



Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

Phone Number: 888-844-9904; Passcode: 359-9209#

Tuesday, January 16, 2018 Monthly Conference Call

Under Montana Open Meetings Law, the Northern Rockies Coordinating Group is holding a public meeting for the purpose of conducting government business. One representative per Northern Rockies Coordinating Group organization that has authority to speak for their group is expected to attend and vote on any decisions during the meeting.

Participants:

Board Members
Deputies and Others

Welcome given
No NMAC Report

Predictive Services

Slight La Nina since October 1, 2017

Expecting a pattern change warm up above freezing in E & ND this week. West side a moist system for high elevations. Valleys possibly Thursday and Friday. Will see a pattern of every few days some warm up and cool downs.

Operation Update

- Craig Goodell (cgoodell@blm.gov 406-329-4961) in place getting his feet on the ground, meeting folks.

Contracting Update – Tim Murphy

- BLM/DNRC/FS will have new solicitations in 2018
- Pre-season vendor meetings set for 2/20 in COE, 2/13 in MSO, and 2/14 in BIL all 1900 to 2000
- The Logging Association will have to wait until after spring break up to do the Heavy Equipment Task Force Capability video.
- Secretary of DOI sent the Montana Logging Association a survey letter asking how they think agreements are working, use on fires and how fires are managed. Overall Montana came out pretty good, other areas maybe not.

ICAP – Judy Heintz

- January 22, 2018 ICAP closes, currently approximately 500+ application. (over 900 at closing)
- February 20-22, 2018 IMT Selections in Butte, MT

NR GMAC Plan – Kathy Pipkin

Draft is with Mike Granger for review. Hope is to have it in draft for NRCG review at February 20th meeting

IMT Operating Guide

Still Working on it. Have to convert it back to 508 compliant.

Equipment/Logistics Committee – Warren Applehans

- AIS – Met with FS researcher on 444 document. Will have a draft out by February 1, to NRCG by February 20. Final to IMT's at Spring Meeting.
- Committee needs members from NRCG Agencies. Only a few people participate all the time.

Incident Commanders – Mike Granger

- Bob Fry – taking vice Leach,
- Joe Sampson requested stay with WFMT (look for email letter from Joe)
- IC's have been talking about dropping an IMT, much discussion with the conference call attendees.
- Mike Granger will complete letters to selected IC's and CC NRCG.

CGAC (Coordination Group Advisory Council) Updates – Kathy Pipkin and Mike Granger

- ICAP issues a briefing paper from the CGAC will go to the NWCG WFIT sub-committee
- Complexity Analysis will be reviewed as it is 15-20 years old. With the reality of what IMT3s are managing is the currently matrix accurate.
- BUYT the current membership is 88% FS, and the jurisdictions served are 56% FS. How to address this and get membership more in line, and accommodate all the requests? How can business be done differently? Work with National BUYT Coordinator and NWCG Business sub-committee.
- 209 the direction that came out trying to clarify the percent contained and completed is still unclear. ACIC committee to work on this
- Remote function groups- Looking at the success that occurred around the nation with this. Doing more with less. NR remote situation unit, CA remote finance unit. Granger taking active role, waiting for NMAC to come back with tasking.
- Craig Goodell will be the NRCG permanent representative to the CGAC.

Safety

- Retired – Get together January 20th.

Round Robin

- NWA – Steve Heppner – Working on year end reports
- GPA – Ray Hart - -24 in Aberdeen, SD
- RMA – Bryce Rogers – Meetings and Surgery on the 24th
- BLM – Ken Schmid – Hoping to fill Meteorologist position (following up since call, Coleen Haskell reports April 1)
- IDL – JT Wensman – Back in the office. Received approval to hire a Deputy Bureau Chief.
- DES – Jake Ganieany – Working on California reimbursement costs
- NPS - Dan Worthin – Mike Davin Retired end of the year. Position currently being re-flown
- FS – Ralph Rau – Pam Jolly detailed in as R1 FAA Staff Assistant and NRCG Administrator starts on 1/22. Steve Zachry's position will be filled with a detailer short term and permanent long term.
- FWS - Mike Granger – Hiring Seasonals, Folks will be going to the SE for Rx. Restructuring is going on within the FWS.

Wednesday, February 21 – Team Selections

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

The intent of the NRCG is to try to allow as many people as possible to participate on the NR team they have been recruited to or working with, except where there needs to be some movement in positions to help support teams that may be short of critical positions.

Due to a reduction in the number of teams in the NR, there may be additional shifting of personnel to fill out the remaining teams. The Incident Commanders will still be selecting their respective teams.

After the IC's have selected their teams, the board will review the overall selections with the primary focus of identifying any staffing gaps or issues that individual teams may have.

Finally, the ICs and the NRCG Board will work together to provide the best staffing possible, across all teams, to the benefit of the Northern Rockies.

Agency Administrators Conference Call Update – Paul Santavy

Team selection process was reviewed and discussion on training and retention occurred. A written succession plan was also discussed and scheduled for later in the week. Inquiry into if there is already a model out there will also be made. Board needs to be able to articulate succession plan expectations. (**Granger**)

Discussion on the larger question of Team Succession occurred, (i.e. – not enough agency people coming into replace members, relying heavily on ADs, etc.) What do we do? (**Morris**)

Also noted was that term length for succession planning was key; another IC may have a different vision after 3 years. (**Rick Cowger**) In addition, depth planning was identified as key; especially in core command and general staff positions. (**Ralph Rau**)

Succession plan needs to key in on specific go / no go positions that are needed to stand up a team. (**Paul Santavy**)

Succession plan is a vision into the future to ensure that we will have the capabilities that will be needed to stand up teams in the near future. (**Mike Granger**)

Succession plan will provide structure; however, will not solve all issues. It will be a vehicle to keep moving forward. (**Ralph Rau**)

The Agency Administrators received a pre-season predictive service briefing and briefly discussed leaders intent without too many changes identified. A commitment to attend the April Team meeting was made. As a group, the Agency Administrators largely feel the board is going in the correct direction, changing the organization to build better relationships across the fire community. Liaisons and implementation of standard procedures were also acknowledged.

Group discussion on whether to invite a representative from the counties to participate on Agency Administrator Conferences calls occurred. Paul Santavy will relay the discussion to the Agency Administrators group.

Group discussion on Individual Red Card Committees occurred. Concerns around qualifications that are not approved, and never making it to the agency administrators were expressed. (**Mike Granger**) An example of a DIVS (T) that performed a job well and had a complete task book; however, the FMO at home unit still required a specific number of mobilizations before they would qualify the individual was put forth. A need for agencies to recognize recommendations of Final Task book approval was also expressed; along with discussion on a challenge for expediency to competency.

There is a need to observe caution in order to avoid reverting to the old someone knows someone" system; multiple assignments assists with this assessment. (**Greg Morris**) Where to draw the line requires a careful balance.

Additional group discussion on importance to demonstrate and express, as a board, to the Agency Administrators need for "Speed to Competency". Importance of being candid on evaluations and assessing qualifications of each individual were addressed, along with a need to discuss with the ICs and have them to relay it down to the command and general staff.

Group acknowledged that there is an extremely delicate political environment and expressed a need to address all abilities for IC qualifications as representatives. Group agreed that there is a need for alignment and agreement in advance of approaching potential new ICs.

- Question of "how do we vet out of area IC (T)s?" arose. Identified particularly were those from other GACCs and the Washington office.
- It was agreed that there needs to be a process identified and implemented.

Recognition was given that the new IC approval process was just begun last fall. Group discussion continued. Question arose as to having individuals outside of Northern Rockies GACC as ICs of Northern Rockies teams. Need to identify if NRCG would accept this and, if so, to establish a vetting process as well. Group agreed it was a good discussion to bring up to the Agency Administrators. Are they ready to step into that position? What would be the expectations after training assignments? What is the role of the Agency Administrators to the board and are they accountable for other agencies individuals brought into the GACC? (**Paul Santavy**) How would it be dealt with it if a removal and/or an IC issue were to occur for an out of area IC? Should the expectation that out of area ICs would only be acceptable as Trainees in the NRGA be put forth up front? (**Judy Heintzs**) Should it be a "case-by-case" scenario? (**Rick Cowger**) Is this endeavor supporting a "Band-Aid" type infrastructure – to keep teams going? (**Mike Granger**) The real question is the accountability chain in sustainability for the teams. (**Paul Santavy**) Once an individual within the GACC becomes qualified – would they be placed immediately with a current team or place them into a future succession plan? AD deputies cannot be the primary IC. If an IC can't go, and the team has an AD deputy, the team has to stand down – that is the reality this year. Poncin, Hutton and one other are available for a short term bench, for depth this season. One of the tools in building that bench depth needs to be increasing applicant depth; looking outside the GACC. Should Job Share of the IC position be considered? (**Rick Cowger**) Group agreed there is a need to develop an IC vetting process; to include ICs outside the GACC. Ralph Rau volunteered to assist. Question: If there is a fully qualified IC outside the GACC; why do we not accept that as "fully vetted"? (**Paul Santavy**) Scope and "within your chain" in the Northern Rockies discussed; important to know how do the Agency Administrators feel about that. (**Ralph Rau**) Should there be a National Conversation about this? (**Ralph Rau**) **ACTION ITEM** - Paul will discuss with the Agency Administrators group and those resulting

conversations will provide direction for development of an IC vetting process; potentially including ICs outside the GACC. Ralph Rau, Mike Granger and Craig Goodell will then begin working on a plan.

Team Liaisons Updates

(see attachment)

Jake Ganieany - with Connell's team; will be working together more in the future. Ken Schmid - with Thompson's team; need to relay and define relationship. Dan Warthin - with Team 5, Sampson's team. JT (Wensman) – with Team 7 (Almas). Concerns over perception that teams that are doing well in recruiting will have those efforts overshadowed by the board and that recruitment re-distributed across the GACC to other teams. This year all applied to an "open" format in the Team Applications process; currently assessing the good of the whole for this issue (**Ralph Rau**) Clear message articulated from the board to the ICs would address this issue. (**Mike Granger**) Mike Granger – with Turman's team. Working on first building block for succession plan for command and general staff; will be getting together and assessing.

Team Staffing

Federal Retirement System has changed

Folks will be limited under the FERS system with financial guidelines and social security caps. This will affect how many times they can mobilize. Generally speaking, after two mobilizations, agency folks tend to drop off the rosters due to work commitments. Group identified this as a compounding issue

General Review of Team Rosters - Judy Heintz

Rosters as a whole looking well; there are some out of area individuals and some ADs. There were multiple DIVS (T)s left over post selection. Approximately 569 applicants this year. Over 120 applicants were for DIVS positions; another substantial amount were for operations positions. Group discussion on 420 class. Discussed need to include non-operations positions in the class (i.e. finance trainee). These types of positions will be key to keep teams viable. Question: What is the overall knowledge spread across the teams? (**Ralph Rau**) Goicoechea's team is strong; Turman's team is strong; Fry's team weaker (Fry is very honest in this respect). There is not much on the depth bench for additional assistance. Also, not much left in the alternate pool. Each team has their own personal list of individuals they can call, when in need. Question: How much of those lists are comprised of individuals from other teams? (**Ralph Rau**) For the most part, these are not composed of primaries – but they do share individuals back and forth on these lists. Are we getting into a situation similar to last year? (**Ralph Rau**) Potentially, if after the third mobilization. It could be an issue. There are approximately 62 individuals from Out of GACC on this year's rosters. This is approximately the same number as in previous years. 24 of the Out of GACC individuals are ADs. There are approximately 103 total ADs. There are some Trainees coming up; however, they are not in Finance or in other key support positions. There has been no discussion of capability or potential of establishing another standing, Type 3 team. Ken Parks shared that his board are not excited about having so many of their number move up; however, they were willing to let them take shadow assignments. Group discussion about utilization as a shadow assignment for a section that might be in need of bolstering. Noted there may be an untapped resource for Type 3 teams – some of the FEMA teams could possibly work together and provide additional people coming into the system. (**Craig Goodell**) The Wildland Fire Management Team is robust.

Individual Review of Team Rosters – Judy Heintz

Group discussed need to know if 520 candidates are on rosters; agreed can ask Melissa tomorrow. Discussed several aspects of new succession plan process reference current trainees on rosters. Discussed succession planning, vetting process and position task book issuance. Succession planning must be in agreement and accordance with Agency sign off. **ACTION ITEM** - Will formalize a process and in the future; all individuals will then go through this process. Discussed if a decision was made prior by NRGA as to Wildland Fire Management Team standard configuration? 24 or 26 individual roster was previously discussed - per final IMT Summit Team Plan – refs NMG Chapter 20 – chart link: https://www.nifc.gov/nicc/logistics/teams/imt_configuration.pdf

Finalize Team Selections with ICs

NRCG board addressed the group about concerns expressed earlier (see above). Emphasized was that the board had a few questions and was seeking clarification from the ICs. The board discussed the importance of ensuring that they are both looking at the needs of the individual teams and at supporting teams in our region as a whole. (**Mike Granger**)

- Mike Almas
 - Board posed question on SOF2 ADs on team
 - Inquired on agency individual from applicant pool, from CA (**Charles Frank**), that has not been picked up yet
 - Challenging to take someone in a command and general staff position with no firsthand knowledge of the individual from another GACC (**Mike Almas**)
 - NRCG wants to look at the whole of utilizing qualified agency resources, on a National level
 - Expectation of the board is that Teams will have individual assignment evaluations and an end of the season evaluation; operating at a high level of performance on every assignment. In order to achieve that, team cohesion is a key factor. Maintaining a roster under the circumstances from last season, with limited resources after multiple rolls, is challenging. ADs and relationships are a critical element to managing this team cohesion. More concerned with shortage of support positions of team infrastructure. (**Bob Fry**)
 - Team Succession is a concern for all – when a qualified, agency individual is on the applicant pool list, from any area, – it is a responsibility to Team Succession on a national level to explore those options
 - Historically, Northern Rockies has only gone through the in GACC agency applicant pool to be picked up (**Judy Heintz**)
 - Out of Area resources that participated on teams historical have freelanced with the team and have gone through evaluation as to whether a good resource for that team cohesion.
 - Question: Does that support the national effort to increase team succession planning?
 - With declining budgets and hiring limitations – efforts should be made to inquire about the individuals, no matter what area they are from. (**Ralph Rau**)
 - LSC2 agency individual (**Fleer**) is not the lead, but has limited availability at times. AD has been proven as a good, dependable resource (**Mike Almas**)
 - How do you feel about your team and what can NRCG do to help? (**Ken Schmid**)
 - Fairly deep team compared to past rosters; have in most cases a plan for most of

- the AD positions on the team. May take a few years to get there. (**Mike Almas**)
- Request to look at roster and identify any potential or future ICs and submit to the board
 - have come up with a list of this from yesterday's IC meeting and will be submitting to the board (**Mike Almas**)
- Emphasized that the process for out of area individuals includes getting agreement from the individuals home GACC before the roster is finalized (**Judy Heintz**)
- Concern expressed on FSC2 – no trainee in the works; the two that are there are on their second year into retirement (**Mike Almas**)
- Rick Connell
 - Did pick up an agency BIA for SOF2. Individual also applied to be an IC – any insight from the board as to his status? (**Rick Connell**)
 - The board did not yet discuss those IC applications that came in after the deadline (**Mike Granger**)
 - There was one individual picked for multiple positions on three teams; have resolved this issue amongst the teams already (**Rick Connell**)
 - SOF2 is the weakest; have been making calls the last few weeks. Do have two or three folks potentially coming on as trainees this year (**Rick Connell**)
 - Suggestion to inquire about agency Out of GACC applicants (**Ralph Rau**)
- Mike Goicoechea
 - Concern expressed reference a lot of individuals retiring by the summer or fall. Not sure if there are enough coming in to replace them; also do not have a good gauge on those that are retiring if they are going to be heavily into being ADs. (**Mike Goicoechea**)
 - Are you finding that FERS retirees are affecting this? (**Greg Morris**)
 - Depends on the type of position – command and general staff yes; other support positions may get more mobilizations before hitting the cap (**Mike Goicoechea**)
 - Question: Operations trainees – are they close to being signed off? (**Mike Granger**)
 - One is close to retirement also – need to check status of PTB (**Mike Goicoechea**)
 - Couple are close to being signed off; also PSC2 (T)s (**Mike Goicoechea**)
 - Confident going in; however, holes appear to be developing in Safety (**Mike Goicoechea**)
 - Have heard agency issues regarding who and how we sign up ADs – will get with Ralph on this (**Mike Goicoechea**)
 - How many did you acquire from the Type 2 teams? (**Mike Granger**)
 - Will have to go back and research – one for sure; there are a few more. However, there is a reluctance that does exist; it would be beneficial if the individuals knew they had the upward support of the board (**Mike Goicoechea**)
- Doug Turman
 - Question on Deputy: If Doug could not go out, who would take the team? (**Mike Granger**)
 - In region – it would be Wally Bennett; Out of Region – not identified at this time
 - ADs in SOF and PSC but trainees in the works (**Doug Turman**)
 - One individual is interested in becoming Type 1 IC (**Doug Turman**)
 - Question – How do you feel about your succession planning? (**Ken Schmid**)
 - Logistics section needs some assistance (**Doug Turman**)
 - Question: How many are going from Type 2 to Type 1?
 - Not many; resistance exists (**Doug Turman**)

- Question: Why is individual doing OSC2 first before moving to ICT2? (Craig Goodell)
 - His PTB is done; only needs one mobilization - can open an ICT2 PTB now (**Doug Turman**)
- Joe Sampson
 - Made some progress on the SOF front
 - PIO has been steady
 - Do have a few folks on alternates list with good individuals that could help out other teams
 - New Liaison officer this year
 - Four Ops Chiefs – shared position; last year hardly had one
 - Finance is a potential hole; currently filled with individual who is available for two weeks only; but do have someone interested to train
 - One AD is looking for a sponsor
 - PSC both are ADs
 - RESL may change; Out of GACC agency individual interested
 - Fire Behavior is becoming a hole; do have a few trainees identified
 - Biggest change is to logistics section - do have some Out of GACC participants that are not allowed to roster; however, they do participate
 - Question: Operation plan says will field 26 individuals on the team – what is your short team roster? (**Mike Granger**)
 - Need to find that out – inconsistency with National Mob Guide and NR Mob Guide (**Joe Sampson**)
 - Can you provide us with a 26 individual member roster per IMT summit roster? (**Mike Granger**)
 - Yes (**Joe Sampson**)
 - PTRCs on alternate list – any chance they will step up to Unit leader? (**Kathy Pipkin**)
 - Yes – that is in the works (**Joe Sampson**)
 - Would like to look at utilizing PTRC individuals that require day jobs that cannot accept a full fire assignment mobilization; using these individuals during traditional day job hours (**Rick Connell**)
 - This discussion came up at CGAC – last year there were two remote situation and decision support centers. Tasks have been issued to study these. There is a desire to explore these non-traditional support options – please submit any ideas (**Mike Granger**)
 - Type 2 team differences discussed – often comes down to delegation differences for WFMT
 - One reason not completely endorsing the 26 individuals roster (**Joe Sampson**)
- Bob Fry
 - Received resources from team that was stood down
 - Command and general staff need to have ownership over those sections, for as much as possible
 - FSC hurdle; PSC section was thin
 - In a good state for first mobilization of the season; middle of the season when people return to work commitments may be more challenging
 - One individual potential future IC
 - Thank you for coming back to support the NRGA as an IC. If it comes to the point where you cannot fill this team and need to stand down – please do not hesitate to advise that it has reached that point. Is there anything that the board can do to facilitate this team? (**Mike Granger**)
 - Will advise if anything arises; no additional needs at this time (**Bob Fry**)

- BIN ITEM – Mike Granger will talk about [ICAP Future](#)
- John Thompson
 - Caveat with this list is that it was only built out of ICAP
 - DIVS that is AD - highly dependable, retired, and last year always had a trainee with him. Highly skilled in heavy equipment usage; does have some current minor health issue. Good resource for training less experienced. Do have two DIVS (T) on the roster this year as well.
 - Planning wise – will be looking for a replacement for current, as current has a desire to move up to Type 1. Need for two PSC2 on every mobilization due to realities of incidents.
 - No Situation Unit Leader this year; do have an individual willing to go on mobilizations.
 - No Facilities Unit Leader; do have a trainee that is close and qualified individuals in other areas
 - Not weak in FSC; have several that did not apply in ICAP
 - Potential future IC interest from one individual; however, firefighter retirement may be a decision driver for them (**John Thompson**)

Discussion on Team Selections

All Northern Rockies agency resources, except DIVS (T), have been placed with a team. ICs have list and board recommends bringing those out of area agency individuals in on a mobilization for vetting process. Board requests to be provided with candid evaluations for individuals. If there are individuals that ICs want further information on, Board members could possibly ask counterparts in other regions for further details. Succession Planning is everyone's responsibility – all need to contribute to make it a successful process and facilitate getting individuals interested in participation.

