over at the end of that tenure (end of 2017).

DeGrosky – what about a letter from his Agency Administrator?

Rau – as there is no formal written process that requires a letter, Ralph has discussed with Melany Glossa, who supports the qualification and commitment.

No objections from the BOD, the official letter from NRCG will be drafted for Granger's signature.

Lessons learned:

- Need to formalize the process, from completion of the task book to official transition with the current IC. **Action item for fall NRCG meeting.**
- Where does the documentation from NRCG go? The IMT Coordinator just needs the recommendation and approval letter from NRCG. Governance of the qualification (currency, experience) will remain with the host agency.

***Resource Statusing/Commit Messages/NRCC Staffing (Kathy Pipkin):***

- Resource statusing issues over the weekend (not isolated). Spent quite a bit of time trying to get a position mobilized, at least 7 individuals showing available national (most statused within 3 days), ended up UTF'ing. Had the same with the priority trainee list, showing available, were really not. Kathy would like to send a note to all the agency FMO's with expectations regarding statusing. Ralph would like a little more weight to it, can mention on FMO call? How will it be most effective? Kathy will send out, and will include BOD members, so they can send out to their respective agencies.
- NRCC Staffing – still down a meteorologist, 7-day staffing effective July 2, a couple will switch the 25<sup>th</sup>. Will not have the weather part of predictive services Sat/Sun, Michael will work Mon-Fri. Harold Gemmell is retiring relatively soon, will have to move people around to cover for the summer. Will be doing their own preparedness review, and will send out a checklist to BOD.
- Commit messages – Kathy sent out a message regarding commit messages, from many years ago, dispatch would send out a commit message for national resources informing of commitment to incident. With all the resource statusing and reports, this is being duplicated. Polled dispatch community and it was unanimous to discontinue. No concerns from the group with discontinuing. Local center info requirement will not change, but National commit messages will no longer be required.

***Priority Trainees (Melissa Wegner):*** Over the weekend, worked with Julie/NRCC to get some priority trainees with Poncin's team, unique situation as they were going to staging. Melissa will work with Goke or Kopitzke, once they get placed, to mobilize more. Communicating with NRCC/Poncin/Goke about mobilization.

**Round Robin – Updates from Agency Participants**

**BIA NW - absent**

**BIA GP - absent**

**BIA RM** – readiness reviews are done, not much going on fire-wise.

**BLM** – Justin Kincaid is in place for a 120 day detail, coming out of West Central Utah. Few fires on the east end, Roosevelt County may be looking at going into fire restrictions. Supporting other GA's. Hope to have Operations position announcement out by the end of next week, will be looking for help putting the panel together.

**Mike Granger/FWS** – Medicine Lake NWR in Roosevelt County (restrictions), will likely initiate severity request within the next couple weeks. All on board, losing one FF to state of WA. Things are drying out, did not experience green up or rainfall expected.

**IDL** - not much for activity, crew to AZ yesterday. Finished up Guard School and engine academy. Aviation assets come on next month.

**MT DES** – Jake Ganieany officially starts Monday, June 26th, Marschal will be done on July 14<sup>th</sup>.

**MT DNRC** – absent for Round Robin

**Montana State Fire Chiefs** - last call for Bill, Rich Cowger will be taking over after this. Thanked the BOD and group. Local FD's preparing across the state. Have not had a whole lot going on in the western part of the state. Rich – central part of state is relatively quiet, east side is drying out.

**Montana Fire Wardens** -

**MT Peace Officers** -

**ND FS – absent**

**NPS** – busy in SW, park is sending NR resources to help, trying to get Yellowstone ship to CO.

**USFS** – Tory Kendrick new Smokejumper Base Manager, supporting other GA's with resources.

**The next scheduled Conference Call is Tuesday, July 18, 2017 @ 1000 MDT**



# Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

Federal, State, and Local Government Agencies Working Together In Emergency Response Management

## **Board of Directors Conference Call Agenda**

**Tuesday, July 18, 2017**

### **Participants:**

**Board Members:** Steve Heppner, Bryce Rogers, Justin Kincaid, Mike Granger, Kevin Benton, Mike DeGrosky, Patrick Lonergan, Vern Burdick, Michael Odell, Brent Woffinden, Ralph Rau

**Deputies and Others:** Kelly McKee, Greg Archie, Tim Murphy, Patrick Murphy, Anthony Krause, Steve Zachry, Julie Shea, Julie Lockman, Cynthia Tate, Warren Appelhans, Tam Kolar

**Purpose:** This is a public meeting for the purpose of conducting government business.

**NWCG Update:** No report.

**Predictive Services Update:** Greg for Michael – fairly benign pattern, some chance of isolated thunderstorms, Wednesday being the hottest day.

**National, NR, and Operational Updates:** Busy with IA, from west side to east side, transitioned in terms of IMT's to the west, but still actively fighting fire on the east side. Multiple fires on the east side, large fire growth, w/out the team activity. Central Zone has Lookout fire (Turman IMT, 390 acres), Park Creek (Hutton IMT, 1400+), Whetsone/Myers (Sutton, IMT3), Sliderock (Leach IMT) 188 acres, which includes Hogback, NW Zone will be transitioning to Type 3 from Thompson (Rogers) Thursday AM, Almas transitioned to Powerline/Corral (7000, 1600). Busy moving crews across the GACC, a lot of crews are timing out around the same time. Aitor is helping at NMAC level.

**Contracting Updates:** Last week, exhausted GA contract engines, but only had to bring in 1 contract engine out of the GA. There are more coming available now. 3 Heavy Equip Task Forces out, plus more heavy equipment. 3 motor vehicle accidents w/contractors, 2 with FD, 1 agency. 1 vendor suspended for anger management issues, dealing with questions about how DPL works. 3 out doing contractor compliance checks.

**Safety Updates (Zachry):** Emphasis with all folks regarding motor vehicle accidents and taking necessary safety measures to prevent. Will be getting out to forests/districts to check in on fatigue, heat illness. If we continue with IA and activity as we have been, recommend putting together a Safety Assistant Team in the next week. Also recommending starting safety conference call on a daily basis. Based on what we are seeing in the eastern part of the GA, do we need a fire behavior/fuels advisory?

Brent – what is the trigger point for ground Safety Team? Steve - consistently busy for a week – 10 days.

### **Follow up on Old Business:**

#### ***AIS Prevention Documents – Aviation & Equipment (Warren/Cynthia/Julie)***

DeGrosky reviewed the comments on the draft document from Julie and Cynthia; the group agreed to adopt the recommended changes. It was also suggested to put the recommendations into some sort of pocket card format. Under prevention, 5<sup>th</sup> bullet down, remove “if possible” (Rau).

Per IMT closeouts, distributing the final document ASAP is recommended (Kincaid).

Final letter will be put together ASAP and distributed to all, including IC's.

## **New Business:**

### ***Solar Eclipse (Rau/Granger)***

Want to get it on the radar, we are not right in the path. Just want to make sure the southern part of the GA is aware, could be a concern with extra traffic and communications.

FWS in Idaho is in the direct path, talking about closing off a portion of the Interstate in Idaho.

IDL – portions of direct protection in path, local area offices doing intensive planning. Will be prepositioning of extra resources, duration 7-10 days, trying to get message out on Prevention side with extra campers, etc. PNW is also in path of totality.

Ralph – if we start hearing from units about impact, need to make sure to communicate.

Brent – is going right over Grand Teton NP, expecting largest visitation in park history – there will be resource competition from other GACC's where path of totality is not an impact.

### ***IMT Closeouts (Granger)***

Need to assign BOD member to each, did any board members attend so far, representing the BOD as well as agency?

Kincaid – attended both Almas and Connell's closeouts. Key item for both was how AIS works on the ground, implementation on the ground in remote locations is almost impossible. Almas – used potable water on all equipment. Getting chemical was an issue through IBA and Finance, got with the state and borrowed some to replace. The document is great, but logistics and real time implementation of AIS protocols will likely come up again. Has copies of transition documents if anyone would like them.

Question – are the chemicals a cache item? Recommendation from Connell was to make it a standard item, along with heater units.

Granger – emphasized pointing people back to the PMS 444.

DeGrosky – Turman IMT is in a prime spot for AIS questions, good to have Granger there and part of IMT to point back to official guidance.

Odell – met with Pearson's team off of Magpie. This was first Type 2 complexity fire in ND, had some issues coming in, delays with internet. Equipment trailer was in disarray when they got it back, dealt with that. A lot of political issues on this fire. Team came short, a lot of trainees functioning as fully qualified. From AA standpoint, good feedback.

### ***MAC Discussion (All)***

Lonergan – is there a need for a MAC representative at the NRCC? Greg Archie and Granger have talked, Greg will advise when he sees the need and will work with Granger to make that happen. Patrick and Ralph would like to participate as liaisons.

Greg – on a nightly basis, prioritizing around 7 fires. Have a nightly call, also work with Kathy/Tim to prioritize, currently workload is pretty easy and does not take very much time.

DeGrosky – also interested and has two alternates who could help as MAC liaison.

Ralph – mentioned charter talks about switching out people, so would not be a long-term commitment.

Historically members of MAC group work with separate functional area, report to MAC group representative or Greg, recommend someone assigned to AIS.

### ***MAC Call vs. NRCG Call (All)***

Group discussion about starting MAC calls and difference between MAC call and normal NRCG business. Group decided to have a regular NRCG call in a week and discuss need for MAC call at that point, unless activity between now and then warrants something different.

## **Round Robin – Updates from Agency Participants**

**BIA NW** – nothing to add.

**BIA GP** – no report.

**BIA RM** – quiet, working on severity request.

**BLM** – bringing a few more SEAT's in from SW, spread around. May have a couple CL215's and bird dog unit to Lewistown, need to do inspections. Active IA on the east end, working through severity dollars, ordering resources to cover IA activity. Working on how we use support code within the GACC, in GB use it a lot to support SEAT's – can we use in this GA to cover support functions and maybe even availability of SEAT's. Brent – Tracey sent out information, emphasized MAC calls cover some of these issues/topics. DeGrosky – within scope of Zone MAC. John Monzie – try to work out in Zone MAC.

**Mike Granger/FWS** – quite a bit of activity in eastern area, not a lot on the west side. Working on severity and bringing in additional resources.

**IDL** - Corral/Powerline significant incidents, need Type 1 and Type 2IA crews, brought in 6 contract crews through NW compact agreement.

**MT DES** – Sturgis rally Aug 13/14, influx in SW Montana.

**MT DNRC** – echoed sentiment about Interagency cooperation, in Musselshell county, North Delphi – great example of avoiding a bad situation with Interagency cooperation. Turman IMT on Lookout, Thompson IMT on Rogers Mountain, sharing Leach on joint delegation on Sliderock, a lot of IA, been keeping really busy but good success catching things. CL215's are one of two groups that were brought in from Canada, through NW compact, among other resources. SWLO is in the process of setting up regional/zone interagency fire prevention team.

**Montana State Fire Chiefs** – no report.

**Montana Fire Wardens** – noting to add.

**MT Peace Officers** - no report.

**ND FS** – resources staying ahead of work/rest, Thurs/Fri going through certification process to use type 1 National Guard helicopters on federal land, shooting for 3 this year.

**NPS** – trying to get severity packages on eastern and western part of the GACC.

**USFS** – going around and meeting with FMO's, etc. appreciate great support to get everything done.

**The next scheduled Conference Call is Tuesday, August 15, 2017 @ 1000 MDT**



# Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

Federal, State, and Local Government Agencies Working Together In Emergency Response Management

## **Board of Directors Conference Call Agenda**

**Tuesday, October 17, 2017**

### **Participants:**

**Board Members**

**Deputies and Others**

**Purpose:** This is a public meeting for the purpose of conducting government business.

### **Contracting Updates:**

- NRCG Letter – Use of Privately Owned Equipment on Incidents – Tim Murphy
  - Letter is the result of several concerns heard from contractors, and in AAR's. Will also put better direction in Business Management Handbook.  
Q: How widespread?  
A: Tim has received a dozen plus comments from contractors claiming to have been put in situations where they did not feel they were qualified.  
Q: What is the issue? Was there adequate supervision and still uncomfortable with the assignment?  
A: Some equipment operators received instructions in the morning and never had anyone with them from then on. Left alone to make decisions. Support water tenders were being used as tactical water tenders/engines.
  - **Edits to Tim by Friday, October 20, 2017.**
  - Will be meeting with the companies AAR Task Force, where it is headed in the future. NRTC Saturday November 4<sup>th</sup> at 1000.
  - Auditing medical equipment, finding issues with that. Then doing spot audits on the other contracting equipment.

### **Predictive Services Update:**

- Red Flag warnings for northern 2/3 of Montana and high wind warnings. Thursday will also be a critical day, but less winds. Another Front will blast through on Friday, might have showers in front and behind. Another high wind event will be coming in Sunday. Northern California will get a little shot of moisture next week, then returning to hot and dry.
- Northern Rockies has had a quiet month. Supporting California with 11 crews. Smattering of aircraft and overhead positions.
  - Would the board like NRCC to start sending out out-of-area.

### **National, NR, and Operational Updates:**

- Hurricane support is winding down.
- California started winding up. Holding steady at PL3 Nationally.
- Developing talking points for "Only the Brave" movie release.

**Follow up on Old Business:**

- Cost Share Concurrence –
  - Bryce Rogers and Steve Heppner both gave concurrence on cost share agreement.

**New Business:**

- NRCG Fall Meeting Agenda Review Comments
  - AAR and recommendations on the first day

**Round Robin – Updates from Agency Participants**

**BIA NW -**

**BIA GP -**

**BIA RM -**

**BLM** – Northern Rockies Operations Positions - Had 14 applicants, 8 interviewed. Have narrowed down to the top 3 to re-interview this week. Hope to have selection next week.

**Mike Granger/FWS** – Attended ops committee meeting in Helena. Issue with shortage of paramedics and safety officer positions was a standout issue. They will be putting out a white paper for NRCG review.

**IDL**

**MT DES -**

**MT DNRC**

**Montana State Fire Chiefs**

**Montana Fire Wardens**

**MT Peace Officers**

**ND FS**

**NPS** – Hoping to have an FLA to share on Sperry Chalet for fall meeting.

**USFS** – Asking for input on National Ops Committee Meeting. Will send out the agenda for input. AFD will be having a meeting tomorrow to put together a plan for facilities, etc.

**The next scheduled NRCG Meeting is November 13 – 17, 2017**

## Monday, November 13 – MAC AAR

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The purpose of this AAR was to learn from the 2017 NRMAC experience in four key areas; achieve consensus around key learning and solutions that we want to move forward on (both sustain and improve) in the next six months and focus on organizational learning and continuous organizational improvement.

Under the four key areas, there were sub-topics to be covered. The format of each discussion focused on **what was planned, what actually happened, why it happened and what we will do in the future**. Some sub-topic discussions were very brief and, as such, did not address all four statements above (in bold). If this was the case, a brief synopsis is provided under the respective heading.

### Topic #1 – MAC Plan/MAC Operating Handbook

#### NRCG/MAC Relationship

##### ***What was planned?***

- Convene MAC Group separate from NRCG.

##### ***What actually happened?***

- Roles and responsibilities were unclear (NRCG vs MAC).
- Ordering of MAC representative created confusion.
- Unclear who was in charge.
- Convening MAC proved to be difficult.
- NRCG BOD decisions vs. MAC decisions unclear.
- Not clear to all when MAC was actually convened.

##### ***Why did it happen?***

- The plan does not identify WHO.