NRCG and IC General Discussion Topics

The group discussed the fact that there are three to four current ICs that will not be here in the next couple of years and that there are currently not any trainees in the works. Recruitment and support positions continued to be identified as items of concern.

The NRCG message regarding medical being moved under safety was discussed. Concern was expressed that the issue was not consistent with current direction. It was identified that the IMS program has extreme costs associated with it, in addition to logistical strain required to maintain the program out of the resources we have. (**Ralph Rau**)

- Push to shift as much into contracting as possible
- Contracting capacity and plan are there
- It was a Line Officer decision that medical program should be in Safety
- Forest Service is also partnering with the National Park Service on change that is being piloted by another region this year (**Ralph Rau**)

The group also discussed differences in opinions on structure protection in relation to the Agency Administrators. Suggestions for improvement included:

- Upfront expectations that are prioritized when a team mobilizes to an incident
- Re-evaluation to see if everyone is on the same page as far expectation definitions

It was noted that there may be different emphasis; however, the Structure Protection guidelines are issued each year. (**Mike Granger**)

- Montana and Idaho Cooperative agreements spell that out as well
 - If there are items that are not identified in those – then clarification is needed. Requested examples from the ICs. (**Mike Granger**)
 - Discussion that it seems to be more of an interpretation of policy

- Want the Agency Administrators to take it back for focus on consistency

Last season saw quite a few revolving Agency Administrators; concerns expressed over consistency issue as fire evolves. Group discussion included the following:

- Strategic Risk verses Tactical Risk due to tactical adjustments related to risk aversion
- Suggestion made that a way to address risk aversion is with a strong trust relationship
- Different perception of what risk is referenced in “risk aversion” terminology
 - Concern expressed over process consistency
 - Question posed if this is the new normal to accept within the fire community or is this an educational component to address with Agency Administrators.

It was noted that internal risk discussions exist at high levels within agencies.

- A lot of work is going into bringing up the skill set of the Agency Administrators
- There is value in spending time around units, participating and developing that trust
- It was noted that the RMAC group would like to come and talk to the board. It would be good to arrange to have the ICs there to develop that feedback on the expectations.
- One of the things that the Forest Service needs to address is provincialism between forests.
 - There is a need to get all to think about the GACC as a whole. (*Ralph Rau*)

The R6 differed risk paper was also discussed. It was agreed that the ICs do not feel it represents the Northern Rockies region.

- Request placed for specific points from the letter to support this statement (*Ralph Rau*)
 - Suggested tasking to the IC Committee with a timeline prior to the Team Meeting for an Aviation white paper reference Agency Administrator involvement in Tactics
 - Almas is the representative to the Aviation Committee – perhaps that is where it should reside?
 - May not be an issue for other agencies; but may be useful for all to understand

The issue of building Incident Management Teams and not Incident Management Organizations was discussed. It was noted that the application process created workload and uncertainty. In addition, ICAP allowed for duplicate selection of same individuals across multiple teams. The ICs would like to provide input into recruiting and the application process. It was noted that the Team Plan came from IMT Summit and it is approved and in place. (*Mike Granger*) For clarification, the Board required that everyone apply this year but in future years team members will only have to apply every three years, per the Team Plan (Judy Heintz read the “Tenure” section from team plan that was approved.)

At CGAC they talked about ICAP and the need for it to go in a different direction. (*Mike Granger*) A committee was put together to provide nationwide support (instead of support from just one GACC) and is gathering input for improvement of the system. The proposal is that it goes back through NWCG, which means it will need to go through WFIT; and this process will take quite some time. For next year, Northern Rockies will go back to the prior way of applying and opening the applicant pool procedures in ICAP. Judy Heintz coordinates this process.

The group discussed the fact that the Agency Administrators would like a written succession plan. The Board will be working on this and requesting input for this project. The Board has requested elements from the Agency Administrators group that they would like to see in this plan. The

General discussion reference the CGAC clarification request for 209 accomplishment reporting also took place.

Team meetings and awards were also the subject of discussion. **Kathy Pipkin** will brief **Craig Goodell** on the process and associated forms. He will work with the ICs. The timeframe for awards is usually two weeks.

Team Meetings – at one point they were held as individual teams. How effective are the group meetings? Where is the greater value? (**Mike Granger**) Individual team meetings may be hard to justify the funds. Sessions at the group meetings for the most recent meetings have been getting progressively better. (**Joe Sampson**) Would like to see more “Team Time” for the teams. (**Doug Turman**)

Thursday, February 22

Predictive Services Briefing – Mike Richmond

(See attachment for Predictive Service Briefing)

Will be issuing a revision to include the recent Northeast area snowfall event. Question: Central MT normally gets Chinooks; however, have not received any... for RX purposes, do you see this continuing? (**Mike Granger**) Models do see a change at end of next week – snow cover should start coming off the latter part of March. (**Mike Richmond**) Question: Flooding potential? Should be fairly slow and steady snow melt (**Mike Richmond**) Season estimate at this point in time - Higher than normal potential west of the divide due to ENSO-neutral and La Nina conditions that exist this year

NRCC Spring Report – Kathy Pipkin

Continuing to support Southern Area with suppression and prescribed burn activities. Second Meteorologist, BLM position, will be filled - Coleen Haskell; on board April 2nd. Pam Jolly on Detail to Program Support Specialist position; will be outreaching to backfill behind her. Will be outreaching a detail for a fire analyst. Will be discussing the need for a PIO and how to best meet this need. Completing normal spring work; working on the Northern Rockies Mobilization Guide updates. Will be including the demobilization guidelines this year. (**Kathy Pipkin**)

National Report – Aitor Bidaburu

Discussion items fall into three main categories:

NWCG

- Had an all chairs meeting last week that was well attended
- Group has come far with capabilities in sharing information
 - Dedicated position for Web site
 - Dedicated publication specialists
 - Undergoing a big overhaul on naming conventions and 508 compliancy
 - There is a new mailing list capability; automatically receive all new publications and operational documents for particular committees
 - Encourages all to take advantage of this new feature

NIFC External Affairs

- Received a one page document that should be posted on the website soon that identifies four main goals:
 - Firefighter and public safety
 - Wildfire behavior contingency on weather and fuels

- Partnerships at the local level
- Unauthorized use of Unmanned Aircraft

NMAC

- Works with the leadership of the CGAC group on a lot of items
 - Buying Team report out – from Buying Team Task group
 - Model of one BUYT, for one or a couple of incidents, will not sustain for the future
 - Work that CGAC has done with the Type 3 teams
 - The October 2018 deadline for Qualifications will not be extended
 - In reference to having flexibility on boundaries
 - Local area versus GACC area, etc. – this has been referred to the Coordination Dispatch Committee
 - Recruitment going on for Area Command Teams – due March 16th
 - The NICC – there is going to be a major turnover in the leadership at NICC
 - Center Manger is retiring
 - Two deputies are moving into other jobs
 - FMB – Federal Fire Directors group
 - Predictive Services Review – has completed Phase 1, and into Phase 2. Task team is led by Dan O'Brian. It is an ongoing effort; first review since Predictive Services was established 15 years ago
 - Expecting FMB to issue a memo on this in the next few days

Question: Timeline for fully qualified for Type 3 – confirming that the request for additional time was denied? (**Mike Granger**) Yes. (**Aitor Bidaburu**) Question: Dispatch area for internal movement for not fully qualified Type 3 was requested to be at the GACC level – was that sent to the Coordination Dispatch Committee? (**Mike Granger**) Yes; the exception for local dispatch area is only in effect until October 2018. (**Aitor Bidaburu**) NR is opposed to this; would like to go on record as opposed. (**Mike Granger**) Recommend that you express that to your Committee members. (**Aitor Bidaburu**) Three weeks ago at a state meeting we were told different. (**JT Wensman**) In Idaho's case, it is in two separate GACCs. That is why it is important to define "local". Flexibility in boundaries is still a discussion point. (**Aitor Bidaburu**) Names of representatives can be found on the website. (**Kathy Pipkin**) Montana has quite a lot of overlapping protection with Local and Rural – do not have the authority to mandate the training for these. (**John Monzie**) There are several Forests that reside in multiple dispatch zones – this would directly affect them. (**Greg Morris**) Committee may need to provide recommendations on retracting the language. (**Aitor Bidaburu**)

Northern Rockies Operations Spring Report – Craig Goodell

Over the next couple of months will be attending zone meetings. Talked with Chris Smith from IHC committee, things are going well; no new news. Appreciative of the fire hire. Will be holding IHC meeting in conjunction with the IMT meetings in the spring. Watching what is going on in R3; La Nina years are typically dry, as is this year. With the R1/R3 agreement, can anticipate moving a lot of resources to R3. Looking to develop a pool of individuals to assist in the operations position to support additional workload as the season progresses. Working on building a MAC simulation; desire to include the Agency Administrators. Met with the ICs yesterday during their meeting. They are very much interested in changing the IC call from 1700 to the mornings – BIN ITEM. Requesting input on the history of this call timing. Will be looking at staffing the Miles City Jump base again as warranted.

Northern Rockies Contracting Update – Tim Murphy

BLM and FS have all of their solicitations open; they close the mid-March. DNRC is still working on T2 crew. BLM has a new fire Contracting Officer; they have dropped the tents and office trailer solicitations; will now do these on ERRAs. Others are open. FS has the 3rd go around on skidders. FS has the 2nd go around on medical and will be including Idaho this year. This would also include South Idaho for a 450 mile radius. First time doing masticators and chippers; dropped short and coach busses for the workload. FS is again doing the heavy equipment task force. Significant changes this year; core will remain the same but adding 2nd transport and 3 optional pieces of equipment. Contract is for in GACC only. DNRC has the 2 type 2 crews – issue that federal contracting officer cannot sign the agreement unless it is competed and DNRC has a set price. This is still in progress. Had pre-proposal meetings with the vendors – no issues; good questions.

Shared about letter from American Logging Association (represents 33 states) – reference how logging industry assesses agency work. The letter somewhat misrepresents the processes that occur in R01; agencies may hear about this. There are differences in standard operating procedures across regions. The letter went to the Secretary level. Currently are in discussions with other regions on standardization of procedures.

Some contracted Type 2 crews in Oregon are putting pressure on Boise to recognize them as type 1. This will be discussed next week at a national meeting. Motivation may be that they see more work potential.

Working with Montana Logging Association to complete video work on heavy equipment video that will illustrate each piece of heavy equipment and explain the heavy equipment task force. Hope to have it completed by fall to use in multiple trainings. March 27th at U of M – there is a one day heavy equipment course; still room for students. Would like good participation. In addition, there will be three heavy equipment boss classes this spring.

Question: On IMS contract – what are you thinking on contract supply? (**Ralph Rau**) Last year in Montana, did a one year pilot test for multiple type resources. There were 5 companies that submitted under that solicitation. The Operations Committee is looking at what is really needed, as far as resources, at the incident. Conducted an AAR – lots of good input; sticking with 450 mile radius and lumping qualifications. Same is now being offered in Idaho; seeing more interest. Encouraging some of the ADs in the medical program to take a look at the contracting side.

IT Update – Patrick Murphy

There was a heavy FS presence at the AFD; however, the interagency capacity was weaker. Received only one viable commercial offer to support with fiber optic. This would put all under one network and share printers, storage devices and such (was not possible last year). Would allow us to set up our own shared network and allow connectivity for all agencies. \$440 a month for 60 months; including install – at the end of 5 years, would be \$225 per month and can upgrade that speed as we see fit (larger seasons); \$12000 installation cost. Proposal would be for a cost share? (**Mike Granger**) Yes; BLM and DNRC are already out there paying for lower speed costs – interagency partners would benefit from the higher speeds. It would provide better connectivity to everyone out there and meet expansion and training needs (mobile devices). Any opposition to this proposal from Cost Share agreement? (**Mike Granger**) Would like to know agency percentage cost? (**John Monzie**) Do not have that figure at this time. (**Patrick Murphy**) Would like comparison figures for each agencies. (**Ken Schmid**)

ACTION ITEM - Patrick will get the information and work with Ryan to provide the information to the board before the next conference call.

Did not have good turnout on ITSS training; completing one on one training. With reduction in Teams this year; will be sending out a note on supplemental capacity to support with equipment. Looking at detailers for unfilled positions

Will be looking at procuring replacement servers for aging equipment. Cost can vary – approximately \$6000-\$7000 each; cost can be shared.

NRTC Update / Trainee Priorities – Melissa Wegner

NTRC

S-520 – changes NAFRI has implemented for this year; new Due Date is April 13th, only have one person currently. Question: Is there any way we can show the S-520 candidates on the team rosters? (*Mike Granger*) Absolutely. (*Melissa Wegner*) S-420 occurring May 14-18th in Missoula. Full with Northern Rockies individuals. Phillips has heard back from some, but not all ICs. Selections will be made after feedback is received. Workshops we are focusing on this year:

- Logistics – full; high interest
- Mobile GIS course – was a success; few in house but mostly remote. Proof of Concept was successful
- S-445 – at the end of March; will have simulations
- Finance suite being offered
- Two zones are picking up dispatch courses

Priority Trainees

Developed a google form for the priority trainee application form; will be distributing today and open till April 20th. Encouraged ICs to send it out to their trainees. Priority Trainee lists will assist with mobilization during season. **Will distribute count of trainees that were mobilized last year (*Melissa Wegner*)**

Leader's Intent for 2018 Incident Management Team Members – Mike Granger

Larry Kotchman and Mike Granger will compile for 2018, with input from all organizations. Currently are requesting input for issues to be identified and included. Who are we directing the leaders intent too? (*Ken Schmid*) It is directed to all from the ground up to Agency Administrators ordering the teams. (*Mike Granger*) Directed to all those involved in the firefighting efforts in Northern Rockies. It is a combination from the Board and the Agency Administrators. Input suggested for inclusion:

- Speed to Competency
- What the “new normal” is with Agency Administrators
- Emphasis need for team members

ACTION ITEM – All will review and submit input to Mike Granger and Larry Kotchman; draft will then be compiled and distributed

Delegation of Authority for Operations and NRCC Manager – Ken Schmid

Delegations are issued annually (**see attachment**); are needed for prioritization of resources and incidents. Changes for this year include the following: largest change was number four Operations

Officer section; also added new language at PL 4 and 5; and removed word suppression. Number 10 on Kathy's contains similar verbiage changes. Changes in the MAC plan match this new verbiage. (**Mike Granger**) **Proposal to Approve** – any opposition? **Noted for Operations Officer, number three** - **Coordinate response from the agencies** – list the agencies for consistency (**Ralph Rau**) Question: Where are we going to keep priorities in writing? (**Greg Morris**) They are kept on shared NRCC drive in Intel folders; eventually will be in Pinyon. (**Kathy Pipkin**)

MAC Plan Changes / Updates – Kathy Pipkin

Group discussion on revision submission procedures. I have quite a few items. (**Greg Morris**) **All to submit input to Kathy Pipkin**. Group was encouraged to look at primary mission versus language used. The following items were identified to be looked at closer:

- Introduction
- “Ensure” verbiage as pertaining to resources
- Page 5 – remove first bullet
- Page 17 – Cache language and identify which caches involved
 - Caches and prioritization clarification language needed
 - May look into archives for previous cache operating plan and how all the caches would operate together; possibly from early 2000s (**Mike Granger, Kathy Pipkin and Pam Jolly**)
- Page 27 - AAR Safety related – Safety Teams
 - Can we do a better job when we send these teams out?
 - Is there a better way of doing business?
 - Instead of multiple teams, perhaps one team that represents all topics?
- Clarification on Safety officer position referenced – NRCG member or FS Safety position or is it someone else? It has been done different ways in the past; would like clarification for consistency.

Clarity for the intention in the MAC plan requested. Workload wise, FS has a full time job in that position (**Ralph Rau**) NRCG is funding part of that position – would support that position being that lead (**Ken Schmid**) **Group agreed with above on FS position and clarification language will be added to the MAC plan.**

ACTION ITEM - Would like new draft by Team Meetings; looking to approve final plan in May (**Mike Granger**)

Fuels and Fire Behavior Advisory Interim Guidance – Kathy Pipkin

New guidance has been issued from NICC predictive services. GACCs will now be able to issue advisories without this additional approval step; have asked for Red Book reference where it says “this shall be done”. Addressed last year’s concerns for meeting all expectations from predictive services functional area, and not only just from the meteorological component. This hole became apparent during the 2017 season. Funding for staffing will be a part of how these predictive services positions are organized and supervised. Only two GACCs have key component of Fire Analystist. (**Ken Schmid**) Solution proposed to bring a detailer? (**Ralph Rau**) Position is on the organization chart; however, have not chosen to fill. GS-11, BIA position (**Greg Morris**) A detailer for this year, yes (**Craig Goodell**) 120 day detail; have funding left over from prior to filling BIA position; sufficient to cover position and travel.

Contract Vehicle Inspection Site – Funding Support – Ralph Rau

Cannot sustain inspecting equipment at the Lolo. There is a need to construct a facility and propose cost share. 45% of contracted equipment is based out of Missoula; also does AFD inspections on rental cars

and busses. Was previously located in urban area at 14th & Catlin; many complaints. Temporarily has been moved to Fort Missoula; however, this is **only** a temporary solution. Have looked for alternate sites and explored lease options; however, did not work out. Have a piece of land west of Fire Cache Lane set aside that FS is paying about \$5000-\$6000 analysis on what it would cost to make the area functional in this capacity. FS engineers established and estimate that was \$250,000 to make the area functional.

Proposal to cost share this need. Supports multiple zones and ultimately, the entire GACC. Open to other suggestions on location; need an area the approximate size of a football field. Also needs a hard service and to meet other requirements. Another option would be to contract this location somewhere in Missoula. (**Tim Murphy**) Will need time to take back to Agencies for discussion. (**Mike Granger**) Will need cost broken down by agency share. Recommendation to have each agency look to see if other options are available. Question: Is this truly a NRCG issue? Each of us have our own areas that do this; albeit that the percentages may be different. Need some time to think about it before making a decision. (**Ken Schmid**) If it is decided it is not an NRCG issue; it will go back the Southwest Zone as an issue.

Board will take some time to consider this issue.

Proposal for Contract Support Position – Tim Murphy

Proposal to add a federal purchasing agent (GS 8/9) to the FS contracting workforce (cost share position). Workload has increased substantially; staffing has remained the same. Last three years – items have been overlooked due to workload (Example: >200 rental car claims). There is an additional IMS contracting workload. Purchasing Agent would meet the following:

- administrative contracting officer responsibilities and could pick up a lot of the claims process
- assist in training also
- be an administrative CO on Libby unit (get verbiage from Tim)
- ITEAMS responsibilities
- managing the evaluation system (3 ½ feet of evaluations this year)
- support to purchase for the cache
 - would relieve some of the work on the BLM and FS COs

No Contracting positions are currently part of the cost share agreement. Proposal is for a warrant authority position. Question: What would the supervisory structure be? (**Mike Granger**) Open to that – could fit under any of the individual agency contracting officers. Could not consider under BLM – must reduce positions by 2020. (**Ken Schmid**) FWS also took a reduction. (**Mike Granger**) DNRC is on a fixed income; also took a reduction. (**John Monzie**) Forest Service is in the same situation. (**Ralph Rau**) Support for the position not possible at this time. Need is acknowledged and recognized. Are there other things we are doing that we could stop, prioritize and put the emphasis on critical items? (**Ralph Rau**) Similar to an unfunded needs list. (**Ken Schmid**) What are the things that have been identified as needed items and be prepared to meet if funds become available? Pam Jolly will consolidate the items that have been identified as needs and distribute.

Proposal for GACC GIS Position – Patrick Murphy / Matt Gibson

There is a need that exists for geospatial and mobile informational support. Much of this is coming down from the teams and there is a need for consistency. Would tie in with national standards for the GACC. Agency Administrators are asking for this information continuously; have struggled to stand up enough trained individuals on GIS. There are difficulties in obtaining training on this specialization for multiple individuals. Lacking on training and setting up workshops; lacking in understanding on needed hardware and lack of field support for teams and other users. Transfer of information from Team to Team did not go smoothly. **Proposal is for a GS 7/9/11 due to potential regional implications. Pam Jolly will search the archives for Anne RysSikora's white paper proposal from a few years back. Proposal will be placed on the**

unfunded needs list.

Out-of-Area IMT Letter – Jake Ganieany / Anthony Krause

Requesting that a cache representative be added to Out of Area team in briefs, out briefs and team evaluations. Last season experienced some issues with some of the teams; want to ensure all are aware of how we do things in the Northern Rockies. Provides an accountability avenue. Reviewed that Area Command team seemed to be doing quite a few of the in briefings? (**Greg Morris**) Would be an issue for expectations. **Inclusion in the Northern Rockies Mobilization Guide discussed.**

AFD Master Operating Plan Review – Ryan Patrick

Looking for discussion and decisions on a number of costs (**see attachment**). Highlighted line 45-53 as included items for discussion. Operating Plan Summary tab – discussed consolidated fair share percentages. On BLM and FWS – in your consolidate fair share – should line 17 transfer down to line 20? There is a difference. **Ryan will make that correction and redistribute.** Contribution and Fair Share tab discussed. Combined Data tab: IT – Dana and Murphy; workload for support - supports this addition as full time instead of half time. **Additions to proposal will be include on a future prioritization list – no decisions will be issued today.** (**Mike Granger**) Mary's position has really only been ½ of her time to the training center – other ½ was to BIA work. Group discussion on position. Medical Contract – providing out of FS budget; Fire is paying 40% of the medical contract. Part of that is taking care of own agency folks; a lot of the rest is for training and taking care of the interagency ADs. Office space – in the past have only asked for a small amount for water and garbage service. Trailers – provide interagency support.

Note: No cost share agreement for the Missoula Cache like there is for the Billings Cache. Perhaps that should be looked at. (**Greg Morris**) What does the board agree that should be part of the fair share? (**Greg Morris**) Spreadsheet shows a more accurate balance of what the Forest Service is actually paying. (**Ken Schmid**) State of MT – mobilizes National Guard, has a county coop program... all agencies probably have items that they could probably add to that list that has not been reflected prior. Good to acknowledge this; however, all agencies could contribute to this list. We could line item everything or go with our normal business approach. Discussed pay difference in FTE between state and federal. (**John Monzie**) Operating Plan Summary – those items that were reflected in yellow are accounted for in this summary? (**Mike Granger**) Yes (**Ryan Patrick**) State of ID cannot have an employee in another state. Difficult to potentially get some of these increases when agency sees it as money going to support another agency. Concern is that at some point when we ask for this money, it will be flat out denied. Doing what can be done to get what can be supported currently. If positions were based in Idaho, may have more support. (**JT Wensman**) Request to include receptionist position at NRCC from FWS. (**Mike Granger**) **Ryan will make that change.**

Question on BIA – FS is working on an agreement similar to BIA employee position at NRCC; BIA has questions – good for this year; however, real questions as to whether they will continue to support that position, if the current individual leaves. If that is the case, NRCG will need to look at other agency options and other avenues to fill. Unable to operate with only one training individual in there. Perhaps a training specialist (vacated by Risa) with specialized skills in RX fire and Fire Analyst - possibility for other six months for that individual in the summer? (**Judy Heintz**) Discussion on should it be shown as a full FTE. **Ryan will make corrections and send out as a final for review and eventually signatures. ACTION ITEM - may be future discussion for March Conference call.**

Structure Protection Guidelines for 2018 – Patrick Lonergan

Few changes (see attachment) this year. Bigger discussion after listening to ICs yesterday – are the agency administrators and line officers educated on this? (Greg Morris) Group discussion on this topic occurred. Expectations letter may address this. (Ken Schmid) Leader's Intent section may need different verbiage. (Ralph Rau) It is a tool in the whole GACC tool box; flexibility to use all the tools is essential. (John Monzie) Without specific examples from the teams, it is difficult to address. (John Monzie) An example on pumps and home protection was presented. (Mike Granger) Sounds like it may be some agency specific issues with agency specific line officers. (Ralph Rau) Group agreed to include or reference this letter in the Leader's Intent letter. (Mike Granger) Original intent was to call attention to differences in suppression and protection and highlight ability for agency specific procedures. Pam Jolly will move the definitions section to the top of the letter before final signature.

National Informational Service and Event GeoDatabases – Patrick Lonergan

Geospatial group is working on standards for Northern Rockies. There is a lot going on nationally as well. Recommend more than a white paper; recommend issuing an actual policy. Group discussion deferred till after the presentation.

Northern Rockies Data Standards White Paper – Remote Situation Unit Plans 2018 – Matt Gibson /Mark Slaten

National Data Standards

Group tasked with trying to identify issues with last season's data accessibility issues (see handout). Push at the National level to store team data in one location. Few teams used it. Being pushed to use this season as a National Standard. Data needs to be updated very frequently. Uses application that will be demonstrated in a few minutes to gather data. Need to ensure all teams have this ability to utilize these applications and conform to this National Standard. Plenty of people to support the teams; however, not distributed equitably. Can instruct and supply support. Group is proposing modification in the Northern Rockies for collecting data per the National Standard. National Standard – example demonstrated: have to turn polygons either on or off. This allows no flexibility to look at individual ones. Group proposal adds flexibility to allow for quality control of certain features (and reduces capability for others to edit important fixed features). Handout has specifics. Demonstration of ESRI Collector (mobile friendly). System meets the NWCG standard, and exceeds it, with a method that is more familiar for our tools. Handout outlines both the process and the work flow. Working on balancing out who the leads will be. This also provides a redundancy, where if the National system goes down, there is a backup. Within a week or so, will have the final out for the white paper (handout). Request to have board review by March Conference Call. (Mike Granger) Recommends policy be issued reference meeting this National Standard. (Patrick Lonergan)

Remote Situational Support

Was successful; for future could test true remote format (not located in Missoula). Opportunity to start rotating team Situation Unit Leads. Did meet with the NIROPS community and continuing to work with them to streamline data. This equals time saved for teams on the ground. Question: Can we try out true remote sit before the full MAC is engaged? (Greg Morris) Very doable - this was in the plan for last year; however, ran into issue of how to pay for it. Whose P-Number would be used? (Mark Slaten) Will look to Craig and Judy for coordination on this. (Greg Morris)

UTV Guidance – Corey Buhl

Operations Committee has yet to meet. Will meet next week and come up with UTV Guidance.

Private Resources Letter – John Monzie

Pam Jolly will check Year date on letter prior to final distribution. Thirty-four Engines went to support CA working for the insurance companies, which were also on our contracted resources lists. (**Judy Heintz**) Group consensus is that letter is acceptable in current format.

Revisiting the Montana Statewide Cooperative Agreement – John Monzie

DNRC would like to start discussion on word changes to three or four provisions – not the whole agreement. Provisions in operations, specifically - 44,46,47,49. Group discussion on revising the agreement occurred. Is it possible to include these concerns in the annual operating plan instead? (**Ken Schmid**) Would agree that may be an option; will take that back. (**John Monzie**) Part of the issue is that if we open the agreement, it would have to go back through the legal department - which is at least a year timeframe. (**Greg Morris**) Would like to make that an agenda item for a future meeting. (**John Monzie**) FWS would also need to go through the same process, including legal. Would prefer the operating plan option. (**Mike Granger**) Specifics will determine if the issues can be handled with this option. This action is intended to be proactive in an evolving fire environment. Group is open to opening up the agreement; however, recommendation is to explore operating plan option. John Monzie will take this back to Mike DeGrosky. Request to review Operating Plan and provide draft language; if can be handled that way. John Monzie will take back to Mike DeGrosky and specifics will be sent out. Agenda Item for March Conference call.

Bin Items

Question on IC Call Time

Afternoon call is needed to assist with nightly prioritization. Looking at 0800 or 0830 for the earliest for call time revision. Conflict for Idaho due to time zone – anything before 0900 would be difficult. Concern for 1700 call timeframe is that it is right in the thick of burning time frame and ICs are not available for critical incident activities. AM calls would alleviate this and provide the best picture of what happened. Priorities are set on a 24 hour basis – this 24 hour definition would have to be altered. Concern on addressing critical resource needs for that day's timeframe. Would need to ensure 209s have accurate information in this respect. Would like to see a Pros and Cons list for prioritization of resources (**Greg Morris**) Can follow up on that. (**Craig Goodell**) Concern that it would set back resource prioritization (**Mike Granger**).

View out there that it is the Operation person's job to bring that information to the MAC. (**Patrick Lonergan**) IC call was intended at higher PL levels to help the MAC set priorities. (**Greg Morris**) Not sure everyone is on the same page with "Who's call is it?" (**Patrick Lonergan**) Board can assist with getting all on the same page (**Mike Granger**)

Request if there is another business model, to have Craig Goodell bring it to the Board for review. (**Ralph Rau**) Discussed need to ensure it does not interfere with the Zone calls. Group is open to other business models; can try and see if it works. Great Basin (lower half of Idaho) – call is in the AM; Operation person brings that to the MAC (**JT Wensman**) **ACTION ITEM** - Request if there is another business model, have

Craig Goodell bring it to the Board for review – can try it out. Pam Jolly will update the Action Item list from this meeting.

Review of IC Trainees That Applied After the Application Date

Judy will send out summary of IC trainee late applicants. When is it appropriate to provide feedback to the individuals? (*Ralph Rau*) Initially or when application to team is made? Concern has been perception that if you get your IC signed off, that you will receive a team. At some point, would need to make application to the Board as potential IC. Need to be with our line officers, as a board, managing who should become an IC. Need to ensure sponsoring agency is supportive well in advance. Want Agency Administrators involved in this process with this new group of individuals. All need to be involved – ICs, Board and Agency Administrators; to address issues such as GS levels and if that is a factor for Agency Administrators. Group review of IC Trainee applicants. *Greg Morris* suggested the following be address in development of a process:

- Have the conversation with the line officer and identify “what support is there?”
- Does everyone understand what the obligation and long term commitment would be?

Should those items be incumbent upon the agency to do that? (*Ken Schmid*)

Date for May meeting / MAC exercise

- May 8-9th; day and a half - first day exercise and then roll into business meeting. Report outs the next day. Pam Jolly will begin work on an agenda.
- Mike Granger will send Craig Goodell issues from previous after action review.

ACTION ITEM – Board involvement with Team meeting and Agency Administrators to be discussed on March conference call

ACTION ITEM – Discussed putting correspondence on website; Board will consider and address at a later time.



Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

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

Board of Directors Conference Call Agenda

Tuesday, March 20, 2018

Conference Call Line:

1-888-844-9904

Access Code: 3599209

Participants:

Board Members: Steve Heppner, Ray Hart, Bryce Rogers, Ken Schmid, Mike Granger, Mike DeGrosky, Rich Cowger, Patrick Lonergan, Ryan Melin

Deputies and Others: Aitor Bidaburu, Craig Goodell, Ryan Patrick, Melissa Wegner, Patrick Murphy, Avery Plains

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

NWCG/NMAC Update:

Focus area of activity is in the Southwest; records are being broken. Area expands out into Rocky Mountain and Southern Area GACCs which touch the Southwest. Once it goes, it may be a significant resources draw. Has been a week of meetings; FMB is looking to launch a task group to look at Wildland Fire policy guidance. Most recent update was 2009; subsequent memos issued in 2010. Effort to establish alignment and have terms properly identified. Will be soliciting agency Subject Matter Experts.

Correspondence on T3 team information that was presented at the spring meeting will be coming out. It centers on the unfinished work of defining “local area”. Northern Rockies stand is that the entire NR GACC is what we want to see as our “local area” definition. **(Granger)** Policy is still the old policy until September. Should an effort be made to get as many signed off this coming year as possible? **(Schmid)** CAT is our major concern. Having them locked down to the Eastern Land Office will not work. **(DeGrosky)** We have people that are working on forests that may not be able to work on all parts of their forest if it is locked down to zone dispatches. **(Morris)** This is an unworkable policy change; request Aitor take this issue back to NWCG and emphasize the importance. **(Granger)**

Predictive Services Update:

No report.

All need to be aware that there is a huge issue with the ability to do smoke forecasting. A switch was flipped in DC and they are working diligently to find a fix. **(Morris)**

Northern Rockies Geographical Area Updates:

No report.

Operational Updates:

Put together a new IC conference call template; it is in the team plan. Call time changed to 0800 AM Mountain Time and has a new format. **(Goodell)**



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Contracting Updates:

No report.

Follow up on Old Business:

Cost Share for IT Interagency capacity at AFD (Patrick Murphy)

BLM rep says current cost is \$60 a month; have not heard back from DNRC as of yet. Costs would be \$440 a month for 60 months; including install and the price of the service. At the end of five years, the install cost would be paid off and the service would be \$225 per month and can upgrade to a higher service level as necessary. Proposal is to roll this into the fair share agreement. Any opposition to moving forward with this proposal? **(Granger)** Cannot make that decision without talking to our network administrator. **(DeGrosky)** Would like to move forward as quickly as possible with this. **(Granger)** At one point had discussed trying to utilize some grant funding; however, that is up in the air at this point due to issues with it going into a federal facility. **(Cowger)** Would like to take a look at the line by line cost break down per agency. **(Morris)** One issue day lighted last season was that it wasn't possible to add additional equipment on the Forest Service network that is not Forest Service equipment. This option increases interagency abilities on both devices and capacity. **(Murphy)** Suggestions on where we go from here? **(Granger)** Group decision to table until next call – **Action Item** - be prepared to make a decision on the next call.

Cost Share for Contract Vehicle Inspection Site (Greg Morris)

No change since the spring meeting; Forest Service has sunk about \$5,000- \$7,000 into design; approximately \$250,000 is needed for implementation. The clay soils at the site are prohibitive to heavy equipment. Issue was who and how do we pay for it? Do other agencies have an alternative? If there are, please pursue those ideas and bring forward the costs. For this summer, we do have the vehicle inspection at Fort Missoula; however, after this season this site will no longer be available. **Action Item - will continue to be addressed in future.**

MAC Plan Update (Mike Granger)

Greg did provide updates to Kathy. Would like to send the draft out for final review and, if no change feedback received, then will look at signing and approving. **Action Item - Would like to have completed prior to the team meetings.**

AFD Master Operating Plan Review (Ryan Patrick)

Changes have been made to the spreadsheet. Discussion on the additional costs that were added this year – Billy Philips position reduced down to ½; IMS contract part was checked and remained the same. Cost for the Heavy Equipment Video added to NRCG Contracting Cost center. **(Patrick)** New cost - office space \$6,000 per year; above the other facilities and support costs. Why are we adding office space on top of these other costs? **(Schmid)** Can send out how calculations are made with each of those costs and can show the breakdown. **(Patrick)** Another question - why are we adding full time IT position, when before it was ½. **(Schmid)** Patrick advised that he feels around 90% of his time is spent in support of these functions – NRCC, NRTC and Teams. **(Patrick)** Group discussion centered on historical fair share breakdowns in comparison to current items. Intent is to show true agency contributions. This also shows our support across our region. **(Morris)** Costs continue to increase due to budget reality; not a lot of capacity to add additional funds.



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(Granger) **Proposal** to approve this operating plan. Will show final contributions to each agency from the states. When you get those final numbers, please give those to Ryan. **(Granger)** **Approved** - Will send final agreement around for signature.

Review of Northern Rockies Data Standards White Paper (Patrick Lonergan)

Has not seen a draft yet. **Agenda Item - April** (post call an update was emailed to the Board – will be ready to implement during the 2018 fire season.)

UTV Guidance

Given back to the business committee; comment will be back by next week from the fire business group.

Agenda Item - April

Out of Area IMT Letter (Jake Ganieany/Anthony Krause)

Anthony mentioned that main concern was to have representative from NRK at in-briefings and close outs.

(Goodell) Will talk with Jake Ganieany and follow up on this; lets strive for a draft prior to the team meetings in April. **(Granger)** **Action Item** – Draft prior to team meetings

Revisiting the Montana Statewide Cooperative Agreement (Mike DeGrosky)

Table this topic; the work that needs to be done needs to occur between the DNRC and the Forest Service.

Will need to be worked out prior to fire season; will handle agency to agency.

Board Involvement with Team Meeting and Agency Administrators (Group)

Mike Granger and Larry Kotchman are working on addressing this group with a Leader's Intent. Agency Administrators are just going to meet that Tuesday. Board's involvement, per feedback so far, is limited. Opportunity also exists to work as representatives as team liaisons. Will route a draft of the Leader's Intent around for review. **(Granger)**

Team meetings – an agenda topic for Aviation Risk reference the R6 memo. Sampson articulated at the spring meeting that this was not representative of the Northern Rockies. Agenda item may be removed due to the history of the agenda item. **(Morris)**

Review of 2018 NRCG Priority Funding List (Group)

Discussed need to establish priorities for merited items; in the event funds became available. List is currently in no particular priority order. Importance expressed to relay feedback back to the individuals who submitted proposals. Request to add item – Mobilization Center. This is a reoccurring item from previous presentations to the Board. Would like to establish a decision criteria for ranking. **(DeGrosky)** **Agenda Item – May 8th** – Board will be prepared to rank the Priority funding list

New Business:

Aquatic Invasive Species (Warren Appelhans)

Intent was to remove room for interpretation in last direction. New language was added reference aviation. Also language reference ground based was included. Other addition was near the end of the paper, inspection



Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

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

Board of Directors Conference Call Agenda

Tuesday, March 20, 2018

and cleaning; title needs to address resources coming in to help the local unit. In addition to that; MTDC, Forest Service and the state were working on some "How To" information that could be put on the web.

Proposal to adopt and distribute prior to the team meeting? Improvement from previous; one minor edit – bottom of 2nd page – "must be decontaminated" – replace with "need to". **(DeGrosky) Approved** – will be distributed prior to the end of next week.

Operations Committee New Charter Review (Mike Granger)

Any recommended changes or comments? **Approved – will be distributed.**

Round Robin – Updates from Agency Participants:

BIA NW – Ops Normal; recent precipitation

BIA GP – snow cover; RX pile burns; muddy conditions are a risk to resources; one 6 person squad and engine in OK; continue to work on agreements and plans

BIA RM – snow on the ground; did have a fire in WY yesterday; resources out supporting other areas

BLM – Coleen on board soon

FWS – finishing up seasonal hiring; RX fire season is underway; Northeast Montana is drier than the rest of the state

IDL –

MT DES –

MT DNRC – local government and interagency training; inquiries from other states; announcement for Division Administrator closed last night. Selection expected by end of April.

Montana State Fire Chiefs –

Montana Fire Wardens –

MT Peace Officers

ND FS – seasonal hires; received some snow; still in drought conditions but another storm on the forecast; supporting Kansans; finished state fire school; working with DES and Dept. of Health on coming up with rehabilitation standards from large fire response – developing a plan.

USFS – Jumpers are getting ready for spring training; have been supporting some other regions. Several meetings have been going on; more than 75 folks out of region; primarily supporting the East and Southeast. Will be moving resources down for R1/R3 soon; prescribed burning occurring. Jacquie Parks is detailed into the Smoke Management Program Coordinator position; Tony Petrilli is detailed into the Safety/Risk Management position.