##### ***What will we do in the future?***

- Review current plan and update.
- Reference WHO the MAC chair is (if there should be one) in the plan, and if it stays, define the role.
- Include an Appendix with MAC members in the plan.
- Clarify NRCG BOD decision vs. MAC decisions.
- Clarify ordering process (i.e. using THSP vs. MAC Coordinator qualification).
- Establish and articulate to agencies that MAC has been convened.

## MAC Roles & Responsibilities (including IMT in-briefs, closeouts, etc.)

Discussion note: MAC is a function of NRCG, Delegation of Authority is to MAC from Agency Administrators once MAC has convened.

- Short discussion regarding the plan to have an NRCG BOD member at each in-brief/closeout; this did not always happen. In the future, be more strategic about which incidents to attend and focus on specific topics/issues.

## Engaging Agency Administrators

- It seemed to be unclear when the MAC had actually convened during the season. In the future, will be more engaged with Line Officers, have clearer structure and leader's intent. Also need to re-visit periodic communication with Line Officers and Agency Administrators (pre, post and mid-season).

## Staffing the MAC

### ***What was planned?***

- Some staffing identified in plan (Plans, Logistics, Public Affairs).

### ***What actually happened?***

- Duties were unclear; Plans Chief was ordered, Logistics Chief identified, but never given clear briefing.
- The Decision Support Center was initially under the FS, created confusion when it was moved under the MAC.
- Plans and Logistics functions identified in plan, but not utilized soon enough.

### ***Why did it happen?***

- Plans Chief ordered too late.
- Delegation of Authority was unclear.

### ***What will we do in the future?***

- Review MAC organization chart.
- Identify personnel need for staffing MAC as activity increases and decreases.
- MAC representative and MAC coordinator need to discuss what positions are needed to support MAC.
- Discuss Public Affairs function and opportunity to utilize and communicate what the group does.

## Topic #2 – Facilities and Logistics

### **What was planned?**

- Bob Marshall Room designated for MAC use, Pintler Room reserved for briefings and Missouri Room used for Expanded Dispatch/other briefings.

### **What actually happened?**

- When MAC representative activated, they were not set up for long-term in the Bob Marshall Room; Decision Support Center set up in same room.
- Selway Room was used for meetings, conference calls, other needs.
- There were technical difficulties in the Pintler and Bob Marshall Rooms using the conference call system.

### **Why did it happen?**

- DS Center and Remote Situation Unit were not accounted for long-term
- Fire situation ramped up faster than facilities needs/issues could be addressed.

### **What will we do in the future?**

- Task AFD Space Committee with looking at facilities and what can be done in the future to meet the needs identified above, without impacting normal business operations.
- Keep all the groups on the same campus, if at all possible.
- Keep MAC/Operations Specialist/NRCC in close proximity.
- Request each function/group to outline expectations ahead of time (IT Support, etc.).
- Have a planned activation of space; look at other options, such as office trailers.
- Look at other functions that can be moved off the AFD campus (in-briefings, IMT staging).
- Include physical plan in MAC Operating Guide and share with all personnel on AFD Campus.

## Topic #3 – Mobilization Guide and MAC Operating Handbook Guidance

### **MAC Representative**

Most of this discussion was covered in Topic #1; need to clean up language on roles/responsibilities in Handbook. Full review of document to clean up inconsistencies.

### **Conference Calls**

#### **What was planned?**

- Schedule conference calls as necessary.

#### **What actually happened?**

- Reluctance to schedule calls.
- Numerous calls scheduled from various functions (i.e. IC call).

***Why did it happen?***

- No established schedule for ramping up conference calls.
- Fear of committing to face-to-face meetings

***What will we do in the future?***

- Identify purpose, information flow and schedule (reference NR Mobilization Guide and pull into MAC Plan).
- Improve/add specifics to Appendix in Operating Handbook.

## Face-to-Face/MAC Representation

***What was planned?***

- Nothing firm in MAC Plan, but Mobilization Guide states that at PL5, MAC will be activated. Discussions that took place after the 2015 state a face-to-face will be initiated at PL5; this is in the NR Strategic Plan.

***What actually happened?***

- At initial PL5 designation, MOST members were present, but no consistency.
- Situation got past the point of needing to be engaged/communicating.

***Why did it happen?***

- Reluctance/fear about coming together.

***What will we do in the future?***

- When resources are being re-allocated across the agencies, consider as a trigger point for face-to-face representation.
- Look at previously identified triggers from MAC group.

## Planned Escalation

***What was planned?***

- Be proactive, have discussions at PL5.

***What actually happened?***

- Key products (outlooks, intelligence) were not available early enough.

***Why did it happen?***

### ***What will we do in the future?***

- Spend more time on shoulder season products.
- Add this component early on in the season (i.e. fire analysis, fuels); could be virtual.
- Plan to have MAC group come together pre-season, make this part of the process.

## **Topic #4 – Decision Support**

### ***What was planned?***

- Decision Support Center was initially set up for WFDSS support (FS).

### ***What actually happened?***

- Evolved into other functions: in-briefings, air resource entities (smoke monitoring, air quality), long-term fire behavior, story maps, integrated with IMTs that were open to the products.
- Products were utilized consistently
- Decision Support “Cookbook” produced – how to stand the center up, address the needs, what went well, what needed improvement.
- 61 personnel rotated through the Decision Support Center.
- Provided significant value to IMTs/agencies, positive feedback received from the field.

### ***Why did it happen?***

- Able to pull in expertise from other GACCs.
- Offered help across the agencies from the beginning.

### ***What will we do in the future?***

- NRCC will utilize positions ahead of time (prior to MAC) because of products they provided; can be rolled into the Decision Support Center when stood up.
- Utilize public relations component to promote the work done by the team.

## **Other Considerations & Points**

- Be more prescriptive in MAC Plan; use bullet points/action items.
- Cross-reference other plans that may have some of the same information for consistency.
- Need to include record-keeping and decision documentation protocol.
- Allow for flexibility with the different agencies when considering face-to-face meeting
- Define protocol for MAC involvement in various conference calls.
- What does an ‘average day’ for MAC look like? Make it consistent, identify who is involved in what, maximize efficiency.

## Next Steps

An editing group was assigned to review the MAC Plan. This group consists of Mike Granger, Bob Habeck, DNRC Representative TBD and Pam Jolly. The group is tasked with cleaning up the language, and making it consistent across all 3 documents that talk about MAC. The group will have a draft ready for review by the February 2018 NRCG conference call. Intent will be to finalize by the Spring NRCG Meeting.

## Tuesday, November 14

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### National Report – Aitor Bidaburu

On January 1, Dan Smith will be taking over as the NMAC Chair. The new incoming BIA Director (TBD) will be the new NWCG Chair.

NWCG was requested to look at combining the PMS 310-1 and the Forest Service Fire and Aviation Qualifications Guide (FSFAQG). The Operations/Training Committee (OTC) will be looking at this as an interagency group. The desired outcome is for all agencies to have one pathway (FS adopting 310-1).

The Military Use Handbook has historically been maintained by the NICC staff and other members of NMAC. It is not an NWCG document, so trying to work toward that and get a PMS number assigned.

NIAC is making progress on an interagency aviation strategy. One of the immediate tasks to the group is to develop a report of ALL aerial firefighting capability nationally. The intent is to develop a “catalog” of all aviation assets, including the National Guard, which will then help guide a strategy for future capability.

NIAC was approved to form a subcommittee: Interagency Cooperator and Aircraft Pilot Standards (ICAPS). Important for all Aviation Managers to be involved.

Communication, Education & Prevention Committee (CEPC) is forming a PIO subcommittee; this will be an opportunity for PIO involvement.

FEMA is looking at identifying/typing Fire Officer positions; trying to steer them towards using NWCG/FPA requirements rather than creating something new.

Type 3 All Hazard team came from VA this summer, was a very good assignment and hosted in NR. No cost to the incidents for hosting those teams, FEMA covers the bill, they are fire personnel from major metropolitan areas. Networking possibility for shortage positions. Team provides a report after shadow assignment – Aitor will send out.