The next scheduled NRCG Meeting is April 17, 2017

Conference Line: 1-888-844-9904 Access Code: 3599209# Host Code: 5649345#

Tuesday, May 8 – MAC Exercise, RMAT & Reports

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

MAC Exercise – Craig Goodell

(See Handouts – three total)

First Bullet

- First bullet is the root cause of all the other bullets. (**Mike DeGrosky**) Common vision and understanding is foundational. (**Craig Goodell**) Lack of an understanding of the constituents on what the role of the MAC truly is. (**Mike Granger**) Revised MAC plan addresses some of the issues that lead to this bullet. There is a need to follow this revised plan. (**Mike DeGrosky**) Revised plan incorporates new language that includes clear definitions and definitive marks on timelines. (**Mike Granger**)
- Group discussion on the role of the MAC. (**Craig Goodell**) Always acknowledge that the MAC is a function of the NRCG. Second, role of the MAC is to operate at a strategic level. (**Mike DeGrosky**) Role of NRCG is viewed as an administrative one and the MAC moves into an operational mode of making decisions at a strategic level. NRCG and the MAC are one in the same. (**Mike Granger**) NRCG functions year round as the business model of the whole; when it goes to MAC we operate as function of the Agency Administrators to operate at a strategic, decision making level. (**Greg Morris**) Another responsibility of the MAC is during these decision making times is to go back to our Agency Administrators and communicate those issues. Also, relational issues at all levels are a component of this function. Need of the NRCG/MAC to define and communicate to all what standing up is and entails. (**Ralph Rau**) **Lesson Learned: When MAC is activated – it will be defined and communicated this year.** (**Mike Granger**) Operating at a strategic level was discussed; believe the role would include in brief and close out. (**Mike DeGrosky**) Saw last year where, in the field, lines were blurred on who makes the decisions and when. (**Rob Miramontez**) Would like to see Board / Zone Representatives discuss the convening of the MAC and how it relates to each of those zones. Timing component should also be a topic of this discussion and communications effort. (**Mike Granger**) When the zone MACs are operating effectively, there is often less need to for area MAC. (**Craig Goodell**) Are there ways we can facilitate having area command work effectively with zone MAC. (**Mike Granger**) Group discussion on use of area command during 2017 season. There is not agreement that functioning MACs eliminate the need for area command. (**Mike DeGrosky**) There is certainly a place for area command; however, often if the zone MAC is functioning fluidly; as much of a gap is not seen. (**Craig Goodell**) Group discussion on traditional ordering and usage of area command. Zone MAC allocates resources within the zone; Area Command consolidates command functions across the area – two separate responsibilities. (**Mike DeGrosky**) **Lesson Learned: Need for MAC to assert role of addressing agencies needs as a whole, instead of addressing individual parts or desires of a particular agency or unit.** (**Mike Granger**) Individual teams performing at different levels during 2017 season discussed as a component of 2017 season. (**Greg Morris**) Agency Administrators seem revitalized and serious, a positive aspect. Need to remember there is a responsibility to advise Agency Administrators if a need is observed by the MAC, but not recognized by a zone, and report that information back to the Agency Administrators. (**Mike DeGrosky**)

Second Bullet

- Revised MAC plan provides new clarification on this topic. (**Craig Goodell**) **Lesson Learned: Revised MAC plan definition of convening will assist with movement between preparedness**

levels. (Mike Granger) One item to discuss - MAC representative need no longer exists once MAC is seated. Definition of a MAC chair, at that point, would eliminate this duplication. Discussion on if the Chair goes with the agency. (Mike DeGrosky) New timeline in revised plan discussed. If a position in the NRCG is not available to perform in the MAC – does it go to the vice or does it go to the alternate for that agency? Discussion on if a separate chair of the MAC (a seated member, preferably) would be an option? (Mike DeGrosky) If an individual on the Board is not available to perform on the MAC, then the alternate will be able to represent the agency but not represent that position on the board. (Mike Granger) Unless they are delegated in that capacity. (Ralph Rau) And confirmed by the board. (Mike DeGrosky)

- Any time a Type 1 or Type 2 team is activated in the Northern Rockies, the IC call will be activated. The NRCG members will call in and be provided with good Situational Awareness. (Craig Goodell) Group discussion on this topic and who all should be on the call given experiences from 2017 season. There is a need for MAC to remember what their role is – to listen. (Mike DeGrosky) Would discourage MAC from asking questions; view this as Operations Position responsibility to brief the MAC. (Bruce Suenram) If kept to a listing role, supportive of this. (Ralph Rau)
- Continued discussion on revised MAC timeline. New timeline provides MAC members ability to concentrate on agency duties during the bulk of the day. (Craig Goodell) Need to recognize that there is no “one size fits all” expectation for MAC members due to differences in agency duties. (Mike DeGrosky) Emphasis needs to be placed on representation for all agencies and continuity of work. (Greg Morris) Group discussion on need for thorough briefing for any alternates that may participate. Group agreement that briefing should include both MAC and agency specific issues. If this timeline is incorporated into the MAC plan, it should provide that clarification. (Bruce Suenram) Difficulties and challenges of the logistics, particularly the conference phone, of participating remotely discussed. (JT Wensman) MAC Representative verses MAC Coordinator discussed. If MAC Representative seated, no need for MAC Coordinator. (Kathy Pipkin) MAC Coordinator is a qualification, MAC Representative is not. (Greg Morris) If MAC is truly not seated, then a MAC Representative is what is needed. (Kathy Pipkin) With new timeline, there is improved opportunity for MAC participation. Is there still a need for a MAC Representative? (Mike Granger) Yes, to incorporate the daily events – especially during preparedness level four situations. (Kathy Pipkin) Lesson Learned: Standing up both decision support and MAC Representative proactively and in a timely manner. (Group agreement) If decision support is stood up initially by an individual agency and then transitioned to provide interagency support, needs of the individual agency still need to be met. (Ralph Rau) Also, needs to be a clean transition at that time. (Kathy Pipkin) Will depend upon Kathy Pipkin and Craig Goodell to keep the NRCG advised proactively if there is a need for a MAC Representative. When the MAC is seated, there will no longer be a need for the MAC Representative. MAC Representative and MAC Coordinator will not be the same individual; two separate roles. (Mike Granger)

Final Bullet

- 2017 Season experiences discussed, in particular use of National Guard. Group consensus that this topic went fairly well. However, was identified as an item in feedback responses from the field. (Craig Goodell) Might have been some confusion, particularly around compact or agency specific policies. This may have led to perception of resistance to some events. (John Monzie) Time also needed to ensure decisions are in line with agency policy. (Ralph Rau)

Team Building Exercise – Matt Gibson

(See Handouts – two total)

Ladder of Inference – 70 year old organizational science. Discussed perceptions and relations. Discussed importance of outside perspectives.

Exercise – Move, Follow, Oppose, By stand: using common terminology to remove personal attachment during group decision making; and utilizing all four action behaviors to facilitate group effort and efficiency.

Award Presented to Melissa Wegner from NRCG

Certificate of Appreciation for Priority Trainee Program during the 2017 season.

Incident Prioritization Exercise and Review – Kathy Pipkin and Julie Polutnik

(See Handouts & PowerPoints from Kathy)

Weather Briefing – Mike Richmond

Intelligence Briefing – Julie Polutnik

Question: Is there a Fire Behavior briefing provided? (**Dan Warthin**) Answer: Will be part of Decision Support and one will be brought in. (**Kathy Pipkin**)

Prioritization – Criterion DecisionPlus; group discussion on individual factors and values assigned

- Discussed need for agency leaders to emphasize clarification on terminology on 209s
 - All levels of leadership are looking at these – important to accurately define and describe our situation in the Northern Rockies during national competition for resources (**Julie Polutnik**)
- Discussed need for Critical Resources listed on 209 to align with what is on order and to align with what is discussed on the IC call.
- Discussed the need to also list on the 209 both critical resource needs and short statement of how utilization of those resources goes towards potential accomplishment results; thus representing the Northern Rockies picture in greater detail at a National Level during national competition for resources.
 - **This expectation from the coordinating group will be put forth to the ICs. (Dan Warthin, Craig Goodell)**
- **MAC will depend upon our Decision support group to provide the prioritization; resources that need to be allocated will be done by Operations position (Craig Goodell) upon approval of prioritization. (Mike Granger) Would like for the MAC to be involved in the prioritizations periodically. (Mike DeGrosky) If MAC is seated, this will certainly occur. (Kathy Pipkin)**

Risk Advisory Group Briefing (RMAT) – Becki Heath / Dave Calkin

(See PowerPoint)

Q: Some of the products shown look like they require a lot of data. Where does the data come from? (**Mike DeGrosky**)

A: All 209 data. Reality of accuracy discussed. Drop recording requires manual data mining from contractor provided information. (**Becki Heath**) Do have some more research that is more complex that looks across the landscape, bringing in a historical analysis component. Full cycle of learning - before incident, during incident and after incident. (**Dave Calkin**)

Q: This is a Forest Service process that is striving to engage cooperators. How successful have you been? (**Mike Granger**)

A: Yes, it is provided for Forest Service decision makers; however, those decisions are not made in isolation. Issues from last season are being addressed and actions will be derived. (**Becki Heath**)

Temporal risk, in addition to other risk transference, are being looked at to reduce those factors. (**Dave Calkin**) Developing tools that help overcome differing agency missions would be useful to the interagency community. (**Mike DeGrosky**)

Q: With these Risk Assistance opportunities for the line officers, they are merging from being strategic to tactical – what qualifications, as far as tactical, does that line officer have to dictate to that Incident

Management Team that specializes in tactics? Have been hearing this from some of our Incident Commanders. Concern is that this has become the new normal and when did this occur? (**Mike Granger**)
 A: There is no intent to influence Line Officers; role is to assist them with decision making assessment. Want those agency administrators to engage in strategies, not tactics. Being clear about roles continues to be important. (**Becki Heath**) It is a concern and a real issue; was expressed multiple times at the Incident Management Team meetings. (**Mike Granger**) There is variability amongst teams, this component can be measured and tracked over time. Agency has a responsibility for oversight and educating the Agency Administrators. (**Dave Calkin**) One improvement was Incident Commander and operational individuals were added to the team core. Also, improved preseason communications. (**Becki Heath**) Recognition given that there is a need to be more engaged with the Incident Management Teams. (**Dave Calkin**)

Q: When discuss firefighter safety, how is that being quantified? (**JT Wensman**)

A: All relative at this point; comparison analysis and statistical components. (**Dave Calkin**)

Zone Reports

North Idaho – Mike Behrens

(Information from Mike Behrens presented by JT Wensman)

- No major personnel changes except Bob Lippencot retiring in September
- CDC will be fully staffed. GVC had difficulty hiring dispatcher positions but I understand they received permission to hire outside of Firehire
- NIZ is planning on a MAC exercise in June
- Standing up a 3rd type 3 team which looks like it will predominately be staffed out of GVC zone. This year using a team application process for the Type 3 teams.

Northwest Montana – Mike DeGrosky

- Tim Flint acting Spotted bear FMO June 4th
- Plains DNRC FMO retired
- Flathead will be staffed; with a few GS-5 filled with seasonals
- NW Zone meeting earlier this spring
- Flathead IHC on May 19th
- DNRC dispatch shifting to Kalispell Dispatch center; continuing well
- Some zone members at “Hands Across the Border” in Canada
- Agency Administrator workshop at the end of the month

Southwest Montana – Mark Wilson / Kate Holsapple

Personnel changes:

- Lolo:
 - Detailed Forest Supervisor: Sarah Mayben
 - New Fire Staff: Chris James
 - Detailed Forest AFMO: Matt Young
 - New FAO: Ward Hiesterman
 - Detailed Engine Captain at Seeley Lake
- DNRC - Southwestern Land Office:
 - New AFMO/Missoula Unit: Beau Maciag
 - New IADP/Missoula Dispatch: Trina Wade

- New ACM/Missoula Dispatch: interviews scheduled for tomorrow
- Bitterroot:
 - Acting FMO @ Stevensville: Isaac Karuzas
 - New Center Manager: Kelly McKee (offered and accepted 5/7/18)

Vacancies:

- Lolo:
 - Some seasonal fire fighters positions
 - 1 vacant GS-5 PSE (Missoula Dispatch) UTF Fire Hire

Issues/Concerns:

- Zone Wide
 - Looking forward to the updated GMAC Plan so the zone can work to communicate better with them.

Significant Events:

- Missoula Dispatch Zone
 - Some changes coming in the dispatch structure as we look to consolidate a couple of 4th tier centers.
 - In 2019, Plains/Thompson Falls and Superior Ranger Districts of the Lolo and the Clearwater Unit of the SWLO will be dispatched out of Missoula Dispatch. Plains Unit of the NWLO will be dispatched out of Kalispell.
 - Helena will be dispatching the Lincoln Field Office of the Clearwater Unit beginning this year.
- Zone Wide:
 - Developed a draft template Delegation of Authority for Area Command after Lessons Learned from last season
 - All agencies within the zone have been burning this spring (no current updates on acres).
 - Lolo IHC Available National 5/12/18 0600.
 - Spring Meeting Scheduled for Thursday that will include an exercise on communication expectations during cross boundary fires with FMO's and Line Officers

Central Montana – Greg Archie

- Marty Mitzkus – Detailed District Ranger for Helena/Townsend zone
- Annual operating plans being worked on; combining some
- Dispatch Centers – Lincoln DNRC will be dispatched out of Helena. Last year's moves worked out well.
- Staffing looking good across agencies.
- Working on meetings with agency administrators and FMOs

South Central Montana – Craig Campbell

Not on call

Eastern Montana – Rob Miramontez

- Training has switched to Andy Shell, new training rep
- Lewistown Aviation dispatcher – hoping to fill soon; challenging to fill (housing an issue for seasonals)
- AFMO position – few detailers;
- FWS – engine captain flown;

- MCC – seasonal hiring; hoping to get the numbers back up to historical seasonal numbers
- Billings BIA – got approval from WO to fill regional position
- East Zone MAC – still deciding on several components

North Dakota – Ryan Melin

- Annual Operating Plan review; some verbiage was changed
- Some interagency trainings have now been accomplished
- Fire Danger Map – last year was not aligning due to drought; review was conducted
- Adding a RAWS station – possibility there will be private land involved
- FWS has extended an invitation for a long fire scenario; upcoming
- Ray Hart is the new Chair for the North Dakota Fire Council

Review NRCG Board Contact for each Zone

Conducted and Confirmed (**Mike Granger**)

- Native American Crew – Chair – change to Rob Miramontez; (change made and posted.)

Team Close Outs – Ralph Rau

Rangers requested NRCG to look at workload associated with Team Close Outs. Possible governance item; desire is to look at expedited approach to close out. There has been a trend towards large numbers of individuals attending close outs and detailed, high end formatted summary reports. Perhaps an Executive Summary type format? (**Ralph Rau**) Good item to go to IC Committee. **Tasking to the IC Committee for streamlining close out procedures and expectations. Will draft a tasking and send out.** (**Mike Granger**)

Would like to discuss this issue also during an agency administrator in person meeting; will compose a Doodle Poll to establish an availability timeline for an in person meeting with the agency administrators meeting. (**Mike Granger**)

Committee Reports

Prevention and Education – Christopher Barth

Tasked with looking at fire restrictions; three questions:

- Task Group developed survey; over 200 respondents across GACC
- Survey questions addressed the three tasked questions
- Results were distributed; can share with the BOD

Highpoints

- Apparent from this study, there is a need to look at the prescription areas and see how it matches up with expectations that are out there.
- Providing the results information to the specific restriction areas was the goal; with a larger push in 2019.
- North Dakota had the most discrepancy; will need to look at narrative data results to assess the root reasons.
- Ryan Melin discussed the varying perceptions of burn bans and historical tracking and implementation. North Dakota was not the only area with varying degrees of discrepancy.
- Provides reflection for conversation going forward.
- **Will share the results of the survey with the Board. (Christopher Barth)**

Business – Tracey Nimlos

- NR Supplements to the NWCG Standards for Interagency Incident Business Management posted April 1, 2018
- Courses completed over the winter and spring include Advanced Cost, INBA, Finance Unit Leader, Finance Section Chief and e-Isuite; as well as an intensive review day at the finance breakout of the IMT meetings
- Incident Business Workshop completed last week; over 125 attendees, 13 instructors, and breakout sessions for Personnel Time, Contract Administration, Buying Team, Procurement, Basic Cost and Comp/Claims. Very well received by attendees with overall extremely positive evaluations.
- Planning for a webinar for new to fire micropuchasers later this month or early June.
- Current Task Groups:
 - Working on an NRCG Land Use Guide for logistics and procurement officials. Challenges with state trust lands, tribal trust and allotted land.
 - Task group formed to draft NRCG Donation Guidelines.
 - Rental cars: continue to deal with known issues and educate about when to us GARS vs. NR completed agreement.
 - Task group formed to look at portable toilets going to a commercial item instead of a solicitation.
- Updated charter to add language regarding the expectations of zone representatives and agency leads.
- Major update to NRCG Business Committee webpage. All Business Committee tools were reviewed and updated as necessary.
- Northern Rockies Cost Share – pre-season are done. During season, notify Business Representatives.

Dispatch Steering – Kathy Pipkin

- This year integrated the Dispatch Workshop with the IMT meeting. Feedback was positive from the dispatch community; ADs felt it was a bit more of a challenge.
- Training continues; majority of courses will occur in June primarily to accommodate those who come on later.
- New aviation manuals are being proposed for policy that will affect the dispatch community; therefore, adding more aircraft training sessions since training calendar was established. This increases the logistical workload.
- Conducting ROSS practice sessions on Wednesdays through May and a portion of June.
- Webpage Update – current server has security issues. Drupal platform ready to go; however, so far, agencies not are supporting going live at this time. CIO involvement and coordination continues.
- Will postpone Dispatch Team formation until a later time.

Equipment / Logistics – Warren Appelhans

- Equipment Inspector workshops are currently being conducted.
- Task of combining charter with logistics – tabled due to proximity of fire season.
- Did get a good mix of new member participation.
- Request from Mitch Dana to host medical information on NRCG web page; follow up will occur.
- Members have been working on aquatic invasive communications with the agencies.

- ATV / UTV Update – still waiting on recommendations; will follow up with Cory and finalize on the next conference call. (Mike Granger)

Fuels – Ryan Melin

- Discussed sharing of resources for multi-unit support.
- Discussed budgeting aspect of prescribed fire and cost agreement options.
- Looking at tasking's from the Board
 - Facilitate agreements across the agencies – any leeway made with that? (Mike Granger)
 - Discussed that agreement; did not have a representative from DNRC available at that time. Was new to the group – will distribute template that may be an option to the Board.
 - Question will need to be answered on what direction to take any future agreements towards.
 - Small dollar agreements work great; however, when get to the larger state level more aspects of the agreements need to be assessed.
 - Also, a name will be provided to follow up on as being DNRC representative for this topic. (Mike DeGrosky)

Incident Commander – Dan Warthin

NRICC meeting timeline:

2/20/18

1315 – Judy reports on incident medical specialist, medical moved under safety in R1

1320 – IMT spring meetings update

1415 – Committee business

*Rick Connell elected vice chair of committee.

*Review action items from summit – IMT SOPs document

1430 – IC trainee discussion

*see below

1500 – Finance discussion

1515 – Aviation/Risk transfer discussion

1530 – ATV/UTV proposal from Ops committee discussion

1540 – NR OPS discussion with Craig Goodell

*all agree to move IC call to 0800

*Connell suggests having EGP updated for IC call

2/21/18

0800 – IMT rotation discussion

*teams will keep numbers established on NRCG IC approval letter

* T1 & T2 rotation is straight-up, no 2 hour. WFMT is 2 weeks on 2 off

0815 – Roster analysis

0900 – National IC meeting update – Turman

0930 – Open topic discussion

1300 – Join NRCG board meeting

Current Organization:

Chair – Joe Sampson

Vice Chair – Rick Connell

Members – Mike Goicoechea, Greg Poncin, Doug Turman, Mike Almas, Bob Habeck, Bob Fry, Jay Winfield, Rick Connell, Brian Jenkins, John Thompson, Mike Gagen, Diane Hutton, Ken Parks, Dave Hamilton, Rod Weeks

Zone Reps:

NW - Connell

SW - Goicoechea

SC - Fry

N. Idaho - Almas

Central - Thompson

Eastern - Shuster

Committee Reps:

Operations - Thompson

Training - Goicoechea

Aviation - Almas

Business - Turman

Equip/Logs - Winfield

Dispatch - Gagen

Issues to report to NRCG:

AAs

- Clearly defined structure protection protocols
- Prioritize values @ risk
- Risk aversion, strategic vs tactical
- Revolving door of AAs last season

Succession

- 3-4 current ICs gone within 3 years, currently 1 within GACC trainee identified
- Unclear if NRCG approved "other" IC trainees. Need clearly defined application and selection process going forward that is agreed upon by NRICC and NRCG, with predefined implementation date.

Aviation & Differed Risk

- NRICC does not agree with R6 paper, using aircraft appropriately does not automatically transfer risk. R1 statement or response, if warranted, needs to come through aviation committee.

Medical

- NRICC does not agree with direction to move medical under logistics.
- Issue is inordinate number of medical staff being ordered for what-if scenario.
- NRICC believes in prompt extrication to definitive care, not bringing definitive care to fire line. Many crews are highly staffed with EMTs and these resources are not being utilized.

Northern Rockies Incident Commander Trainees

Jay Winfield (Fry) – OGA
 Scott Shuster (Turman)
 Mike Davin (Sampson) – OGA
 Brian Jenkins (Connell) – OGA
 Troy Phelps – in ICAP, status unknown

Potential Incident Commander Trainees (1-3 years out)

Brent Olsen (Goicoechea)
 Reggie Day (Almas)
 Andy James (Goicoechea) – OGA
 Rich Cowger (Fry)
 Corey Buhl (Sampson)
 Andy Huntsberger (Goicoechea)

Native American Crew – Rob Miramontez

- Updating NAC Plan verbiage to match the Interagency Standards for Fire and Aviation Operations.
- Working on establishing a full-fledged committee; limited members at this point.
 - Working on making contacts to this effort currently.

Aviation – Bob Flesch

- Changes and additions for resources
 - DOI & DNRC agencies will have the same resources

- USFS will have an extra Sherpa this year
- Trying to do a modified CWN contract for an additional two platforms
- SEATs Update given
- FWS no longer has a pilot in the Northern Rockies. (**Mike Granger**)
- Idaho helicopters – hover-step information; can do on DOI but not USFS land (**JT Wensman**)

Training – Jesse Best

(Not on call)

Team Liaison Report Outs

- Ralph Rau – Goicoechea – Team 1 – in good verbal communications; Team recently set up half day scenario for Forest Service Regional Leadership Team meeting; was well received and heard positive feedback. Also, was invited to the IC IMT breakout
- Mike DeGrosky – Fry – Team 6 – attended IMT meeting; already worked through an internal issue.
- Mike Granger – Doug Turman – Team 2 – good interaction and communications; especially related to succession. Recommendations regarding Task, Purpose and End State are being reviewed and focused on to ensure national suggestions are being incorporated. Opportunity for the Board to work with team vacancies.

Exercise Follow Up – Craig Goodell

In the Southwest, exercise combined with M-581. May be a potential for the future? Discussed if space would be an issue. May also be an opportunity to include the Agency Administrators; would provide inclusions and ensure engagement in the interagency environment.