## NR EOY Report – Kathy Pipkin

Kathy handed out and went over the NRCC Cost Share document.

Staffing during 2017: down 2 positions (Meteorologist and Floor Coordinator). 52 personnel came through NRCC to help staff during the season. As a comparison, in 2015, NRCC was short 3-4 positions, which were mostly Assistant Coordinator spots.

The Floor Coordinator (DNRC) position is still vacant. Roy Robinson detailed in this summer, and other detailers filled in behind Roy. As long as the budget allows, the position will be advertised; the whole process will take approximately 2 months (**Monzie**).

The national group will be taking the report on predictive services and looking at those positions and what products should be coming out of them. Would like to explore other options, does not anticipate filling the position anytime soon (**Schmid**).

Northern Rockies does not have a representative to the new National Dispatch Committee.

New IDIP program will have cost-share component (**Bidaburu**).

The Dispatch Steering Committee supports sharing the general session with the Dispatcher's Workshop/IMT Meeting, and then attending breakouts.

## IT Update – Patrick Murphy

Put 12 students through new NWCG sponsored course for the ITSS position, which also has a taskbook. There were a couple more that could not attend the class, but were able to still go out as trainees. There was at least 1 trainee with each IMT this year. 7 trainees completed their taskbooks, and were certified or in the process of being certified.

The course scheduled for Spring 2018 was cancelled due to low numbers. It is not required for the position. 1-on-1 training is available, and the training is geared towards all the partners. There is also a Spring Workshop, which will target individuals already qualified.

IMT's have been traveling with 2 plotters; the older ones are being excessed as the support for them is diminishing. For future seasons, the goal will be to have each IMT travel with 1 owned plotter and supplement with commercial rentals. IT group will be working with the Contracting/Business groups to come up with a way to rent as a commercial product.

There was extensive testing with wireless equipment this year to increase range throughout ICP. It was relatively low cost and seemed to work very well. There will be a more streamlined approach to wireless in camps in the future. Newer servers will take up less space, and can be shipped. The TA and acquisition process takes some time, but hope is to have a couple by the spring. Priority for new servers will be for the 3 IMT's that do not have any, followed by the 2 IMT's with aging servers, then the final 3 IMT's with newer models. 3-year timeline to replace all. Network attached storage has helped setting up storage quicker, as they are non-agency devices.

Brought in public internet service from a phone company for NRTC this summer, it did not perform at a high level. Would like to look at something like Spectrum for a commercial service to provide support to MAC, Decision Support and other groups that utilize the space in the future. Estimate is \$100/month. Would put one unit in the NRTC building and one in the NRCC building. It could be activated and deactivated as activity dictates or left active all year long, in which case could be utilized by those attend training or meetings during the year. Patrick will provide research information on next conference call.

IT trailer maintenance costs approximately \$2,000/year (total for ALL the trailers). Would like to request funding and add to Operating Plan. Cost will be covered with what is already in Operating Plan for NRCC (*Pipkin*).

How do we plan for a season like 2017, where ICP is established and utilized long-term, but IMT's set up and take down equipment inconsistently (i.e. equipment is set up and taken down with each IMT transition)? Is there input on what model works best (set up and take down with each transition, or bringing in rental equipment upon initial set up and leaving for the duration)? Bringing in rental equipment and leaving for the duration seems to be the better option (*Connell/Granger*).

Is there discussion among the other Geographic Area counterparts on standardizing this type of thing (*Bidaburu*)? IT position is somewhat unique in NR and how it functions; equipment is not managed consistently in other GA's (*P. Murphy*).

All IMT's have some tablets, which have been deployed with different levels of success. Will be evaluating what can be done to streamline geospatial process.

## NR Operations Update – Greg Archie/Tim Murphy

Relationship with NRCG BOD and Operations position is an area that could use some improvement. As experience level with MAC increases among the group, it will get better. Did not feel like there was a lot of guidance from the BOD, so need to continue dialogue and clarify/solidify roles and responsibilities.

Interactions with IMT's also needs to be worked on. The volume of calls was so great, and it was hard to figure out how to get the right information that is needed from the various calls. Ended up having 3 people working in the Operations group, which was necessary to manage days off and maintain situational awareness.

Interaction with NRCC/floor is crucial to the position. Need to continue that relationship and make sure they are working together in the future.

Medical program was a big issue this year. Need to identify what level of service we need and what that looks like in terms of numbers.

National Guard was used heavily this year; question came up about what we can do to standardize logistics/training/physical fitness. Greg Morris is in Tucson discussing this, and John Monzie will be working with the national group to help sort some of the details out.

## Contracting Update – Tim Murphy and Bryan Lorendo

Tim presented statistics for 2017 in a Power Point and handed out 2018 solicitation plan for NRCG approval (no objections).

Medical solicitation will be expanded to North Idaho this year, will do another 1-year agreement in Montana, and then move into a 3-year cycle for both.

DNRC will not pursue competitive solicitations for Crews/Modules, will keep current agreements.

## Heavy Equipment Task Force/Montana Logging Association

Discussion and Power Point presentation on heavy equipment burnovers in 2017.

Issue of contract equipment supervision (lack of) on incidents was brought up; more equipment was mobilized than could be managed. Need to continue dialogue with different groups (Business, Operations, Equipment Committees) to ensure we are addressing this. Working with MLA to find individuals that don't have equipment or agreements, but may have experience as a Heavy Equipment Technical Specialist or prior fireline experience, that could be utilized.

### **2018 Action Plan:**

Industry and operational personnel don't have good grasp on what you can and cannot do with heavy equipment; would like to increase awareness in NR. At NRU, will be putting on specialized class focusing on heavy equipment. Also pushing HEQB training (S-236), including MLA cadre and field day. One scheduled in SWZ and possibly two in NWZ.

HEQB was a shortage position and was added late to the Priority Trainee list in 2017. With 227 trainees in the NR, need to make sure people are getting on the PT list so they can move through the position. Some concern that even current qualified HEQB's lack experience with the variety of equipment that is out there (**MLA**).

Request for NRCG BOD: working with MLA, would like NRCG to sponsor 10-15 video that focuses on heavy equipment task forces, capabilities, limitation, operational windows. Video could be used by a variety of individuals, including Agency Administrators, Operations, IMT's, HEQB's, Contracting, and IBAs. **Estimate is \$10,000 to \$18, 000 for production, and would like to have in NRCG Financial Plan.** Timeline would be completion by the Spring IMT Meeting.

## Northern Rockies Cache Update – Anthony Krause

Anthony handed out a document with statistics for 2017 and reviewed briefly.

Had to lease a 15,000 square foot warehouse this year because of space issues. The NRK handles the medical kits for the nation and will be working towards expanding that capacity by 20-30%. Vacant positions in the NRK are not primary or secondary firefighter, so due to the hiring freeze, they are unable to hire and running very short on staffing. May increase sprinklers, plastic spheres, tents. Pre-positioned some tents to Billings early in the season which helped. Added the oil program in 2017,

which has helped with the pump destruction rate. Anthony is on the Kit Committee, so please provide recommendations to him if there are any.

## Safety – Steve Zachry (Absent/Handout)

Steve provided a handout to the group, as he could not be in attendance. The group had a short discussion on each bullet point, any action items are identified below. The handout is attached at the end of this document.

## Contractor Care

**Action Item -> Tim Murphy/Steve Zachry:** develop white paper providing guidance to assist fire managers, AAs, and IMTs in navigating post-incident processes and procedures involving contractor accidents and loss of equipment.

## Zone Reports

### North Idaho – Kevin Benton (Phone)

2017 Fire season activity for the North Idaho Zone was moderate with majority of the activity occurring on the Clear Nez NF. The Zone experience a few IMT fires such as Corral Creekk/ Powerline, Hanover, Buck, Strychnine and North Hughes. However the Zone was successful in managing resources to keep emerging Type 3 fires from going to Type 2 given the limited available resources. The Zone MAC group experience limited activation specifically to help coordinate Fire Restrictions within the Zone where the CDA Restrictions Zone experienced Stage 2 Fire Restrictions for 34 days.

Agencies within the Zone continue to facilitate support for the North Idaho Type 2 IMT succession management needs. Positive outcome this year was that all agencies were actively engaged in supporting these teams with agency personnel. However, shortages still remain.

The Zone members have agreed to initiate an effort to stand up another Type 3 IMT to service NIZ needs for emerging fires.

Zone Chair has been turned over to IPF -Mike Behrens and Vice Chair will be NPC - Mark DeCaria for next two years.

### Northwest Montana – Rick Connell

Zone met last week. Felt things worked well within the Zone, were able to move resources based on priorities. Would like to see something on NRCC website identifying acting Operations Specialist and/or MAC Coordinator for the day; this was no always communicated to Zones. Had some questions on moving national resources between fires in the Park. Need to clarify how GMAC works with Zone MACs in the MAC Plan. Decided that at PL4 or 5, they will have a dedicated Zone MAC Coordinator instead of having it as a collateral duty, and will bring in support as needed. Correspondence from NRCG didn't always get passed on consistently, would like to see that improved. Worked with Canadians quite a bit. Will be hosting an Agency Administrator Workshop in the spring.

## Southwest Montana – Kate Holsapple

SW Zone had 333 fires total, for 390,000 acres. Mobilized 35 IMTs, 2 line of duty fatalities on incidents. Skipped Stage 1 restrictions, went straight to Stage 2 on July 27 and remained in restrictions for 56 days.

Lolo NF FAO job is open, panel has been put together. The Bitterroot Dispatch Center Manager position will be open.

The Anaconda Unit transitioned this spring, was dispatched out of Dillon. Felt like this was a smooth transition.

## Central Montana – Greg Archie

Have not met yet as a Zone. Good year of coordination on Central Zone. No structured time for calls, ad-hoc, but communicating when necessary. Within divisions, worked well together, and with Zone neighbors. Will be talking about how Zone is formatted (footprint), will look to make recommendation on different format of Central Zone. Struggle with how large the Zone is, when it gets busy, working across that area and getting together.

## South Central Montana – No Report

## Eastern Montana – Scott Schuster

Have not met yet. Smaller groups meeting Thursday, talking about Crow Agency being fully integrated into Billings Dispatch. Irv Leach retiring.

Need to have better set of backups when chair is gone for Zone MAC. Rapid ramp up and ramp down in Eastern MT – continuity issues when standing up actual MAC. Need to talk about east side and how we want to use that – communication does not always go through MAC, issues were getting resolved directly with Operations.

Need to have some training within ALL Zone MACs (**Granger**). Also try and coordinate GMAC and Zone MAC exercises (**Archie**).

## North Dakota – Michael O'Dell

Met on November 3, Ryan Melin is current chair, Ray Hart will be taking over January 1. Brought in Type 2 IMT for Magpie, last IMT above a Type 3 was in 2004. Emergency declaration on June 26, finalized State AOP last year, doing another review to look at verbage. Some talk about standing up Type 3 IMT within zone.

## NRTC Update & Priority Trainees – Melissa Wegner

Melissa handed out statistics for the NRTC for the 2016-2017 training season (attached at the end of this document).

Mobile GIS going on this week – 9 remote locations, all being managed from NRTC.

Emphasized need to fill out per diem form, even if instructors are local. Important for instructor data/agencies and tracking.

Satellite session of FLA course was successful last year; will not be having remotely this year due to IT upgrades at NAFRI and compatibility with NRTC. Still having sessions in physical locations (Tucson, etc.)

YWNSA course is under NAFRI now – may be hosted in NR late in spring 2018 by NAFRI Cadre – hope is to build up cadre in NR to aid in putting course on in 2019.

S420 course was beta in 2017 – working with OTC, not sure if course is going to be certified this year, but will be putting another on in 2018, beta OR certified, depending on status.

No dispatch classes on the schedule, but recognize that the need is out there. Needs Analysis is used to schedule courses for the training season. Will be working with Kathy to get courses on the schedule.

### **Priority Trainees**

Melissa was on detail, but brought in people to help with the PT list. Was able to get out with IMT to work as a Training Specialist – also saw a lack of understanding of the various qualifications manuals (i.e. AD TNSP's) and incorrect information being communicated. TNSP Workshop will be put on this spring at NRTC to help facilitate getting people trained.

PT nomination period was open a bit longer for ICs to get team trainees on list for ease of mobilization. ICs were very receptive.

TNSP reports may or may not have included PT's – 144 mobilizations of PT's from NR, ~661 trainees total through IMTs on NR incidents. Finance had the lowest numbers.

Request for INVF to get added to PT list (**Chris Barth**).

## **2017 Fire Season Recognition – Mike Granger**

Group discussion on how to recognize individuals for 2017 fire season. Those individuals were submitted at the Executive Session, and tasks given to respective board members to follow up on.

## **Committee Reports**

### **Aviation – Bob Flesch (Phone)**

Need to encourage participation, only 5 people on committee call.

AIS letter this spring from Equipment/Aviation Committee was completed.

Northern Rockies Aviation AAR was hosted at NRTC, included both agency and vendor personnel. Gives platform for vendors to bring up any issues/concerns. Retardant misapplication was brought up – needs to get reported properly. In some instances, there are circumstances that warrant, but still needs to be reported. Concern about transfer of risk to aviation resources was brought up by vendors.

Sharing of resources – IMT's not having dedicated Air Attacks, resource shortage and moving across the GACC all summer.

Lack of qualified ACDP's – but there is a general lack of aviation management across the board.

Airtanker rotation – incidents requesting large tanker, ending up with VLAT without knowing, just needs to be communicated better.

Issue with getting people carded on helicopter side by FAA, “self-carding” led to falsification of qualifications. FAA bottleneck, but will affect resources available to agencies.

Sharing of resources during IA worked well.

SharePoint for QR codes for Retardant avoidance areas was brought up – “one-stop shopping”.

AIS – RO only received one review on AIS mitigation, not much feedback.

DOI SEAT’s – for 2018, working on different options, maybe variable term contracts. FAR regulations that limit dollar amount are limiting options for 2018.

UAS used on limited basis – looking at severity of burns, etc., can see increased use in 2018. BLM will be hosting a UAS pilot course, June 4-15, 2018. Encourage aviation managers to attend.

ASAT – stood up, delegated from MAC group. Final write-up has not been distributed.

## Business Committee – Tracey Nimlos

Chair will transition to Sarah Lee in 2018. Committee met last month.

Hosted GA IBS conference calls 3 times/week during fire season; all around, though to be very valuable.

Will be working with National Business Committee on using gmail accounts.

Would like to propose to NRCG board to have a team feedback form that would go to IC's, done by incident agency, rather than a finance/logistics evaluation form. Meant to be an awareness for the IC's. If approved would do away with finance/logistics form, and just have the one team feedback form – **BIN item**.

Some critical finance trainee positions get signed off, still have 4 FSC2 trainees and one FSC1 trainee.

Tracey highlighted the NRCG Action Items from the spring and went over tasks assigned and completions.

Full suite of finance courses in 2018 at NRTC.

Finance/Logistics had a lot of issues with transitions (i.e. tracking un-operated equipment). Suggestion when we know incidents will be long-term duration – should we focus on in-briefings/closeouts or concentrate on transitions? Need to involve line officers – **BIN Item**.

Passed out GB UTV guidance – has order form to help in the process and tracking. Also includes inspection form. UTV use has increased, and end up spending quite a bit on renting, and claims for extensive damage. Not a lot of accountability when it comes to damage. Operations Committee is in support of this – Corey has not had a lot of feedback yet. **Action Item -> Corey/Operations Committee**. Would like dispatch to be involved in this guidance too (**Pipkin**).

Medical/Paramedics – huge quantities of OTC meds purchased that got turned back to the home agency, lot of issues with this.