Spring Meeting Discussion

Spring Meeting broken into two meetings this year – worth continuing for the future? Is there a better way to do business? (**Mike Granger**)

Wednesday, May 9

Award presented to Anthony Krause – Certificate of Appreciation in support of Northern Rockies 2017 Fire Season

Governor's Briefing – Mike DeGrosky

Scheduled this year for June 14th in Helena 1500 - 1700 hours; meteorologist from predictive services invited. Typically offer one or two seats per agency. Uniforms are traditionally worn. An official invitation will soon be distributed.

Aquatic Invasive Species Document – Kate Wilson

Would like to finalize the “How To” document. Working on some training slides as well that go hand in hand with the “How To” guide. Training video will be ready for next season. Have had a couple of vendors that have been more aggressive in their approach on procedures. Vendor putting forth criticism on 444 guide; team has been taking a discerning look at the specific criticism. Hoping to have letter turned back by next week to NRCG for review and approval. Consolidate response approach verses independent agency responses is preferable. Would like to see it come from the Agency Administrators; however, if it needs to come from the Board that will suffice. Want to emphasize best available science basis and would like to be proactive. **(Mike DeGrosky)** NRCG has authority to determine what is used in the Northern Rockies; it is appropriate that it come from NRCG. **Kate will submit to Mike Granger and will have signed by next Friday.** Need to ensure the agency administrators are fully advised and aware of this particular issue. **(Ralph Rau)** Procedure stickers have been developed at Yellowstone National Park; perhaps could expound upon this idea at a later time. **(Dan Warthin)**

List of PIOs to Reach Out to During Fire Season NRCC/NRCG – Christopher Barth

Emphasis that this will not be Chris or Chrystal; they are working on a list. Will order in PIOs; this will be done when possible. There is a need to be flexible about who the PIO for the NRCG will be. **(Mike DeGrosky)** The MAC plan is not reflective of what is currently being discussed. **(Ralph Rau)** Appreciate that being day lighted. Adamant that public affairs is not a MAC function. **(Mike DeGrosky)** Group discussion on communications section of MAC plan. Thought the agency administrators had resolved that public affairs was an NRCG and / or NRCC function. **(Mike DeGrosky)** There is a need for a public information role at the Geographic Area level. **(Christopher Barth)** Concern over attracting media attention to the MAC. **(Mike DeGrosky)** Want to ensure that if PIO is moved out of the MAC plan and moved under NRCG, that it will be supported by all agencies. **(Greg Morris)** Either way, leader’s intent is needed for this issue. **(Mike Granger)** Have asked Christopher and Crystal to develop that leader’s intent. **(Mike DeGrosky)** This issue will be pulled out of the MAC plan and put under the NRCG/NRCC plan and when these resources are brought in, they will be working for the NRCG/NRCC and not working for the MAC group. **Christopher Barth and Kathy Pipkin will take the lead on this issue.** **(Mike Granger)** Agencies will check resources to see if they have individuals they could contribute to this effort. **(Mike Granger)**

Sage Grouse – Sarah Lee

No changes to the best practices; still a high national resource priority. BLM will continue to justify use of Large Air tankers by way of sage grouse habitat.

Formalization of a Helitack Subcommittee Aviation Group – Bob Flesch

Was approached by the interagency helitack community on this item. Other geographic areas have similar structure in place; charter mirrors those others. Subcommittee would report to the Aviation Group. **Approval to stand up the subcommittee granted.** **(Mike Granger)**

UTV Guidance – Mike Granger

Suggested originally from the Business committee; more about the approval and oversight of the IMT. Significant amount of damage on these have been reported; this follows Great Basin in accountability procedure issues. (Sarah Lee) Can only be more restrictive than individual agencies policy. (Greg Morris) ATV / UTV Update – still waiting on recommendations; will follow up with Cory and finalize on the next conference call. (Mike Granger)

Action Item Review

(See Updated List)

Wildland Fire Agency Administrators Tasking – Larry Kotcham

Wanted to share some information on behalf of the Agency Administrators; two documents were distributed for review earlier.

Task Assignment Memo

Primary reason reached out with this memo was the result of previously conference calls and meetings. Discussed strategies for strengthening Northern Rockies in a variety of areas; including unified messaging. Want to identify timeframes for a potential face-to-face meeting with Agency Administrators.

Conversation on Strategies for Increasing Team Support

Emphasis on the team succession planning and modernization – addressing both equity needs and including a feedback loop. Memo lays out some modernization techniques. Tasking for drafting some modernization questions. Wish to ensure integrity of the system while improving efficiency. Reviewed taskings within the memo. Identification of positions within the GACCs seems to already be done through Melissa. (Mike DeGrosky) This information needs to be shared with the agency administrators and be incorporated into a written incident management team succession plan. Also would like to know more from Board about how agency administrators can engage more with this process. (Larry Kotcham) In the succession plan itself, there is a role for both the incident commanders and the Board members as well. Individual teams shortage and succession needs analysis needs to be conducted; incident commanders can help with the development of this. (Mike Granger) Also looking for feedback on the task assignments. Also, it is realized that the dates listed are subject to adjustment. (Larry Kotcham)

With this fire season approaching, most likely can work on these taskings prior to the Fall NRCG meeting.

(Mike Granger) Emphasized importance of the agency administrators to be involved with the incident commander selection process. (Ralph Rau) Group discussion on agency specific incident commander qualifying, mentoring and ultimately being supported to lead a team in the Northern Rockies; and the various interaction between both the Boards roles and the agency administrators roles. Group discussion on agency administrator's support of out of area incident commanders. Currently three individuals that are IC trainees from outside the geographic area that are being mentored on Northern Rockies teams. Those names would still need to be brought to the board for recommendation at a later time. (Mike Granger) Move that we accept these three and recommend them to the agency administrators. (Mike DeGrosky) Application will be put with a letter from NRCG and put forth to Agency Administrators later today. (Mike Granger)

Speed to Competency Memo

Reviewed memo and discussed as a group. Would like to bring the memo to a final form and distribute.

(Larry Kotcham) Memo will need to come from the individual line officers from each agency and distributed down the organizational structure. (Ralph Rau) Yes, wish to ensure wide distribution. (Larry Kotcham) At the top of page two, recommend verbiage change from fire staff to all employees. (Greg Morris)

Communications and Unified Messaging

Acknowledged there has been a shortage of resources; would like to do more and have some help accomplishing. Would like to tie this to the MAC and would like to see an information officer engaged earlier rather than later. Wish to ensure that communications needs are always part of the agenda.

(Larry Kotcham) This ties back with a prior conversation, PIO actually works for the NRCG and not for the MAC. **(Mike DeGrosky)** Minutes of this meeting will be sent to Larry Kotchman. **(Mike Granger)**

There is a need for an Agency Administrator and NRCG joint workshop. Would like feedback on if this is possible prior to fire season? **(Larry Kotcham)** IDL – unrealistic; NPS – will make an effort; DNRC – not realistic; USFS – will be tight scheduling; FWS – not realistic. **Group discussion and consensus that it would be extremely difficult to have a majority of the NRCG in attendance.** Larry Kotcham will take this message back to the agency administrators. Group discussion of early June, if agency administrators are adamant. Option to add an additional half day at Fall NRCG meeting in November discussed. This option may be more productive and valuable.

National Cohesive Strategy – Craig Goodell

(See Handout)

Each region has a regional strategy; re-tooled strategy committees to implementation. There are four co-chairs on the western regional committee. Two face to face meetings a year; meeting last week in Utah. BLM is now embracing the cohesive implementation in a more progressive manor. Discussed cross boundary activities. Alignment with vision and strategy of all agencies amongst all levels for support for implementation at the ground level. Grass roots efforts proved the most effective. There is no policy associated with the cohesive strategy; it is a framework. Outcomes of large wildfires are not necessary desired ones; cohesive strategy provides a framework and philosophy for change. Three goals of cohesive strategy are interconnected. Cannot be effective in a holistic stance without advancing all three fronts. Involves managing both short term and long term risk; increase long term benefit across the landscape to produce resilient landscapes. Invites collaboration and working at the grass roots level across multiple partners and cooperators. Opportunities in the Northern Rockies to advance implementation. **(Craig Goodell)** There is a need to be careful of how we generalize the value of “more fire on the landscape” when addressing protection lands. Legal mandates dictate this caution. **(Mike DeGrosky)** Localized implementation provides this flexibility. **(Craig Goodell)** One of the things to be cognizant of, many of these cohesive strategy meetings are dominated by one tenet of “fire resilient landscapes”. This is a hurdle to overcome as part of the long term success is being upfront and honest with all parties involved with beneficial fire use management. **(JT Wensman)** Key is those partnerships at the local level and building a plan. Availability and utilization of new scientific risk management technology is also a useful component. Will be continuing as co-chair for cohesive strategy. **(Craig Goodell)**

CGACC Update – Craig Goodell

Still continuing discussions on Type 3 Incident Management Team “local” definitions. **(Craig Goodell)** National leadership has presented this as a finalized issued at meeting two weeks ago. **(Greg Morris)** Have not received the final word on this officially as of yet. **(Mike Granger)** All our Northern Rockies existing Type 3 teams are comfortable with where their qualifications are standing in regards to meeting the timeframe. **(Kathy Pipkin)** Department of Homeland Security is moving the communications section out of logistics and put it under general staff. There was a proposal for this to be done under NWCG as well. Did not receive much traction. NAFRI is going to put on a 620 course in early December this year. An announcement will come out after the dates are established. Effort to make ICAP program a bit more user friendly and solid, possibly re-building the platform. Aircraft dispatch certification and qualifications also discussed at length. USFS national leadership is advising that it is a mostly finalized issue.

Bin Items

Fish Strainers – Greg Morris

It is a Forest Service item; however, working with our fisheries individuals on how to work with drafting operations, applicable across all land ownerships. Prevents both suctioning and pinning of fry. Working on these procedures and protocols. Several different types. This is a directive from the Fish and Wildlife service down to USFS to minimize our takings. Increasing awareness of this issue across the geographic area. Applicable to bull trout habitat. USFS issue on USFS lands and working on processes and procedures when bringing in outside resources.

Chainsaws – Greg Morris / Tony Petrilli

Fuel geysering – USFS has come out with a letter advising we are no longer allowed to purchase Stihl chainsaws. Not being told to convert. (**Greg Morris**) Husqvarna do not meet EPA standards; however, waiver issued for exception device. Field trial will occur this season for this device. One issue is with ethanol fuel use. (**Tony Petrilli**)

Fall Meeting – Dates & Location

Week of October 29th - pencil in for Fall Meeting; Missoula Location

Breaking Spring Meeting Into Two Meetings

Group consensus to return to one Spring meeting.

Northern Rockies is in rotation to send someone to L-580 Staff Ride.

Operations Committee put together a rotation of teams, will get with that committee and follow up. (**Mike Granger**)

The next NRCG Conference Call will be held June 19, 2018 at 10:00 hours Mountain Time



Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

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

Board of Directors Conference Call Agenda

Tuesday, April 17, 2018

Conference Call Line:

1-888-844-9904

Access Code: 3599209

Participants:

Board Members: Ken Schmid, Mike Granger, JT Wensman, Jake Ganieany, Mike DeGrosky, Patrick Lonergan, Dan Warthin, Ralph Rau

Deputies and Others: Aitor Bidaburu, Coleen Haskell, Melissa Wegner, Patrick Murphy, Tony Petrilli

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

NWCG/NMAC Update:

Went to National PL 2 on Friday of last week; the Southwest and Southern areas are getting busy. Primary support is aviation; not a lot of crew requests at this time. Of note, there was a fatality with a road grader operator on suppression activities. Reports of extreme fire behavior. Paul Summerfelt is the new Area Commander, along with Tim Sexton and Joe Stutler. In regards to IMT succession – there is a new charter being formed by a long range incident workforce development committee. It is being compiled by a diverse group and is currently in draft form. It is expected to be approved.

It is important to note that this group was formed at the request of those at CGAC; this request is coming from the ground up. There is a lot of support at the ground level to look at doing business in a different way. (**Mike Granger**)

NWCG is meeting tomorrow and NMAC is meeting on Thursday.

Predictive Services Update:

Low pressure system moving through the Northern Rockies; snow advisors out with a storm moving across Montana and moving into North Dakota today. The big impact after the precipitation will be high winds; looks like last significant winter type storm. Dry and warming pattern afterwards. Currently, in between two systems – ridging coming in; less dispersion and warmer temps will start to melt record snow pack. Potential for flooding. May – warmer and dryer pattern will continue. Memorial Day week may be wet and cold. June – tail end of La Niña winter; going into Enso-neutral; warmer and dryer.

Northern Rockies GACC and Operational Updates:

Sending resources to New Mexico; also for severity. IHCs are in the middle of critical training; will be coming on line at the end of the month. Last ones come on in mid-May.

NRCC Update

Went to PL 2 nationally, which means the National SIT Report is posted daily. NR activity is slowly starting to increase, prior to green up. Asking units to status resources accurately.



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Contracting Updates: (Tim Murphy)

Yesterday began Forest Service Solicitation evaluations; we are seeing a lot more responses to the solicitations. An increase from previous years. BLM is slowly moving through the process of their solicitations. This effort is affected by the loss of their contracting officer.

Safety Updates: (Tony Petrilli)

No significant updates; please email if any questions or issues arise.

Follow up on Old Business:

Cost Share for IT Interagency capacity at AFD (Patrick Murphy)

Proposal to Approve - There is a need to move on this quickly, in order to implement prior to fire season. Otherwise, will have to put off till next year; need to identify how to pay for this. (**Ralph Rau**) Patrick or Jake – Ryan sent what you were looking for – any new info from FEMA on putting in the lines? (**Kathy Pipkin**) Have not heard any comment back from FEMA. (**Patrick Lonergan**) Grant out there that is potentially available; however, FEMA does not put money into federal operations. Need to clearly show that there are state dollars involved. (**Mike DeGrosky**) That is why we used our percentage breakdown. (**Kathy Pipkin**) State IT people said we cannot put state equipment on a federal pipe. Patrick's idea of saving money and increasing capacity for DNRC will not work out. (**Mike DeGrosky**) If we were to do this, it would have to be funded only by Federal agencies. (**Mike Granger**) Still need to be open to the FEMA ruling, once issued, possibly to cover installation. USFS change in budget structure will not allow for previous flexibility; will need to wait on FEMA response before proceeding. (**Ralph Rau**) Will table until hear back from FEMA; if there is an opportunity for outside source funding, then will re-visit this issue. (**Mike Granger**) If FEMA does approve, it would go to Rich's unit and it will be them putting the line in and not us. (**Kathy Pipkin**) Q: Will agencies run into the same IT challenges as DNRC? No; it would be a business transaction, not an ownership issue. (**Jake Ganieany**)

Northern Rockies Data Standards White Paper – Update & Policy Issuance (Patrick Lonergan)

Have not seen anything further; at team meetings they talked about how the Board had endorsed their standards. **There is a need to produce those.** **Granger will follow up**

UTV Guidance Update (Corey Buhl)

They have not met since fire business group returned it to them. **Granger will follow up.**

MAC Plan Draft – Final Review (Kathy Pipkin/Mike Granger)

Draft has been circulated. Kathy received nothing further since last discussion. Have not had a chance to review. (**Mike DeGrosky**) One comment that I will send out today. (**Ken Schmid**) Comments from the Prevention Committee were incorporated. (**Kathy Pipkin**) **Have all comments in to Kathy prior to the MAC Exercise; if no additional comments, will go ahead and approve.** Will have ready for distribution at May meeting. (**Mike Granger**)

2018 Out of Area IMT NRCG Northern Rockies Geographic Area Briefing (Mike Granger)

Proposal to Approve - Craig did some updates to reflect timing change of IC call. (**Mike Granger**) Timing change does affect the schedule of the MAC; have re-worked and updated the letter and working on the plan. (**Craig Goodell**) **Pam will distribute Craig's edits to the board. If no additional changes received by May 8th meeting, will sign and approved.** (**Mike Granger**)



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New Business:

Northern Rockies Incident Organizer Update (*Mike Granger*)

https://gacc.nifc.gov/nrcc/administrative/policy_reports/NR_incident_organizer.pdf

Potential Tasking for Operations Committee - topic brought forth by Brandon Cichowski. Multiple incidents of NR Incident Organizers out across the Northern Rockies. Question was brought forth of do we want to have a Northern Rockies standard one? (*Mike Granger*) Would be good for the Operations Committee to look at. (*Ken Schmid*) Will task the Ops committee with this issue. (*Mike Granger*)

Additionally, at the Operations Committee breakout, there was an issue on the lack of Heavy Equipment Bosses. Question was posed of will there be an option in the Northern Rockies to manage more than one piece of equipment, as long as one is on order? Asked the Ops Committee to look into this and report back to us on this option by the June conference call. (*Mike Granger*)

Business Committee Charter – Draft Review (*Mike Granger*)

Proposal to Approve - have not received any additional comments. (*Mike Granger*) Comments – voting members be NRCG members and not the zone representatives. The issue is that zone representatives could possibly be all from one agency. Would like to push back to the agency representatives. Additionally, zone representatives are there for 3 years; that is a long time. Perhaps should be up to the zones. (*Ken Schmid*) Support for both of Ken's comments. Would like to take a consistent approach to committee membership. (*Mike DeGrosky*) Most committees are trending towards two year commitments. (*Mike Granger*) They do not necessarily need a term length. (*Ken Schmid*) Will get back with business committee and request those changes be made; then re-submitted to the board. (*Mike Granger*)

Distribution of Medicine Update (*Craig Goodell*)

Issue found out about IMT meetings; contractor for USFS has taken a position that it is too risky to provide OTCs at the incidents. Perception is that they are prescribing this OTC at the incidents; but outside their scope. State of Montana is ok with this distribution. There has historically been a training associated with this distribution; however, these trainings have not been held the last two years as the contractor advises this is outside their scope. Discussed with Mitch Dana at the USFS the needs of the service that the contractor should provide. The contractor will be providing the training this year; however, they will also be coming up with a position paper on this issue. The current contract ends soon. May want to ask the Montana board of medical examiners and counterparts in other states to also provide a similar position paper. (*Mike DeGrosky*) Also, there are other people, in the same camp, that can provide these; which increases complexity of the issue. (*Kathy Pipkin*) Craig will keep Board updated.

Team 6 (*Mike DeGrosky*)

IC for Team 6 (Bob Fry) has an unbreakable family commitment during the time that team comes on the board. Looking at options - currently, the way that team functions is the deputy will be running the team with oversight from Bob. Proposing fully qualified individual to run the team. If in June, what about NRCG Operations specialist? (*Kathy Pipkin*) Would like to support a team's internal solution. (*Mike DeGrosky*) Word getting back from agency administrator's group on support of out of area IC is that there is no issue with that; so agree with Mike DeGrosky to endorse team's primary solution; however, is a good opportunity to have Craig to provide additional support. (*Mike Granger*)



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Team's alternate plan is they could ask Mike Gagen if he is willing to do it. (**Mike DeGrosky**) Q: if Craig were to go as the T2 IC – do we have someone to fill in for Craig? (**Dan Warthin**) Tim Murphy is a deputy; Steve Fry is also an option. **Mike DeGrosky will provide Board approval feedback to Team 6.**

FireNet (Patrick Murphy)

This is a Google platform that allows interagency collaboration while providing compliance with federal standards. Northern Rockies and Rocky Mountain are pilots for this fire season. Looking at Command and General staff, and down to some unit leaders for initial accounts. Due to associated costs, they are limiting these accounts. Accounts will include dispatch as well. There will be two types of accounts; named and role based. Role based accounts will stay with that incident through the incident duration. Email Patrick with any questions.