Would like to propose letter reminding IMT's about documentation and legacy record standards – **BIN Item**. Accident and claims documentation seems to be lacking quite a bit. NRCG would draft letter if BOD is willing to send out.

Numerous cases of paying entities for services that were within their normal jurisdiction – tied to LOFR positions. Could be discussed at IMT meetings?

Closeout summaries that are produced by IMT's – don't need to be full color, heavy glossy paper, spending a lot of money unnecessarily to make it look nice, violates federal. Content is what is important. Requesting letter from BOD to highlight this – **BIN Item**.

### Dispatch Steering – Mark DeCaria

CM meeting and DSC conference call – many discussions that mirror discussions that have already taken place.

Difficulties staffing expanded dispatch, shortage of aircraft dispatchers. A lot of offices are run with a shorter staff, so when it gets busy, people have to be brought in. Dependent on AD/militia. A lot of the qualified ACDP/EDSD types are Assistants, Leads, those who can't get away easily.

Need 300 level courses – they are fairly hard to get into and need to include AD's within the GACC since they are a big part of the staffing.

Concern is that opening up dispatch courses to AD's would bring in more requests for AD's for other courses. This would be a unique situation – feedback from Operations Committee is that it is a critical need to train these people.

EDSP and CORD positions have no real refresher requirement – a lot of these individuals are AD's, and in some instances, they are not being supported to attend Dispatch, IB Workshops which could benefit them. Would like to encourage attendance and support for these individuals.

Will be holding GA Dispatch Workshop at the same time as the IMT Meetings.

NICC is sponsoring CDAT in Reno in March – hoping to have several reps from GA/Centers to bring back.

Business Committee brought up issue of Expanded Dispatch SOP's – all centers have them, but they are not standard.

Takes time to get Expanded dispatch set up, white paper that DSC put together to address having dispatch teams respond immediately to set up, those individuals would then be freed up within 3-4 days to go back to home units - **BIN Item**.

Jamey Graham from the Kootenai NF will be taking over as chair, this is Mark's last year.

## Equipment/Logistics – Warren Appelhans (Phone)

Had quick conference call – couple people attended AAR, will be working with Operations Committee on HETF, will be reviewing specifications in solicitation.

Mary Fields/Roylene/Dan looking at BLM trailer/tents.

Put out a request to agencies through reps to support HEQB classes.

Carryover from last year – AIS direction, will meet during week of Jan 8 with proper representatives (scientists, researchers) and have document lining out options/solutions for IMT meeting for education. Feedback at the beginning was to not be so restrictive, towards the end there was more of a demand for more clear, firm direction, and still a lot of concern with chemical disposal.

Hope to have draft charter for combined Equipment/Logistics Committee early next year.

## Fuels – Kevin Beck

Committee has 2 conference calls each year – spring and fall to share info across agencies.

Follow up on spring action items:

- Tracking resources across the state for prescribed fire help? Might be able to utilize seasonal dispatcher at NRCC who could help track resources. Would have to work like a wildfire assignment, working through ROSS (**Pipkin**). Could use name request process – committee to work with Kathy to work across agencies to help facilitate.

Any way to plug in state resources to help with prescribed fire? No firm resolution, still working on it.

Last year as chair, Ryan Melin will be taking over.

## Incident Commander – Joe Sampson

First meeting as a committee held on 11/13; reviewed final charter and IMT Operating Guide Draft, discussed IMT capacities, received update from Business Committee, elected Chair/Vice-Chair and representatives. Chair will be Joe Sampson, Vice-Chair will be Joe Brabender.

In 2017, Mike Goicoechea was signed off as an ICT1, Bob Habeck and Joe Sampson were signed off as ICT2. There are no IC trainees identified within the region.

There was some confusion about the communication between the MAC and Operations; as it got busier, it appeared that there was less communication with the ICs.

ICs felt that Area Command caused more work, less help – is it necessary? Unsure of their role and how to use – was there a better tool to support the unit that needed help? Took workload off of some of the forests.

RMAT – were assigning tasks to IMT members while they were assigned to an incident.

Did not feel IC calls were effective, would like to see time changed (to AM instead of PM). Prior to other calls, and is a lull in the day.

Would like to see a discussion on how to invest in more resources, seemed to be a lot of resources held at home units (for IA).

IC and IBA relationship – feel that there is no consistency with IBAs within the region. Will establish meeting with IC and IBA group to help improve communication and relationships.

Medical issues – consensus seems to be role is extraction to definitive care, not definitive care on site.

Cache boundaries – do the boundaries make sense when resources/supplies are needed?

Type 3 IMT plans – 4 total in NR. No governance or operating plan for those teams – Operating Guide does not include the Type 3. Will invite established ICs from these teams to be a part of the committee.

### Native American – Bryce Rogers

NAC Plan draft out, to follow Red Book, added new verbiage. Aiming for March 2018 to have final out for signature. There are still units that utilize those crews, Fort Belknap, Lame Deer, Crow, Browning had crews out this year. 6 total crews this year.

Vehicles/coordination/purchasing support make it difficult for organizing Type 2IA crew.

Talking about Crow becoming fuels crew – could work into a Type 2IA.

### Prevention & Education – Crystal Beckman

As of January 1, Rita Chandler will be Chair, Chris Barth will be Vice-Chair.

Met mid-October – good representation, missed Central/SC Zones.

Had quite a few new agency and zone reps, a lot of the meeting was review, going over charter, and what the purpose of the group is. Identified 2018 priorities:

- Restrictions Review (task from spring meeting). Are restrictions working? Do they prevent fires? Are we restricting the right things at the right time?
- Platform to share electronic files.

PSA's were broadcast across MT into ND/WY through Northern Ag network – took turn between agencies to pay for PSA's to be broadcast.

BLM worked with MT DOT on reader boards; will work to make them more accurate per area, but still raised awareness.

PET ordered – ran into some issues/confusion when ordering. Most success with local/regional team members. Information sharing with zones complicated things during season, advise to wait until after season to share to avoid complication.

Would like just one agency rep for the team.

NRCG website – working to get information on there.

Fire restrictions survey and data analysis – would hope to have information together, and report out to board by January. Move forward with an action item by next season. Survey does break out what area

the responder is in to help identify improvements in one area vs. another. There is nothing in the survey about enforcement, will get that added. Also nothing in the survey about the Fire Restrictions website, so will also add that.

Did identify potential future tasks – need to address firerestrictions.us website – presented issues for some people, need to improve upon how it serves the public.

## Training – Jesse Best

Met last week, Melissa covered a lot with NRTC/PT program.

Schedule is set, nominations in for 2018, OGA/NAFRI have been prioritized. A lot of nominations for RX courses, cancelled S490 (waiting for better course material). All zones have robust training plan for 200 level courses, requests for S236 course well received. Zone representative for Central MT Zone will be Maria Helterline next year.

A lot of personnel going through courses, but not seeing the number of personnel finishing task books (i.e. HEQB).

## Operations Committee – Corey Buhl

Kevin Benton will be new Vice-Chair.

7 applicants for S520, 5 selected, and got priorities from IC's.

Greg Archie did a “day in the life” presentation of the Operations position at meeting – encourage zones to bring back from field what they want to see from the NR Operations position.

Need to redo charter, with IC Committee forming and IMTs under BOD. Request BOD to refine role of Operations Committee with all the changes.

East Zone brought up the size of the zone – becomes cumbersome when it comes to training, priorities, restrictions. Operations Committee will help bring that to light.

Geographic Area IHC group brought up that S336 has gone away, they would like to look at revamping the training and making it more useful. Saw a lack of supervision.

Equipment Committee requested input from Operations Committee as to what LCES looks like for heavy equipment.

**Action Item -> Operations Committee:** UTV guidance.

Business Committee requested Operation representative(s) at Finance workshops, and someone with chainsaw expertise to also be present. Fred Thompson volunteered, Corey will follow up with him.

Type 2 and 2IA crews have been showing up in buses, thus leaving them unable to break down. **Action Item -> Granger:** take this issue to CGAC to help refine NWCG standards.