Stand up NRCG Technical Working Team (Mike Granger)

Review of 2017 Proposal from Anne Rys-Sikora. Q: Why is it a working team instead of a committee? (**Mike DeGrosky**) Foundation to that proposal is good. Would like for Patrick to provide the Board with feedback on proposal points as far as to pursue or not pursue. Needs to be discussed and looked at more in depth. Patrick's request brought at spring meeting was more geared towards help in the geospatial area support. There is somewhat of committee that has come forth to address some of these geospatial issues (Matt Gibson, remote Sit – data standards). (**Mike Granger**) Reluctant when this was first proposed, thought it went too far and was too specific and agenda oriented. Feel this does not meet our needs; would favor the idea of a technology committee or geospatial committee on behalf of all the agencies. (**Mike DeGrosky**) In Alaska, we did have a geospatial committee and I can provide that charter to the group as an example. (**Dan Warthin**) No personal expertise in this area; some personnel in NRTC do possess supporting skills however not those specific skills. (**Melissa Wegner**) Patrick, who would you recommend? (**Mike Granger**) Mark Slaten DNRC, Greg Dillion USFS, Lester Maas, BLM in Missoula Field office. (**Patrick Murphy**) Mark is highly skilled and would definitely be DNRC's individual to contribute to the effort. (**Mike DeGrosky**) Patrick, would you be willing to head up this committee and head up the charter? (**Mike Granger**) Are we looking at a committee instead of a working group that could develop the standards and then be concluded? (**Kathy Pipkin**) One that would be under NRCG. (**Mike Granger**) Echo working group as meeting the need; would not be the appropriate person to run a committee such as this. (**Patrick Murphy**) **Will reach out to Mark Slaten and see if he is willing to head up a working group for Northern Rockies Geospatial issues as they arise.** (**Mike Granger**)

Direction for Public Affairs/Communications – NRCG/NRCC (Ken Schmid/Chris Barth)

Agency administrators discussed this issue also; was previously brought up by Kathy. All executives agree it is important. Chris has been working with a group of individuals. (**Ken Schmid**) On the agenda for May; want to put out there for all to be thinking about. Currently serving as a PIO representative to a higher group bringing forth Northern Rockies issues. There has been discussion on a number of things outside skills are currently doing. Much came out of the team meeting breakouts; however, the desire is not to operate outside of skill sets. Would ask that the Board think about a bit more directions on filling that role, and those people or person to operate, when the need arises. (**Chris Barth**) When we say "this role", the agency administrators discussed that this role is a function of both the NRCG and the NRCC. **When we get to the MAC Exercise, would like the board to be clear on whether this is a role of the NRCG/NRCC or a role of the MAC.** (**Ken Schmid**)



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Rotation of BOD Chair (*Mike DeGrosky*)

After the last agency administrator's call; there was confusion on which agency is assuming the chair next. Discussion was held in 2016 that was not captured in official documentation. The understanding was that since DNRC had skipped it's turn, then DNRC is the next in line for the chair. (*Mike DeGrosky*) That is correct. Will get the latest list to Larry with the agency administrators. (*Mike Granger*)

Review of Action Items (*Mike Granger*)

These will be covered at the May 8th meeting.

Round Robin – Updates from Agency Participants:

BIA NW – (Not on this call)

BIA GP – (Not on this call)

BIA RM – (Not on this call)

BLM – (Ken had to disconnect in order to participate on another conference call.)

FWS – Continuing winter conditions are affecting prescribed burning efforts; resources are supporting other GACCs; Oklahoma is extremely active. Will be back in the office next week.

IDL – Underwent a re-organization and have two new Deputy positions – Deputy Chief - Operations Josh Harvey and Deputy Chief - Planning and Prevention Scott Hayes. They officially start in May and hope is that they can attend the MAC Exercise. Both will also have delegation to act on behalf of IDL. Working on NW compact; hiring for this year continues; IDL also closely monitoring Idaho's political situation.

MT DES – Major Sean Hardy will be working with Mike DeGrosky; MOA review and approval occurring; meeting weekly due to flooding concurs; attended MT National Guard workshop – productive meeting.

MT DNRC – Lots of training going on; FEMA FMAG call occurring (coinciding with this call); important news will be coming out later today on Forestry Division Administrator. John Monzie is at Northwest Compact meeting in Portland; later in the week CAT team meetings occurring.

Montana State Fire Chiefs – (Rich Cowger at National Fallen firefighter meeting.)

Montana Fire Wardens – (Not on this call)

MT Peace Officers – (Not on this call)

ND FS – (Not on this call)

NPS – Attended out of town for IMT meetings; Regional FMO position is still vacant, interviews took place last week. Hope to have a decision in 3-4 weeks. Northern Rockies is in the process of hiring seasonals and training; also providing support in the Southern Portion of the Intermountain Region. Alpine ICH (Rocky Mountain GACC) is going through certification process next week.

USFS – (Ralph had to disconnect earlier to return to Regional Leadership Team meeting.)

The next scheduled NRCG Meeting is May 8-9, 2017 in Missoula, MT



Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

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Board of Directors Conference Call Agenda

1000 am Tuesday, June 19, 2018

Conference Call Line:

1-888-844-9904

Access Code: 3599209

Participants:

Board Members:

Deputies and Others:

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

NWCG/NMAC Update:

(Aitor Bidaburu unavailable for this call.)

Predictive Services Update:

Drying mitigated, flooding concerns across the GACC Remnants of hurricane Bud. Starting Thursday more seasonal norms. Starting Wednesday possible drying. Idaho Panhandle and along Canadian Border and Camus Prairie still dry.

Northern Rockies GACC and Operational Updates:

NRCC Update (Kathy Pipkin)

Quiet Nationally, Eastern Area and Southern Area - PL1, Rocky Mountain - PL1; 416 incident transitioning to NIMO, offered IHC crews; Southwest Area 5-10 days warmer; FNF IHC timing out coming home; Great Basin Area offered up resources; South OPS, North OPS, and Northwestern Area offering up resources; Alaska - PL1; NRCC 10 T2IA, 1 IHC, 5 loads of smokejumpers.

Contracting Updates: (Tim Murphy)

BLM extended Potable Water Contracts. Forest Service finishing up and getting DPLs into dispatch. Montana Logging association waiting for woods to dry out.

Safety Updates: (Tony Petrilli)

Returning to regular position; Dave Williams will be starting in a couple weeks.

Communication Needs for Agency Administrators and the Northern Rockies Geographic Area:

As go to GMAC, make sure information is tied into common communication threads. More communication i.e.: smoke (ensuring same message being shared)

Follow up on Old Business:

Wildland Fire Agency Administrator (AA) Discussions (Lead will be an Agency Administrator)

- In person meeting with Agency Administrators update (speed to competency memo)
- Diane Mann-Klager – Considering resources normal job responsibly. Line officers put the letter together. No one had issues. **NRCG Chair will get with NRCG AA Chair and finalize letter.** Granger purposes working with the AAs for this Guidance. Granger will go forward for this fall. Nothing in place this season.



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ATV / UTV Guidance (Mike Granger / Cory Buhl)

- Proposal to Approve
- Approved; will be disseminated.

MAC Plan Revisions (Kathy Pipkin / Christopher Barth)

- Inclusion of Prevention Edits
- Re-wording / Removal of PIO language
 - Per the May meeting notes:
 - This issue will be pulled out of the MAC plan and put under the NRCG/NRCC plan and when they are brought in they will be working for the NRCG/NRCC and not working for the MAC group. Christopher Barth and Kathy Pipkin will take the lead on this issue.
 - Kathy to get final to Pam for dissemination.

Out-of-Area IMT Geographical Area Briefing (Mike Granger)

- Craig's edits were distributed previously for BOD review with note to submit changes by May 8th
- Approved - Needs Signature and 508 Compliancy

Northern Rockies Strategic Plan Review Update (Craig Goodell)

- Has been sent to Craig for review
- Final Draft distributed for review
- Not seeing it as strategic plan more an operating plan. Next fall/winter revamp.
- Is this document really needed?
 - No, Document will be removed from the website.

Development of an IC Vetting Process Update (Ralph Rau / Mike Granger / Craig Goodell)

- Ralph routed around examples from another GACC (Southwest - recruitment of ICs)
- Granger to get with Larry to discuss
 - All tasking from the tasking letter added into this document
- Agency Administrators and NRCG will come together for designing the process.
- 2 – step (Craig Goodell)
 - 1) Mindful of who is selected for the IC process, responsibility of supervisor and IMT IC.
 - 2) Selection process, not everyone that gets qualified may not get a team.
- Vetting – (DeGorsky) seems pretty straight forward
- Succession Planning

Northern Rockies Data Standards Policy Issuance (Greg Dillon / Mark Slaton / Mike Granger)

- Draft Proposed Standards distributed to BOD prior to call for review
- Proposal to Approve
- Approved



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Operations Committee Tasking Update – Shortage of HEQBs (Mike Granger)

- Policy of allowing one HEQB to supervise two pieces of equipment, provided another HEQB was on order similar to the HEMG.
- Buhl shared with BLM National for advice; they felt no issue in policy.
- Buhl and Granger to draft a memo; draft will be shared with NRCG for feedback prior to standards being issued.

Northern Rockies Geospatial Working Group Update (Mike Granger)

- Mike will follow up with Mark Slated to head up this group.

New Business:

Suppression Modules – Recommendation for the Northern Rockies (Kathy Pipkin)

- Potential tasking for the Operations Committee
- Request from BIA to put up a Suppression Module Nationally in North Dakota
- Currently, in the Red Book only the BLM has direction of what a suppression module consists of
- Suppression Modules are not generally recognized nationally; however, the Forest Service does send them to the Southwest on a case by case basis.
- Tasked to the Operations Committee

Remote Situation Unit CGAC Tasking (Mike Granger)

- Tasking distributed to BOD for review prior to call
- Granger leading the efforts and developing the National Remote Situation Unit

NRCG Chair Transition / Agency Administrator Chair

- Transition at the same time.

National Guard Training – Jake Ganieany

- Meeting on funding that came in that will be used to train the Montana Army National Guard.
- Three training sessions occurring (July and August).
- Working thru the boots issue; wants to use the NRK for equipment for training then give back. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) potentially.
 - Discussion centered on the Northern Rockies purchasing the equipment; funding is only for training.
- Resources shared governor to governor?
- How to get trainers, (contractors) payment, concerned of how fast the contracts can be issued?
- Finding leadership for the crews, especially to go out of state.
 - While desirable to have the leadership train with them, availability of agency employees will be very limited during the timeframe.
- Can other agencies assist? FWS - would be smart to utilize the training MOU holders.

Review of Action Items: (Mike Granger)

- Most Action Items in need of follow up for this month are covered in above “Old Business” topics



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Round Robin – Updates from Agency Participants:

BIA NW –

BIA GP – Ray Hart / Diane Mann-Klager – Precipitation at Ft Collins; slow in ND. RTRO Coordination going to MN, will be advertising

BIA RM –

BLM – Cory Buhl – Billings FMO interviews completed

FWS – Mike Granger – Governors briefing

IDL – JT Wensman – Slow, 1 Type 2 Helicopter on Friday; next on July 1; SEATs on 7/2; Scoopers on 7/9.

MT DES – Jake Ganieany

MT DNRC – Mike DeGrosky – not a lot going on, expect in training, Thank you for participating in the Governor's Briefing. Critical Training Completed. Leadership training on going. Helicopter out; full staffing seasonal workforce. Sonya Germann joining Agency Administrators.

Montana State Fire Chiefs –

Montana Fire Wardens – Pat Lonergan

MT Peace Officers –

ND FS –

NPS – Dan Warthin – Regional FMO Jay Luster Selected.

USFS – Greg Morris / Melany Glossa – Philip Ketel new Regional Aviation Officer, starting in August; Dave Williams selected for the Safety position; new Air Quality individual starting in the next couple of weeks.

The next scheduled NRCG Meeting is July 17, 2017 at 10:00 Hours Mountain Time



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Tuesday, July 17, 2018

Conference Call Line:

1-888-844-9904

Access Code: 3599209

Participants:

Board Members: Ray Hart, Ken Schmid, Mike Granger (Chair), JT Wensman, Jake Ganieany, Mike DeGrosky (Vice Chair), Rich Cowger, Vern Burdick, Ryan Melin, Dan Warthin, Ralph Rau

Deputies and Others: Darron William, Rick Seidlitz, Michael Odell, Craig Goodell, Tim Murphy, Kathy Pipkin, Michael Richmond, Melissa Wegner, Dave Williams

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

NWCG/NMAC Update: (Aitor Bidaburu)

(Conflict with an NMAC meeting; unable to be on the call. Provided the following update :)

Nationally holding steady at PL3, still good availability of most types of resources with the exception of Type 1 crews. T1 crews mostly committed to large fire or are in GACC's that aren't willing to let them go due to drawdown levels. NIFC jet brought out its first jet load of T2 IA crews out over the weekend. More plans in the works to bring down crews from AK towards the end of this week. The monsoon is expected to deepen in the SW and with that more of their T1 crews should be available in the next week or so. Other than that it's business as usual and feeling fortunate to still be at PL3.

Predictive Services Update: (Michael Richmond / Coleen Haskell)

Lightning moving across southern portion of region; dry strikes on Nez Perce – Clearwater and Bitterroot. Cluster of intense strikes between Helen and Great Falls and a bit north; expect increased initial attack. More lighting is expected over Yellowstone and Missouri River Breaks. Warm and dry to the north and west – fuels dryer in those areas. No change in forecast; dry pattern continuing. Isolated lightning and a fire weather watch in effect for PSAs 10,11, and 13. Dry and breezy on the west side with warm temps and low humidity. Friday will be the warmest day of the week for the west side, progressing into the east. Saturday of next week a trough is expected to come down from the north; looks to be dry, not a lot of associate precipitation. On the eastern side and North Dakota, there is a large footprint of wet thunderstorms expected overnight tonight. Overall, this pattern is forecast to persist.

Northern Rockies GACC and Operational Updates:

NRCC Update (Kathy Pipkin)

Over the last 24 hours have mobilized two IHCs to a fire on the Kootenai National Forest. Currently, one IHC crew is available; one is at "Stand Up" training today; will have two IHCs available tomorrow. Currently available - one T2IA crew and two loads of smokejumpers. Grangeville is currently out of jumpers, as they were sent as ground resources to a fire on the Nez Perce – Clearwater National Forest. NICC agreed that NRCC will keep what initial attack resources it has now.



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NRCG Operations (Craig Goodell)

Zulu Fire on the Kootenai National Forest is 20+ acres; committing the Lolo IHC and Helena IHC to that fire. Blackerby Fire on the Nez Perce – Clearwater National Forest has smokejumpers from Grangeville staffing it; initial attack from this morning. Currently receiving lighting in the GACC; expect to see hold overs and additional initial attack. On the bigger picture, north Great Basin took a lot of lighting and is reporting a lot of new initial attack. Expect heavy competition of resources, as other GACCs are experiencing increasing activity. Would like to discuss moving to Planning Level 2. Group consensus that the discussion will occur towards the end of the meeting.

Contracting Updates: (Tim Murphy)

All agreements are in place; there are a few pieces of heavy equipment that responded out of area that triggered some of issues with contract compliance (illegal substances, temper, etc.). Expect that there is the possibility that our region will be able to get approximately 75% out of the agreements in place, due to the job market. Video project in conjunction with Montana Logging will continue next week.

Safety Updates: (Dave Williams)

Cal Fire suffered a dozer roll over fatality last weekend. Preliminary information is on the Lessons Learned site.

Communication Needs for Agency Administrators and the Northern Rockies Geographic Area: (Mike Granger)

This topic is to ensure that information going out to the public is consistent and presented with one voice. Earlier this week, the Restrictions conference call provided a good example of this.

In addition, last conference call the topic of getting together at the fall meeting for the purpose of constructing a visioning / futuring document for the IMTs was batted around. General consciences was to have this at the beginning of the week of the fall meeting in October. The first part will involve sitting down with the Agency Administrators and working on a document with the intent of getting them more involved with both the mentoring and futuring of IMTs and also engaging them in the IC recruitment process. This process will also include the third action item on the Action Item list of identifying PIOs.

Follow up on Old Business:

Montana National Guard Training Update (Jake Ganieany)

Training was contracted; rigorous recruitment of soldiers occurred. First training began on the 23rd and the next will occur on July 30th, with each session having 50 individuals. Working with partners to provide shelters and tools. Training, with DES assisting – should have 100+ trained soldiers by Aug 4th.

We are hearing through the grapevine that DeWayne would like help with training CRWBs; however, we would need an official request from the DES to MT DNRC. We would like to request that Jake be the conduit and single point of contact. **(Mike DeGrosky)**

This is the first we have heard of it; will follow up. **(Jake Ganieany)**



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On getting the tools to the training through the cache - this cannot involve a Pcode; however, it can be done and we will supply tools to the guard. Greg can provide more information on this. Kathy will get with Tam. **(Ralph Rau)**

Wildland Fire Agency Administrator Discussions (Lead will be an Agency Administrator)

Memo was distributed and reviewed by the board.

Development of an IC Vetting Process Update (Ralph Rau / Mike Granger / Craig Goodell)

Drafts were distributed and reviewed by the board. Request feedback on edited document be submitted to Pam; she will distribute to the working group. Feedback Due back by next conference call.

A second component to this process is that internal agency vetting must also occur, be managed and documented.

Received an email from Curtis Heaton in R2; he sent back outstanding support of Almas team representation in their region. Will share that email with the board. **(Ralph Rau)**

Shortage of HEQBs – Operations Committee Tasking (Mike Granger)

Draft memo was distributed for review by the board; standards to be issued upon approval.

NWCG and the 310-1 call a heavy equipment boss a single resource; when put together two pieces of equipment together, it usually requires a strike team leader. **(Tim Murphy)** The committee looked into this and believes the latitude exists. **(Mike Granger)** As long as this is only in times of shortages, not utilized as a standard. **(Ken Schmid)** Will ensure that last sentence is in there and will sign and distribute. **(Mike Granger)**

Northern Rockies Geospatial Working Group Update (Mike Granger)

Mike Granger is continuing to follow up with Mark Slaten to head up this group.

Remote Situation Unit CGAC Tasking (Mike Granger)

Had a small opportunity to stand this up due to what was occurring in Colorado; however, during the procedures to obtain a PCode, the need was met and ultimately, stand up did not occur. It was, however, a good exercise for the future.

New Business:

Mobilization of Local Government Forces (Mike DeGrosky)

Document was distributed to the board for review.

In the past, NRCG has provided courtesy review and feedback on this DNRC document. Clarification stated that it is not an NRCG document. Any input or concerns? **(Mike DeGrosky)** Group discussion occurred on where this document was posted and how it was linked on the NRCG site. Discussion also over adjustment of the cover to reflect DNRC more and de-emphasize the NRCG.



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Montana Sheriff's and Peace Officer's Evacuation Recommendations (Rick Seidlitz)

Documents were distributed and reviewed by the board. Fire wardens had a big conference last year and got their association involved and these documents are what they came up with; also they are now finally approved. Purpose was to ensure consistency throughout the state. These are recommendations only; there is no mandatory enforcement. It was a large endeavor; resulting in to good progress.

Gettysburg Staff Ride (Melissa Wegner/Mike Granger)

Coming up in October; Northern Rockies has been selected for this portion of the staff ride and NWCG will pay for the tuition. **(Mike Granger)**

Direction is that Northern Rockies has 12 individuals from our IMTs. This is put on by a contractor and NWCG pays for tuition. Would like to focus on our Unit Leaders and Mid-level operations positions. This training can help influence leadership for the future. **(Melissa Wegner)**

Spoke with the ICs and they will provide names that will meet the intent listed above. Class is coming up in October; deadline not available as of yet. Agency only individuals; no ADs. **(Mike Granger)**

Would like to consider some of the T3 ICs as a thought; there is an opportunity that exists there. **(Ralph Rau)** Have not reached out to them as of yet; however, it is a good thought. **(Mike Granger)** National Rotation is typically 3-4 years; for NWCG pay. **(Melissa Wegner)** What is the tuition per person? **(Mike Granger)** Don't have it readily available; however, L-300 & L-381 are approximately \$1200. **(Melissa Wegner)** I went to San Diego last fall and it was approximately \$2000. **(Ryan Melin)** We can think about that for the future. **(Mike Granger)**

Preparedness Level Discussion (Craig Goodell)

Group discussion centered on increase of preparedness level from PL1 to PL2. ERCs and Fire Dangers are moving from Moderate to High across the region. **Group consensus to move to PL 2.**

Review of Action Items: (Mike Granger)

Mike Granger and Pam Jolly will review Action Item list for revisions post call.

Round Robin – Updates from Agency Participants:

BIA NW – Mission Valley ship in the Northwest region helping BIA units there.

BIA GP – ND slow; no fires region wise. RTRL position will be advertised, GS-11 Fuels.

BIA RM –

BLM – Light initial attack; roughly half a dozen 50-100 acre fires; resources currently returning from out of area; things are drying out.

FWS – light initial attack; resources have returned from out of area; tremendous fuel loading across the landscape; poised to take off and run.

IDL – Northern area light initial attack; majority of fires so far have been human caused; Southern Idaho experienced increased activity yesterday. Currently sending resources down to assist; anticipate activity picking up to the north. Loaning out SEATs to fire on Kootenai National Forest.



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MT DES – Will be following up on both the CRWB and tools.

MT DNRC – Activity may possibly increase rapidly here pretty soon; Northwest corner of state may take off at the same time as the eastern part of the state. Rural Fire Coordinator, Doug Williams, is retiring this month. Possibly will be filling external recruitment.

Montana State Fire Chiefs – Seeing an increase in local initial attack; state wide – burning well in green grass along the interstate. Program rolled out by MT Chiefs that is similar to ROSS; for resources not intended for ROSS. Program is designed to talk to ROSS; however, is for local capacity use only.

Montana Fire Wardens – Similar conditions to what has already been stated.

MT Peace Officers – Severity has begun - Northeast Land Office; headed out to help DNRC. Also helping CAT team as a Safety Trainee. In addition, helping with STAR program which will be more streamlined this year. Will be in the field most of the summer; call cell if needed.