## IC Reports

### Thompson

Assigned to 4 incidents this summer.

#### *Challenges*

- Decision processes related to complexing fires created operational issues
- Some incidents spanned a very large area; populations were quite diverse, challenges in communication based on the customer
- Transfer of command times; questions about why it was being done at 1800
- Transitions – small details got missed which turned into bigger issues
- Key personnel from previous team demobilized early, right information was not getting passed
- Tracking crew swaps, R&R, especially contract resources
- Fire camps located near railroad tracks
- Financial databases
- Area Command doing briefings
- Tracking evacuations and closures across county lines and working with Information section
- Heavy amount of smoke masked actual movement of fires
- Lack of appropriate resources
- Cooperator challenges in Situation Unit, became unmanageable workload
- Contractor supply protocols, how to issue, need to follow contract language and be consistent
- Payments not made in timely fashion (specifically Type 3 caterer on Sprague)
- Agency social media policies
- Lack of standard for report percent objectives completed

#### *Successes*

- 150+ trainees over 4 assignments
- Adapted cooperator meeting to meet cooperator needs
- Modified team schedule associated with fatigue at PL5
- Using multiple social medial platforms
- Population protection plans went smooth because of pre-season meetings
- Evacuation group on Rice Ridge created by Goldman IMT was helpful
- Good leader's intent from all agencies
- AIS cleaning process for incoming water-handling equipment was straightforward
- Backing off indirect strategies and going direct when available was well-received upon explanation
- Live streaming of public meetings
- After Lolo Peak fatality (Brent Witham), IMT and personnel stepped up to raise \$4800 within 48 hours for Wildland Firefighter Foundation
- Remote Situation and Decision Support group were helpful
- Collector working well
- No HR issues

- All-Hazard team worked well for the most part
- Comp/Claims position that Lolo had was helpful
- Used of rotor-wing retardant, VLAT's and Scoopers
- Use of agency-developed prioritized values at risk
- Sleeper trailers for night shift
- Attitudes remained good
- Ability to roster a team for all 4 assignments

## Hutton (Sampson)

71 days mobilized for 66 days on incident, spanning 4 fires.

### ***Challenges (if not listed above already)***

- Lack of resources
- Lost one major structure
- FLA for Sperry Chalet – offsite interviews at a later date while on another incident

### ***Successes (if not listed above already)***

- No major injuries/accidents
- Training opportunities; many C&G signed off plus multiple other positions
- Tracking of suppression repair within Collector passed from one team to another

## Connell

1<sup>st</sup> team out to July fire, 4 incidents, 57 days total.

### ***Challenges (if not listed above already)***

- In-briefs that were lacking significantly (need to reference Red Book template and use)
- Rolling Agency Administrators (no consistency)
- Need process for delegation from one Agency Administrator to another and share with IC
- Rehabbing private lands (what is rehab/repair/restoration) and developing protocol
- Tech side of Collector on download side

### ***Successes (if not listed above already)***

- SWIMT worked as a branch on Sunrise/Burdette, but still functioned as a team, and were successful
- High percentage of IMT being present for all 4 assignments

## Leach (Brabender)

### ***Challenges (if not listed above already)***

- Merging incident when downsizing (logistics issues, i.e. porta potties unaccounted for)
- Line officers transferring risk to the IMT
- Local sheriff had challenges with various team protocols (i.e. evacuations, why/when)
- Rental vehicles
- Relationship with IBA and inconsistency when ordering

## Poncin (Goicoechea)

75 days out, 4 incidents.

### ***Challenges (if not listed above already)***

- Socio-political issues
- Last incident stretched team pretty thin (Rice Ridge and Liberty) and in-brief seemed to imply IMT would not be set up for success

### ***Successes (if not listed above already)***

- 5 days staging early in R3 allowed IMT to work together through scenarios and review processes prior to being assigned
- Established relationship with Southern Area, allowed for networking and receiving support
- Good working relationship with Missoula County Sheriff

### ***Miscellaneous***

- Would like to allow for flexibility on transition times; need to work with IC to determine what the situation warrants
- Utilize National Guard to provide logistical support to cache; include in operating procedure
- R3 used Area Command in a support and coordination role, not for moving resources; could be a different model to look at in the future

## Wednesday, November 15, 2017 – Executive Session

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## IC Reports (Continued)

### Turman

Assigned to 4 incidents.

### ***Challenges (if not listed above already)***

- Trying to keep enough middle management in the field to supervise heavy equipment
- No one waiting to take over IC position
- Did not go as smooth with 2<sup>nd</sup> Area Command group as 1st

***Successes (if not listed above already)***

- Able to get ahead (i.e. put fire on the ground instead of waiting for it to get to them)
- Team is in 2<sup>nd</sup> year of 3 year rotation, getting people qualified
- Did well with the shortage of resources
- Good interaction with 1<sup>st</sup> Area Command group

**Remote Situation – Matt Gibson**

BOD tasking to stand up remote situation unit out of NRTC – full report on website.

**2017 Remote Situation Unit Final Report**

NWCG Data Standard was not applied consistently – continuing education on WHAT that is, and how the IMT's want to use it.

NR does not have rep on Data Standards sub-committee; Mark Slayton has offered to be that rep, need NRCG BOD approval. Greg Dillon could be a backup/alternate. No opposition from BOD, recommend Mark Slayton/Greg Dillon to committee. (Takes place of TF option – Ken requests to have DOI representative to the group that has been identified/established).

**Action Item -> Matt Gibson/Billy Phillips:** white paper addressing data standard for NR, that would be compatible across ALL IMTs. Will communicate to Plans/Situation units at IMT meetings – information sharing, continuing education. Need to reach ALL levels (**Lonergan**). Intent is to help guide national standard.

Issue of need for good interagency communication tool; FireNet (Google application suite of tools adopted by NWCG) has been used, but DOI pulled out of it last year. Need a consolidated voice at the WFIT meeting, and briefing paper on why this is important to support (**Bidaburu**). **Action Item -> Matt Gibson:** letter from NRCG BOD in support of FireNet for CGAC meeting. NRCG Agency representatives were also asked to talk to their respective WFIT board representatives.

NRSS should be put under the Plans section.

Matt requested approval of verbage from NRCG for thank you letter to participants in Remote Situation Unit and to share final report (link above) from this summer. No objection to either.

**Decision Support Center– Julie Shea**

Julie handed out the Decision Support Final Report and Executive Summary.

Burden is going to be on the Forest Service side initially to set up, due to WFDSS, but need to have a discussion as a BOD when activity dictates ramping up across the agencies. Personnel were brought in on support code when it was determined to be necessary. The DS Center was made up of interagency personnel so there was a challenge sharing data. Relied heavily on outside GACCs to help bring in personnel. Important for other GACCs and NMAC to hear that DS is in place (**Bidaburu**).

## NR Operations Specialist Position – Ken Schmid

Sent email out about selection process and selection made – Craig Goodell. Craig will be starting the week of January 7; Ken, Greg Archie, Tim Murphy, Greg Morris and Ralph Rau will all be present to brief to the position. Need to look at the Delegation of Authority. Operations Specialist will attend CGAC meetings in the future, representing NR.

## Incident Commander Selections and 2018 IMT Direction - ALL

The group had a lengthy discussion regarding Incident Commander Selections and Team Direction for 2018. The discussion points were:

- Can the NR successfully field all 8 IMTs?
- Application process for ICs, C&G and Team Members
- Selection process

After the discussion, the following decisions were made:

- EVERYONE will need to re-apply for 2018 (ICs, Deputy ICs, Alternate ICs, Trainee ICs, C&G and Team Members).
- ICs, Deputy ICs, Alternate ICs and Trainee ICs will need to submit an application packet to Mike Granger by December 15, 2017; the packet includes the following:
  1. Cover letter
  2. Resume
  3. Supporting letter from supervisor
  4. Verifiable qualifications (IQS or IQCS Master Record)
  5. Reference form from current IC (optional)
- C&G and Team Member application period will be December 1 – January 15 in ICAP.
- Applicants will be applying for a Type 1, Type 2 or WFM Team, but will not be picking based on the IC.
- NRCG will be taking an active role in the selection process, while including the ICs in the process.
- NRCG and Incident Commanders will meet February 20-22, 2018 (location TBD) to go over IMT selections; Incident Commander selections will have been made at this point.
- A BOD member will be assigned to each IMT as a Team Liaison. Roles and Responsibilities of that individual will be outlined in the 2018 IMT SOG.
- NRCG spring meeting will be separate from the IMT meeting.