ND FS – Pretty quiet; minimal fire activity; severe storms with high winds and tornadoes; exporting resources; certified national guard ship; thank you to Ray Hart

NPS – Northwest Montana dry; of particular note, Glacier National Park. One small fire in Yellowstone National Park. New Regional FMO, Jay Lusher, will be in the office on the 25th.

USFS – (Ralph had to drop off the call earlier due to RLT meeting.)

The next scheduled NRCG Meeting is August 21, 2018 at 10:00 Hours Mountain Time



Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

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

Board of Directors Conference Call Agenda

Wednesday, July 18, 2018 – 16:00 hours Mountain

Conference Call Line

1-888-844-9904

Access Code: 3599209

Participants:

Board Members: Bryce Rogers, Mike Granger (Chair), JT Wensman, Jake Ganieany, Mike DeGrosky (Vice Chair), Patrick Lonergan, Vern Burdick, Ralph Rau

Deputies and Others: Corey Buhl, Bruce Suenram, Brent Woffinden, Greg Morris, Craig Goodell, Tim Murphy, Kathy Pipkin, Aitor Bidaburu, Pam Jolly

Purpose: This is a public meeting for the purpose of conducting government business. Also, would like to thank everyone for their schedule flexibility in participating on this call.

Prepositioning of IHC Crews (Mike Granger)

Group discussion on the specifics of this topic occurred. General consensus to mobilize up to three crews on the regional support code, with the understanding that these resources will be released (if not otherwise assigned to a specific incident) after the approaching critical weather event (of approximately 3 days) was agreed upon.

Stand Up of Miles City Smokejumper Remote Base (Mike Granger)

Group discussion on the specifics of this topic occurred. General consensus to mobilize the Miles City Smokejumper remote base was agreed upon.

The next scheduled NRCG Meeting is August 21, 2018 at 10:00 Hours Mountain Time



Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

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

Board of Directors Conference Call Agenda

Monday, July 23, 2018

Conference Call Line

1-888-844-9904

Access Code: 3599209

Participants:

Board Members: Mike Granger (Chair), Vern Burdick, Ralph Rau

Deputies and Others: Darron William, Corey Buhl, two MT DES representatives, Bruce Suenram, John Monzie, Greg Morris, Kathy Pipkin, Tim Murphy, Pam Jolly

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

Shortage of HEQBs – Operations Committee Tasking (Mike Granger)

Received feedback from a board member; concern expressed on this topic. Have delayed the policy issuance to allow time for further discussion and review. **(Mike Granger)**

Group discussion occurred. Consensus reached that although the Board already voted on this; there are some issues that need to be explored further. Mike Granger will forward this proposed policy on to NWCG for feedback and guidance. This issue will be revisited at the earliest possible date, once feedback has been received. **(Mike Granger)**

The next scheduled NRCG Meeting is August 21, 2018 at 10:00 Hours Mountain Time



Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

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

Board of Directors Conference Call Agenda

Tuesday, September 18, 2018

Conference Call Line: 888-844-9904 | Access Code 3599209#

Participants:

Board Members:

BIA NW – (Not on call)
BIA GP – (Not on call)
BIA RM – (Not on call)
BLM – (Not on call)
FWS – Mike Granger
IDL – JT Wensman
MT DES – (Not on call)

MT DNRC – John Monzie
Montana State Fire Chiefs – (Not on call)
Montana Fire Wardens – Patrick Lonergan
MT Peace Officers – (Not on call)
ND FS – (Not on call)
NPS – Dan Warthin
USFS – Ralph Rau, Greg Morris

Deputies and Others:

John Monzie, Greg Morris, Tim Murphy, Craig Goodell, Dave Williams, Kathy Pipkin, Coleen Haskell, Julie Polutnik, Pam Jolly

Purpose: Welcome and a reminder that this is a public meeting for the purpose of conducting government business.

NWCG/NMAC Update: (Aitor Bidaburu)

(Aitor Bidaburu not available for call – provided update via Craig Goodell)

Lack of availability for NIROPS / IR; one aircraft is down for the rest of the season due to a part that needs to be manufactured; other aircraft was down yesterday as well due to mechanical. Ongoing maintenance issue with agency owned aircraft. Need to develop plans on how units will map fires and acquire the same level of intelligence. **(Craig Goodell)** While out on fire assignment, incidents relied heavily on the DRTI Bird (Distributed Real Time Infrared - a WA Air National Guard aircraft that has picked up some of the workload due to the lack of IR aircraft availability this season). **(Mike Granger)** In the future, will be looking at multiple options, including UAS. **(Craig Goodell)**

Predictive Services Update:

Meteorological: (Coleen Haskell)

Over the last week have seen generally a westerly pattern, littered with shortwave troughs; giving an opportunity for scattered showers. This did provide breezy and dry conditions over Yellowstone and Southwest Montana. Now will be beginning to turn towards cooler and more humid. Tomorrow night and Thursday will be punctuated by rain showers over generally the entire region, especially on Sunday. Eastern half in particular should receive a significant amount. With this will come a lot of variability in temperatures, especially in areas receiving rainfall. Starting to see some high elevation snow across the geographic region. With the passing on of the tropical activity, models are now in higher agreement.



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GACC Situation: (Julie Polutnik)

Since last call, 30 new fires for 18,929 acres and suspect some of that is catch up acres. Year to Date – 1,929 fires for 123,195 acres. No new large incidents in the last week.

Northern Rockies GACC and Operational Updates:

NRCG Operations (Craig Goodell)

Yesterday Northern Rockies went to PL 2; currently have 3 IMTs assigned. Sampson is transitioning with Goicoechea today; transfer of command at 1800 hours; in brief at 1300 hours. Paola, Whale Butte and Coal Ridge were turned back to the Flathead National Forest yesterday afternoon. They are being managed by a local, T3 organization. Gold Hill – Almas T2 continuing to mop that fire up and working with the unit on a tentative turn back of 1800 on Thursday, with close out on Friday TBD. Do still have 13 active incidents in the Northern Rockies.

NRCC Update (Kathy Pipkin)

Rocky Mountain is having another spurt of activity; Great Basin is up to PL 4. Critical needs for those areas include mid-level management and safety positions. Have been doing a lot of UTF'ing and looking for reassignments. Resources are thin as seasonal fall actives begin to start up. . Do have three loads of jumpers currently and one airtanker remaining in west Yellowstone. Also, some SEATs and Helicopters are still available. CWN aircraft are available as well. Question: Do we still need the weekly afternoon call? **Group discussion and consensus that NRCG will return to a regular, monthly call schedule. Pam will distribute a notification email.**

Contracting Updates: (Tim Murphy)

Still a fair amount of equipment out. 57 pieces of heavy equipment remain on various incident; in addition to a handful of water handling equipment; with a few outside of the geographic area. Would anticipate more leaving with the uptick in other GACC activity. Will be heading into the field in the upcoming days.

Safety Updates: (Dave Williams)

Update on Interagency Strategic Risk Assessment team that went up to Howe – completing a draft and hope to have it out to the board by the next week. Touched based with the safety on Howe and the Flathead National Forest – has been pretty quiet overall.

Follow up on Old Business:

Heavy Equipment Task Force After Action Review (Ralph Rau)

Working with Tim, reaching out to the people that need to be there. Due to availability, **the meeting has been moved to the week of the NRCG Fall meeting and will be held on Thursday, Nov 1st at 1300. Ralph will send email out to the group.**



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Status of Team Trailers (Ralph Rau)

No update at this time – **topic move to the Fall NRCG Meeting agenda.**

New Business:

Montana Evacuation Language (John Monzie)

New language has been adopted by most of the sheriffs in the state. It is not mandatory; however, provides guidelines and recommendations. Would provide a placeholder. **(John Monzie)** Believe that this topic was presented with a desired outcome for the board to issue a memo and endorse it. **(Patrick Lonergan)** How does this apply to Idaho as well? Will we have three separate languages? **(Greg Morris)** Would only be for Montana; does not apply to other states in the Northern Rockies. **(Mike Granger)** Would be good to send a draft out that also highlights what Idaho and North Dakota do; thus keeping it all in one document. **(Ralph Rau)** Will obtain this language and include it in the draft. **(Mike Granger)** Also included in the Northern Rockies geographic area are Wyoming, South Dakota and parts in Washington. **(Kathy Pipkin)** **Pam will work on obtaining each states applicable language.**

IMT Reporting Statistics (Kathy Pipkin / Judy Heintz)

- Proposal to drop zones from the IMT Reporting Statistics

In the past, our teams have been dispatched with the zone concept in mind; have now migrated away from that concept. For ease and staffing workload constraints, recommendation is to remove the breakdown by zone. Did not see where the break down by zone is valuable. **(Mike Granger)** For the local departments, does the zone break down assist with their local stats? Would like to hear from them, if they think it is of value. **(Ralph Rau)** Would think that is a Vern, Rich and Patrick Question. **(Kathy Pipkin)** Can that information be teased out from the other tables? **(Mike Granger)** If one has that skill set, it can be derived from the data. **(Kathy Pipkin)** Do not see a need for the zone breakdown. **(Patrick Lonergan)** **Group discussion and consensus to move forward with the proposal to drop the zone reporting from the IMT Reporting Statistics.**

Review of Action Items: (Mike Granger)

- IC nomination process - any updates? **(Mike Granger)**
 - Discussed at GMAC/NRCG Face to Face meeting; finalization of the documents will be completed. Each agency has their own process for task book initiation; then will have our own Board process for application. Each agency will need to be responsible for which individuals initiate a task book; then will fall on board after application to vet. Still in question a bit is would there be any board interaction for trainees to take assignments. Burden falls on individual agencies to vet as far as initiating a task book. Then once application is made to board, the process will include ensuring the agency is supportive of the individual. **Will be reviewing and fine tuning the applicable documents; should be ready by the fall meeting. Will send rough draft to Pam to send to Mike Granger and Mike DeGrosky. (Ralph Rau)**



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- Heavy Equipment Boss issue – will not pursue any further. (**Mike Granger**) Will need to close the loop with operations committee. (**Tim Murphy**) Will accomplish this on Oct 10th during the operations committee meeting. (**Mike Granger**)
- Will not have an October conference call due to Fall NRCG Meeting occurring that month. Please note that it will be a full meeting; please block off all of those days with Friday being a travel day.

Round Robin – Updates from Agency Participants:

BIA NW –

BIA GP –

BIA RM –

BLM –

FWS – back and catching up; appreciate Neal Beetch's assistance. Making transition to prescribed burning season. One individual down in Idaho helping an adjoin region and will continue with a reciprocal approach in the future.

IDL – no further updates at this time.

MT DES –

MT DNRC –

Montana State Fire Chiefs –

Montana Fire Wardens – Did attend the CAT team close out; good assignment. Was a good fit for that team. County has paid for a radio in dispatch that turned out invaluable for communications on that fire. Rapid evacuation task force – brought back as a good best practice; at end of incident decision was made not to force the evacuation. As there was no formal closure in place; near the end, large groups caused an issue looking for lost pets. In the future, will look at only residents.

MT Peace Officers –

ND FS –

NPS – Do still have fire activity in Glacier National Park; continuing with Bacon Rind, sharing with Custer-Gallatin National Forest. Brent is spending a lot of time working on the story board project at Glacier National Park. Looking forward to his product and many thanks to state and other partners for helping out with that.

USFS – Transitioning to prescribed fire work; still have suppression activity in region. Looking forward to the October meeting.

The next scheduled NRCG Meeting is October 30 – November 1, 2018 at 0800 Hours Mountain Time

Monday, October 29 – Executive Session

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

Welcome and Introductions

Larry Kotchman and Mike Granger – Welcome and Thanks for this critical time to go through these important issues.

Review NRCG BOD Task Assignment Memo

- Acknowledge it came out late; received in May. Fire Season began right afterwards.
- Well thought out; BOD appreciates the direction.
- Memo represents one of the first that the WFAA have issued to the BOD.
 - Conversation regarding how to have better agency administrator involvement during establishment of standardized processes.

Incident Management Team Succession Planning

IMT Succession Plan Template with Key Modernization Questions

- Tasking – IMT Succession Planning – discussed Turman's draft IMT Succession plan.
 - Represents one view of what one should look like.
- Issue has not yet been taken up as a group by the board due to time.
 - Group discussion on the following points:
 - Issues not only filling teams, but also positions within the agency.
 - Looking at the amount of time it takes to obtain these higher level positions.
 - Need to expand the pool from which recruitment occurs.
 - There is an ever increasing amount of people (plan recommends two people per position). The amount of people has increased as we continue to ask them to do more over time. (Teams have increased in size historically.)
 - Need to start thinking about if current team composition model is sustainable.
 - Number of people that are available to participate on teams is dropping daily.
 - Discussed possibility of providing a framework for those coming in, as to how agencies can assist these individuals with success; agency administrators can have a presence and be involved.
 - BOD is looking to the WFAA for clear definition of what are the expectations of a succession plan, so that the BOD may then sit down with the IC committee.
 - Noted that all BOD members perform as collateral duties; time becomes an element.
 - Suggestion of a Draft Team exercise proposed.
 - Group discussion on worthiness of exercise; however, caution expressed not to re-write the 310-1 but rather apply it to a team.
 - WFAA Question: BOD is in a position to evaluate each team; how can the WFAA assist with getting this done?
 - **BOD needs to identify and Action Item and accomplish.**
 - Envision a short write up summary of each team's gaps.
 - WFAAs emphasized that a simplified needs analysis is critical; must find some way to motivate this action.
 - Group discussion on the following points:
 - Same issues surfacing - lacking in finance, plans, etc. – are there other agencies and pools to recruit from?

- Important to note that historically in the NR – team commitments were based on two assignments per year. This is no longer the normal. Teams are continually asked to extend and mobilize to additional incidents.
- **BOD noted that WFAA can really become involved associating names to those shortage positions.**
 - WFAA Question: Has this name matching to critical needs positions for the teams occurred in the past?
 - BOD consensus - not in earnest.
 - **BOD proposed identification of key gaps and WFAA assistance to match names with those critical needs positions.**
- Group discussion on inherent link between succession planning and speed to competency.
- WFAA Question: Does the group want to look at both short term and long term approaches to achieve this?
 - Group Discussion involving identifying obvious barriers to obtaining positions, shortages, and potential names of qualified individuals.
- Discussed the need to look at both what a team does and does not need to arrive with.
 - Important to note that the the ask of teams has increased historically. (Run the community stuff; strike team of WFDSS, etc.)
- **Tasking for the BOD - Critical needs assessments for each team; identify gaps; crosswalks, qualified individuals, and obvious barriers to obtaining qualifications.**
- Important to note: Eastern Area is no longer allowing participation on other teams without all their needs being met first.
 - This will impact our teams directly this year.
 - A couple of years ago there was an interest for cooperation from this region that was not embraced by our region.

Strategies for Increasing Team Support Including Process for Agency Administrator Involvement

- WFAAs – idea of long term modernization approach, inclusive of strategic thinking, will also need to be looked at; recognized that there is a need for ownership.
 - Group discussion on the following points:
 - FEMA is offering some assistance for next spring; would like to encourage interaction with the BOD.
 - Remote concept discussed – some of the positions and some of the units may not have to be on site with the teams. .
 - Some of those long term fixes will require top down direction.
 - BOD noted that in reference to modernization; have implemented some of this in the Northern Rockies. Change is difficult and there is resistance that is encountered. BOD is fairly progressive about change.
 - Basic model is not going to work moving into the future.
 - Basic framework that needs to be changed is outside the scope of influence. Is anyone talking about wholesale changes to the basic framework? These are all collateral duties that have historically worked; however, not functioning in today's workload.
 - Discussed positions dedicated to IMTs.
 - Noted that this is where NIMO origins began.

- Group discussion on higher level involvement needed for long term modernization fixes.
- Noted that this same topic came up in Great Basin.
 - Paid team positions were discussed and who would champion idea.
- Area Command is also looking at not being able to staff viable teams in the near future.
 - Flexibility will be the key to the future.
- Evolving incident management was discussed at CGAC and currently a committee has been established to explore.
 - Issue is being discussed at a national level. Including breaking down those barriers to recruitment.
- Concern expressed on continuing to treat each position on a team as highly specialized and requiring a tremendous amount of experience.
 - May need to reassess.
 - Speaks more to speed to competency.
- WFAA's Question: Are there any modernization ideas or techniques that the WFAAs could assist with here in the Northern Rockies?
 - Position Pool concept discussed – make a team when needed.
 - Discussed NWCG qualifications being a true bottleneck to increasing recruitment pools from non-traditional areas.
 - Needs to be addressed both ways – two pronged approach; from top up and BOD down.
 - **WFAAs – this is something that the WFAA group needs to add to their list of To Dos – modernization and strategy into the future.**
 - 310-1 and pathways to qualification.
- WFAA Question: On Speed to Competency Memo – is it worthwhile putting together an issue paper, framing the problem - so that it can be presented at higher level agency meetings? In order to facilitate the WFAA being effective at going up through the chain for direction?
 - Group discussion on the following points:
 - Running the system on a collateral duties model when we have gone from a fire season to a fire year, is not sustainable.
- **WFAA Question: Do we need an issue paper honestly addressing both pros and cons? (Example: Team cohesion as a tradeoff.)**
 - Group discussion – **Writing an issue paper is going to be a challenge; however, worthy of taking on.**
 - Could really help draw some more intentional work from some other entities that could be beneficial.
 - There is a need to come up with some ideas as to what a model looks like to put into this issue paper.
 - Needs to be Interagency.
 - Need to welcome all in who want to come in – collateral duty folks still have a purpose; however, also include designated IMT positions. Important that they are integrated.
 - Needs to continue on with the conversation for 310-1 alternate pathways to competency to recognize these non-traditional recruitment pools.
 - Need to clarify if talking about fire only or inclusive of all hazard.
 - Would like to see alternatives presented instead of designing the perfect system.
 - Discussed differences in what is desired by agency.
 - Discussed the need for stronger type 3 teams?
 - Group discussion on who is the right group to work on this issue that it is

agreed needs to move forward.

- What is the right level?
 - Issue is national; targeting it to the right area to land would be critical.
 - WFAA Question: Looking at Speed to Competency memo – would it be appropriate to put something like that together?
- BOD emphasis placed on not underestimating the power of a letter from the WFAA to the other entities. Strength in unified WFAA power to tip this discussion into action.
- Need exists to frame up the issue and provide awareness at higher levels.
- Need exists to flush out the issues; identify the facts.
- WFAAs - Expressing some ideas as to what a model might look like would have value; perhaps doable by January.
- BOD discussed value in sending representative to CGAC with this.
- Group discussion on the idea of contracting IMTs and other different ideas.
 - There would be pros and cons to each idea. (Example: Who would administer the contract?)
- WFAAs - propose essential components for what a solution could look like without definition of exact – define critical success factors.
 - Group discussion on the following points:
 - How do we keep people engaged and supporting them to continue with the teams.
 - How are the agencies taking care of the ADs? (One in five team members is an AD.)
 - WFAA Question on time frames:
 - Team Succession plan should include a three year outlook.
 - Accomplishment of long term should look more towards next fall.

Incident Commander and Team Selection Process Including IMT Operation Guide and NRCG BOD Liaison Role

- Reviewed of history behind this item and associated comments.
- Noted that this should only be utilized for the T1 and T2 ICs.
- Important to emphasize the need for each agency to enforce their own qualification process prior to application to the board.
- Ready to move forward with; only in need of final editing.
- Mike DeGrosky – like the approach. Three potential changes:
 1. Individual should have both line officer and supervisor endorsement.
 2. Having individuals outside the GACC re-apply annually is unnecessary; suggest striking that language.
 3. IC's, alternates and deputy's language should be added.
- Ken Schmid – only concern is how this may impact Speed to Competency.
 - Mike Granger – Provides for due diligence and gives the BOA and Agency Administrators ability to increase awareness and involvement.
 - Ralph Rau - Part was to develop a consistent and measurable recruitment strategy.

Speed to Competency Memo

- Acknowledged came out a bit late; would like to have prior to the team meeting.
- Group discussed systemic problem – individuals hesitant to sign people off with fewer assignments.
 - Even with each element completed.
- Memo was well written; need to continue to encourage message.
- BOD would like to see the memo reissued each spring.
- Group acknowledged that there are valid incidents where individuals may have everything signed; however, have not gone outside the local area.
- Group discussion emphasized importance on meeting the criteria.
- WFAAs discussed the new section that was included on this subject in the Leader's Intent letter.
- WFAAs – acknowledged that leaders in the room need to actively work towards this goal.
- Group discussion on Red Card Committees challenges:
 - Incomplete documentation.
 - System as designed is not working very well because people do not know how to use it.
 - Discussion on loss of a performance based system.
 - Needs to be addressed at IMT Meeting.
- Group discussion on whether or not agencies were following up on their own internal processes.
 - Interagency Line officers were to be included in getting a copy of this letter.
 - Each agency has its own process. Letter advises of the expectations.
- Concern expressed over experience with individual not being certified due to mentor being from another agency.
 - Happened twice this last year.
- Noted that one piece could use help from the line with is when individuals have signed on for one position; however, would not be able to perform at a higher qualification.
 - Part of respect is being truthful; evaluators need to be honest and somebody needs to have that conversation.
- Group discussion on if a GACC effort is needed to re-tread individuals on how the Position Task Book system works.
 - More appropriate for a presentation at the IMT meeting.