Judy Heintz and Mike Granger will work on getting the IC application process out so potential candidates have as much time as possible to get packets submitted.

Will be inviting Type 3 IMTs to IMT meetings to get them more integrated.

## PIO Coverage for NRCC/NRCG

Need to bring someone in early and start networking to provide coverage for the entire summer. The Regional voice was definitely missing this summer; would be helpful to provide communication on some of the other functions we use during a fire season (DS Center, Air Resource Group) so we can educate. Joint Information Center (JIC) was talked about, but not approved. Structure this summer was an ad-hoc JIC, which worked well, but was put together too late. **Action Item -> Crystal Beckman/Chris Barth**: put together a list of PIOs who would be available to help provide coverage for both NRCC and NRCG during the season.

There is a monthly GACC/NIFC/PIO conference call, which has not had NR representation, so there is an opportunity to do so. Chris Barth will be willing to take this on, and consolidate a distribution list for IMT/Agency PIOs. **Action Item -> Chris Barth**: Draft letter from NRCG BOD officially approving Chris as NR representative, and send to Mike Granger for signature.

## Area Command

Area Command is supposed to provide relief and value to the agencies; can be a benefit to Line Officers.

Is the current Area Command setup based on an old model? Is there some evolution in that structure that would make it more useful? The AA's set the tone on how the AC teams are going to be used; but there is flexibility. Need to understand how they can be used, and set expectations.

Line Officers under Area Command felt like it took a burden off. Needs to be discussion on how they are used, and education on WHAT area command does (**DeGrosky**).

## Medical Program – Ralph Rau

Enrique Olivares is now in the detail, Alicia is out of the detail. Not going to fill until we know where we are going nationally. Trying to marry up with the NPS, moving along, but need to identify what the position will look like.

IMS – doctor in MT used to provide medical direction, but retired. Developed contract – costing 140-160K per year for the medical program. Started talking about cost split – really an EMS program, so split across the functions. When classes were set up, most of what were trained were IMS. Agency cannot sustain the program and train the numbers that are out there. Through this year, going to morph into having IMS program under contract. If contractors know the work is going to be there, they can provide the personnel. Moving into ID this year as well. Paying a large part of IMS program, and unable to focus on the internal EMS program.

Need to test for the upcoming season, so will still have some IMS classes this spring but will be scaling back. Not practical to make a complete switch given the timeframe.

There is a need to develop a medical supply contract (IDIQ) to purchase medical supplies to provide for some control.

WHAT do we need in the field? Important question to be answered.

As part of new agency policy, forests are responsible for writing Emergency Response Plan, and identify how many EMS personnel are needed on the unit (including supplies, etc.) – will help to set a reasonable standard on what is actually needed.

## Medical Coverage - Anna Stull

Operations Committee meeting had discussion on how to get back to a manageable level of medical personnel (handout).

IMS offers Occupational Health component that traditional EMTs do not get. With IMS sunsetting, need to figure out how to educate. Who are we asking to do what? Need to have someone looking at the contract that knows what to look for so perhaps we do not lose that OH component (**Rau**).

There may be an opportunity to utilize Area Command in assisting in setting something up, i.e. a centralized urgent care center for non-life-threatening injuries. Need to look at things creatively.

Need to recruit MEDL Priority Trainees; recognize that these individual may not have to have in the field experience, but who could manage people and events. Recognized prior learning should also be considered. Also need to recognize that there are numerous resources out on incidents that are not being considered in emergency situations as being valuable, and empower those individuals in those situations. **Action Item -> ALL:** outreach and coordination to resources that are already on incidents.

Key questions:

- What is the acceptable level of staffing? What affects that?
- Where does MEDL go in ICS? (Officially under Logistics still, in NR under Safety)
- What does medical care look like on NR incidents?
- What should standard of care look like on incidents?

**Action Item -> Mike Granger:** GA report out at CGAC meeting; what is each GA doing about this issue?

**Action Item -> NWCG Risk Management Committee:** What does standard of care look like on incidents?

## Cost Share Agreements – Tracey Nimlos

Tracey handed out 5 Cost Share Agreements for signature. They were as follows:

- 2017 NR GMAC Support
- NR IMT Staging
- Medical Assistance Team
- NR Eastern Montana Staging
- NR IR Support

\*NG Training and Mobilization – would be done on agency split by usage – only the on the ground FF's – were only used on Lolo Peak so split between FS/DNRC. Will work with Mike/Ralph to finalize. Some were trained/outfitted but not used – so may need to include all agencies as it was a group decision.

VLAT base in Eastern Montana – MAC decision log shows extension approved for two weeks but no other documentation prior. Emphasized importance of MAC decision log when they have financial implications.

## AFD Operating Plan – Ryan Patrick

Master Agreement will expire on December 31, 2017. Ryan can send an email out identifying what is already in there, get feedback on what needs to be added. Ryan will have a copy tomorrow for review (note: there was not an opportunity to review on 11/16).

Since each agency has to have their respective contracting personnel and Agency Administrator review and sign, it may not be feasible at this point in the year to have a new agreement signed by December 31.

## Taskings (Also in Fall Action Items)

- Delegation of Authority for Operations Specialist and NRCC Manager – Ken Schmid
- Leader's Intent – Mike Granger and Agency Administrator Lead
- Structure Protection Guidelines – Patrick Lonergan
- MAC Plan Changes – Mike Granger/DNRC Rep./Bob Habeck/Pam Jolly
- Mobilization Guide Updates – Kathy Pipkin
- Sage Grouse – Ken Schmid
- Out of Area IMT Letter – Jake Ganieany (will work with Anthony Krause)
- Private Resources Letter – Mike DeGrosky
- NRCG Operating Plan Revision – Done (IMT SOG)
- Transition Protocols – IC Committee
- Review of Strategic Plan – Kathy Pipkin/Ralph Rau

## BIN Items

- BOD attendance at IMT closeouts – continue when available.
- Updated NRCG Contact List and Representatives
- Dispatch Teams White Paper – CGAC has also taken this on, need to know if this has been vetted through respective Fire Staff officers for approval. Kathy Pipkin will follow up with Mark DeCaria.
- Dispatch Stress Study Evaluation – Kathy received the results, and it was concluded that a true study is needed. Kathy will work on a proposal and also with MTDC to determine if there is funding for it.
- Team Feedback Form – will be based off of the Finance/Logistics evaluation, NRCG BOD member or representative will sit in on the evaluation, and copy will be provided to Judy/Team Coordinator to include in IMT package.
- Documentation/legacy record standards for IMTs – will be the focus of 2018 Leader's Intent letter.
- Transition protocols – **Action Item -> IC Committee**: task other functions to create transition checklist/protocol (can reference Finance transition checklist currently used).

## Approvals by NRCG BOD

- NRCC will be closed the day after Thanksgiving, and the week between Christmas and New Year's. NRCC will have someone on call.
- [2018 Solicitation Plan for Competitive Agreements](#)
- Cost for Heavy Equipment video with MLA will be put into Operating Plan as a shared cost (\$18,000).
- Mark Slayton will be NR representative to NWCG Data Standards Committee, Greg Dillon will be the alternate.
- MEDL will be put back under Logistics.

## Thursday, November 16, 2017 – Executive Session

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The group reviewed the 2018 IMT Standard Operating Guide, and made edits based on the decisions earlier in the week.