Follow Up on Orientation Framework for Incident Commanders Outside the Geographic Area

Team Expectation Letter

- Are there other issues or key points that need to be captured or identified from the 2018 season?
 - Group Discussion – no other items need to be identified.

Leader's Intent for Incident Management Teams

- Added some new sections and language.
- Presentation at IMT meeting went and was well received.
- Want to have a letter that is pertinent to the times – for tomorrow, may look at:
 - Positive workplace inclusion
 - Risk assessment inclusion

Bin Items

Facilitating the IMT Meeting

- Recommendation that BOD will take a more hands on approach to IMT Meeting Facilitation this next year.
- Recommendation for BOD to take a steering committee approach.

Tuesday, October 30 – Executive Session

Bin Items Review

- WFAAs – Issue / Concept paper from yesterday
 - Paul Santavy and Jon Raby volunteered to write a draft.
 - Goal is to have it completed and ready to go by January.
 - First draft will be completed and to Diane Mann-Klager by the end of November.
- Tasking Assignments Memo – Incoming ICs from outside the Geographic Area
 - This already exists and is updated annually.

MAC activation and NR Strategic Intent for Allocation of Resources

- Strategic Intent went out on August 16th this year.
 - Is there anything that should be included for next year?
- DNRC was very satisfied with both the level and timing of engagement with the WFAA group. Overall timeline from this season went smoothly.
- BLM – took the lessons learned from 2017 and applied them in 2018 with overall good success.
- Noted that the BOD believe it to be critical that the WFAAs communicate down the chain when the MAC is activated.
- BOD Question: Were the WFAA satisfied with the process?
 - WFAA consensus – yes; also began weekly conference calls that were helpful with good participation from the Agency Administrators.
- USFS – believe all did a really good, intentional job of standing up the MAC. Also, believe communications overall went well. Appreciated the engagement of both the WFAA and the BOD overall.
- WFAA USFS – believe it made a difference with our agency; did have a lot of good lessons from 2017.
 - Challenge is to keep the good practices going. Important to keep in mind as moving forward; especially if increased activity becomes more routine.
- BOD noted that diligence in MAC Plan revisions have led to improved practices.
 - Plan will be updated annually.
- Thank you to the BOD and WFAA for all their efforts and initiative.

Communications Coverage for the Wildfire Season in the Northern Rockies

- At least two news releases were issued during the season.
- WFAA expressed desire that this topic be included in all of our discussions consistently.
- BOD noted that improvements have been made; however, still a work in progress.
 - Continues to be a struggle to maintain adequate coverage.
- WFAAs noted that when we write news releases, there is a need to keep in mind entirety of area that the Northern Rockies covers; including all states involved and not just the area experiencing incidents at that time.
- WFAA Question: Where exactly are the struggles?
 - Discussed timing of PIO function activation and questions of who the PIO works for between NRCG or NRCC.
 - BOD needs to discuss specifics of each of these further.
 - There is a need to work on execution.
 - WFAAs would like support from the BOD that the PIO is a function of the NRCG, instead of the NRCC or the MAC.
 - Need exists to increase the resource pool; too few people currently.
 - Discussed what is appropriate to go through a PIO and what can be handled by individuals that are not a fully qualified PIO.
 - Key is to establish what is appropriate to go through a fully qualified PIO and what can be handled in another way.
 - Discussed rotation - works well; would like to see it continue with a larger resource pool.
 - Communication plan is approximately 90% complete.
 - Discussed critical not miss the opportunity to communicate with the public; important to function as a team in public perception.
 - Group discussed attempting to have some regular messages drafted in advance and ready to pull out of a tool box.
 - This, combined with less agency specific editing, would increase timeliness of messaging.
 - Action Item for the BOD - regular messages drafted in advance and ready to pull out of a tool box
 - Action Item for BOD – clarification of who the PIO is working for – NRCG, NRCC, MAC
 - Craig Goodell supervising this function is a possibility
 - Rotation by Agency may be an idea to explore.
 - Discussion around if an agency is simply thin on that resource? NPS is currently in this situation.
 - USFS BOD – endorse the idea; however, have also struggled to find this resource as well.
 - A set coverage schedule for the rotation would assist with this. Can work remote for the majority of the time.
 - Group discussed how this could be a deliberate, target involvement where the WFAA could engage to provide this support.
 - BOD noted that it is important that individuals tapped have knowledge of fire policy.
 - Discussion on how this speaks back to what is appropriate for the PIO to answer and what regular items can be answered by the staff.
 - Action Item BOD – Request Letter of Support from IDL regarding PIO Assistance
- WFAA Question: Is there any additional messaging for the WFAA that should be included on the

regular messages that would be drafted in advance?

- Discussion on Interagency messaging and how it all works with resource allocation and smoke.
- Discussed need to ensure not duplicating public messaging of teams and forest.
 - Need to emphasize what the NRCG and MAC are doing and what is going on in the Northern Rockies.
 - Should be focused on resource allocation and multiagency coordination functions.
 - Messaging should come out of what truly are the roles of the board.

BIA/Tribal Resources Office of Workers Compensation program and Indian Health Services

- Briefing Paper discussed.
- Memo came about due to BIA/Tribal resources that were on a fire and there were questions on where they should be treated for care.
- Sensitivity issue
 - Not all individuals are covered under IHS.
 - Some individuals do have their own care as well; in addition, individuals can also forgo certain types of care – their choice.
- Action Item BOD - Good Topic for the Team Meeting; will be put on agenda for team meeting.
 - Medical and Finance emphasis will be placed at team meeting.

Northern Rockies Wildfire Agency Administrators Charter and Chair Rotation Schedule

- Added some language regarding specifics of chair rotation.
- Group discussion on question that remains on membership regarding Montana Association of Counties as a member.
 - Concerns were expressed that, if invited, a valued, local jurisdiction partners like this would that open the door to elected officials as well.
 - Historically, this has been a function of the line officers to maintain these daily relationships.
 - BOD clarification of proposal that MTCO serve in a line officer capacity for the three already represented on the BOD.
 - Suggestion was made to have them serve in an ex-officio (line officer) role; would increase successfulness of initiatives that are put forth.
 - WFAA Question: Would like to address if this should only be Montana or include Idaho counterpart as well?
 - Group discussion center around idea of a separate issue.
 - This one speaks to the current make up of NRCG.
 - The other speaks to the need to address future make up of NRCG.
 - USFS BOD – have had conversations with partners and cooperators and concerns from non-federal agencies have been expressed about a perceived Montana centric focus and having a say in decision making.
 - There needs to be some thoughtful work put in on how can strike a better balance.
 - Important for our partner relationships; speaks to cohesive strategy.

- Montana Sheriffs and Peace Officers Association BOD – as the representative, it is a responsibility to bring this information to all those asking questions.
 - Would encourage those inquiring to call and increase communication with the existing liaison.
- WFAAs noted that there is no tribal representation as well.
- Group discussion over concern that with being all inclusive; more that add to the group, the more it increases the workload of the collateral duties.
- Services are being provided to all; want any future discussion on group membership inclusion to be deliberate and ensure that it would be value added.
- WFAA USFS – important to recognize that these are two separate issues.
 - With the charter, one of the purposes is to provide some administrate structure as to how group functions.
 - Need exists to take a step back and take a look at what the group is all about in order to make these decisions.
 - Reviewed the language in the draft, as it is written now - need representation from each of the member states and land management agencies.
 - Recognize that this leaves out tribes and others.
 - Is there some benefit to have the discussion of if we were starting from scratch, is that how the group membership makeup should be? This answer would then lead to the question of if a change is needed.
- BOD emphasized that NRCG membership alterations should be done in a collaborative environment and conducted with an outside facilitation.
- WFAA USFS – perhaps should take some time to review and assess the language in the charter for a later decision.
- Montana State Fire Chiefs' Association BOD – need exists to ensure conduit back to the ground. MTCO inclusion in a line officer, ex-officio role would provide for this conduit.
- WFAA DNRC – Motion to adopt this WFAA charter as it is with the current state agency language; with the intent to review further inclusion at a later time.
- Montana County Fire Wardens Association BOD – would like to emphasize that DNRC does not have exclusive fire jurisdiction in Montana; it is concurrent.
- Draft issues identified and discussed:
 - Line officer responsibilities language not consistent with those named in draft.
 - Draft starts off identifying jurisdictions and then switches to State Agency terminology.
 - First sentence under purpose – suggestion to change “regional” to “Geographical” and change for NPS language to reflect “Intermountain”.
 - WFAA – amendment suggestion:
 - Have a formal designated deputy or alternate chair.
 - Suggestion to add language as a line item in section five, first sentence; add a “C” sub-section to explain the vice-chair.
- WFAA DNRC – Motion to adopt this WFAA charter as it is with the current state agency language and including the suggested amendment regarding the vice-chair language; with the intent to review further membership inclusion at a later time.
 - Motion carried and approved. Charter will be updated and distributed for signature.

WFLC Leader's Intent on a Positive Workplace Environment Letter

- May be an area of emphasis for next year's Leader's Intent Letter.
- WFAA Question: Is there any specific intent that Northern Rockies WFAA would want to take with this?
 - Action Item BOD- ensure compatibility and crosswalk with what has already been addressed in other documents.
 - WFAA USFS – some strengthening, alignment and reinforcement would be helpful.
 - IDL counterpart letter had a line reference “expected professionalism” that was worded well.
 - One of the elements that is new to the forest service is Bystander Training. Will be willing to share; if interested, please let Jane Darnell know.

Medical Units Discussion

- Topic results from what was seen on the line in 2018.
- Requests for additional medical support on the incidents have been increasing drastically.
- Group discussion that this is another issue that needs to be addressed on multiple levels - agency, incident and IMT. Would like to see Anna Stall address the IMTs at the Team Meeting.
 - Action Item BOD – Discussion Item for Team Meetings.
- Discussion around over emphasis on level of care provided to the fireline; may not be needed as can be provided by local cooperators.
- Group discussion on appropriate level of care that is needed; relates to multiple issues including expenditures.
- WFAAs can support by emphasizing this is an appropriate care issue, not a cost driven issue.
 - (Example: Rapid Extraction Module utilization by out of area teams.)
- Discussion also on this being an insufficient resources issue.
 - Need to discuss expectation of WFAAs on level of care for individuals; resources such as paramedics, are limited.
 - Desire to avoid getting into a resource care prioritization position between incidents.
- WFAA consensus that expectations are to get back to a “what is available on the ground” already approach.
- Group additionally discussed some larger issues going on with the medical unit, including current inability to give out OTC medication.
- Utilization of local resources occurs; however, then have those locals performing in an unusual capacity from their daily responsibilities.
- Trend towards contracting of these resources is a contributing factor in use.
- WFAA USFS - need exists to engage and focus thinking around this issue.
 - WFAAs might also benefit from a similar input from the field discussion, similar to the action item above.
 - Need exists to wisely utilize local resources.
- WFAA and BOD consensus – desire is to get those who need medical attention off the line quickly and safely.
- Discussed items point to desired principles.
- Group discussion centered around decisions to place crews in areas based on the fact that there are paramedics on scene.
- Group discussed second conversation is - what is that adequate level of staffing?
 - Subjectiveness of this leads to variations based on individual perspective.
- WFAA consensus that the seriousness of this issue deserves some engagement from the WFAAs.

- WFAA discussion around having crossed into the two aspects:
 - Risk management and mitigation
 - Agency specific direction per incident.
 - More discussion is needed, in addition to presentation mentioned above. Need presentation from the risk management side.
- Group identified the need to involve the states; as they dictate a lot of what can and cannot be done in relation to medical.
- Group discussed this issue as two separate needs; current and future.
- Acknowledged that this issue is not unique to the Northern Rockies. Is being faced by multiple Geographical Areas.
- WFAAs identified targets to aim for:
 - Identify interagency values that the WFAAs could agree on for Leader's Intent letter
 - Communicate agreed upon principles clearly
- BOD expressed desire to come together as a joint group WFAA/NRCG BOD to flesh out before go to the Team Meetings with a product.
 - Group Discussion and consensus to meet the last week of February in Missoula, MT.
- USFS is undergoing a national medical direction; no timeline as of yet. Has potential to change how USFS is supporting within the GACC.
 - A lot is yet to be seen and much to stay on top of with this transition.
- BOD encouraged all to stay principal and philosophy based.
- BOD expressed need to utilize caution; as acceptance by the field may be challenging.
 - Need exists to ensure an informed decision.
- BOD identified the need to address where this action is stemming from; where is the pressure to order coming from?
 - Action Item BOD - Possible tasking to the IC Committee – Identify where the pressure is coming from and what are your ideas for the BOD to remedy these pressures? What are thoughts from ICs as to what expectations are to take care of the firefighters? What does "right" looks like?
- Unrealistic expectation perception discussed that incidents will never have an injury or fatality.
 - Unrealistic, national topic that continues to be pushed.
- Mike Granger – Anna will prepare materials and plans to attend the February meeting.

NRCG Chair Rotation

- Reviewed past and current chair rotation.
- JT Wensman will attend CGAC for Mike DeGrosky second week of January.

NRCG – RMCG IMT Proposal

- Rocky Mountain Coordinating Group is also facing similar challenges with multiple team rolls; far more than in the past.
- Inquiry has been made to know if NRCG would consider putting Northern Rockies teams into a joint rotation – including both Type 1 and Type 2 teams.
- This would not include combining the Coordination Groups; for the IMTs only.
- USFS BOD – Question: Just went through this with the northeast area and experienced pushback.
 - What makes it different this time?
 - Would like to see this thoroughly thought through. Experienced some relationship degradation from the previous experience.

- Clarified that inquiry was to maintain separate teams.
- WFAA Question: Has anyone looked at the stats as to what that would do to the number of average rolls? Has the net effect been looked at?
 - No. Idea has not been floated with the ICs either.
- Group discussion on worthiness of looking at every alternative.
- USFS BOD Question: Would this be a mutual rotation?
 - Yes; a single rotation.
- Single rotation may prevent re-occurrence of past events.
- BLM BOD – have been in communication with one IC; expressed a desire to know what advantage it is to the Northern Rockies Geographic Area.
- Discussed possibility of considering a joint rotation based on a PL level.
- Re-iterated that this was a simple inquiry to determine interest level; have not begun to look at specifics as of yet.
- WFAA DNRC – good to consider all options; however, noted need to explore thoroughly.
- Group discussed past experience receiving push back from Agency Administrators that specific teams were desired at certain times and desire not to wait for mobilization. Some agencies/units desired the familiarity of certain teams.
 - WFAA would need to be willing to commit.
- Discussed concern over workload increase.
 - Eastern Area had known fewer assignments.
 - Would increase the pull on Northern Rockies resources.
- Succession planning concern expressed.
- Group discussion around being supportive of continuing the conversation.
- Group discussion around the advantage:
 - Stretching the same amount of teams and the same amount of activity over one large area versus two smaller areas.
- Group reviewed the history of last season team usage and declining IMT resource pool nationally.
- Group discussion on if the RMCC Agency Administrators are supportive of this as well.
- WFAAs – Desire to look at IMT usage data from both GACCs and that the Agency Administrators from both sides have this understanding of no specific team selection; ensure that is understood all the way down.
- Mike Granger – will continue correspondence with RMCC counterpart and will communicate back to the incoming WFAA chair.
- WFAA consensus - When get to data gathering step, would like to include season of use and timing.
- Group discussion on Line Officer support; all team members are collateral duties and also have duties at their regular jobs that they are responsible to perform.
- Reviewed one of the advantages with the Eastern Area was that there were shared team members.
 - Desire to not limit the region and to put those types of items on the table as well.
- WFAAs - would like analysis to include extended rolls.
- Group discussion on continue this conversation with RMCC; potential to end up with a suite of options instead of one single solution.

Resource Impacts on Private Land during Suppression Operations

- Seeing an increasing trend of suppression actions being taken on private land for fires coming off public land.
- Growing sense of frustration – viewpoint of these individuals differs from viewpoint of agency needed suppression actions.
 - Discussed how Right flank of Gold Hill went around Stempson Private Forest – presents a good example of how can minimize impact to private land when it is practical.
- Early engagement critical element.
- Issue needs to be discussed as an interagency community.
- Desire expressed to see issue discussed at the team meeting.
 - Action Item – Facilitate a discussion at the IMT Team Meeting and thought process that goes into that; considering alternatives etc.
 - If can't keep it off the private property, what can be done to minimize?
 - Discussion on how to engage with the landowners.
 - Would be good to have some of the ICs talk about success and failures.
- WFAAs expressed desire to keep to the overall larger picture without getting too much into the tactical.
- Need also exists to ensure line officers understand this piece.
- DNRC BOD – really looking for some awareness building. Raise awareness so that when you can achieve the same suppression outcomes with differing alternatives – that all alternatives are considered and all concerns are considered.
- WFAA DNRC – discussed experience with Montana Forest Owners Association; came to DNRC with an overwhelming concern of not having had a positive experience with the engagement of IMTs.
 - Initial inquiry requested protocols for dealing with landowners.
 - DNRC is attempting to care for this relationship and be proactive with preseason conversations.
- IDL BOD – similar situation occurred since 2015. Weekly calls have assisted in keeping all parties engaged.
 - Provides national and regional informational awareness without getting into resource allotment.
 - Seems to have helped the situation. Some is also perception. (Example: Unstaffed fire near industrial landowner's land.)
 - Benefit of increased communication has had a positive impact. Provides the why without getting tactical.
- WFAAs expressed desire to ensure that teams are truly tuned in to all values at risk and all concerns.
 - In addition to the WFAA being tuned in to these as well; being able to help highlight these values at risk.
- WFAA Question: Impact mitigation – are issues being observed with individuals going in and not doing appropriate mitigation?
 - Mostly hearing from the timber industry.
 - Action Item – Break Out discussion for ICs at the Team Meeting.
 - Potential lead – Allen Christman
- BLM BOD – some is appropriate to be spelled out in delegations of authorities.
- WFAA Question: Should leader's intent letter include "regardless of landownership" language?
 - To ensure looking at values at risk for all; not only for the agency that order the team.

Formalize Expectations – BOD to Zones

- Desire for the BOD to formalize the times of year that their meetings occur.
- Request also to send out to the committees' expectation that committees will meet prior to the board and come to the NRCG meetings prepared to report out, discuss taskings and current project status.
 - BOD Question on formalizing these meeting times:
 - Group discussion and consensus on time frames:
 - Fall Meeting
 - Group Discussion and consensus to establish fall meeting first full week of November.
 - Spring Meeting
 - Last Week of February – Tues – Thurs;
 - WFAA – commitment to meet face to face has always been with the Spring NRCG Meeting and at the IMT Team Meetings
 - Mike Granger will send out a letter from the board to the committees with the meeting dates and expectations.

2018 Fire Season Recognition

- Group discussion regarding individuals or groups for recognition:
 - Judy Heintz – long time help and support; retiring soon. Worthy of a plaque.
 - Thank you for Neal Beetch for helping when MAC activated.
 - Bruce Suenram is retiring.
 - Doug Williams – Letter.
 - Paul Fieldhouse – also announced he is retiring at the end of the year.
 - Steve Heppner – letter.
 - Will also inquire with the ICs.

Findings from the Risk Assessment Effort (Dave Williams)

- Draft paper was distributed, included the original proposal.
- Review of the assessment history – going from the incident level and taking discussion to the strategic level; engaging Agency Administrators.
- Looking for best practices and things that can be shared.
- Interagency approach taken with team members representing various agencies.
- Intent was to start the discussion and engage at this level; challenging to avoid preconceived perceptions. Sensitivity and complexity of reviewed incident were both taken into account.
- Intent was to learn and share methods for communicating risk and intent.
- Multiple questions were asked regarding various aspects.
- A lot of discussion with the team occurred.
- Was good to have an outside perspective included in the group, in addition to an IC.
- Visited Howe Ridge Incident and spoke with many associated management levels.
- Value in the learning that can be done from sharing interagency perspectives.
- Level of expertise is completely necessary for the make-up of the team.
 - Learned for the future - finding Agency Administrators to participate is a critical element.
- Majority of the best practices were developed by the team.
 - BOD Question: Who do you envision this document being distributed to and what are your expectation for the information?
 - Would like to see distributed to the Agency Administrators. Each may find

different aspects of the document specifically valuable.

- BOD Question: Would assume it would go out with some kind of cover letter telling them how to use and what the perceived value would be.
- Group discussed the fact that the team was acting for the MAC; letter would either come out from MAC or NRCG.
- WFAA USFS – other work going on in the USFS that is well aligned with this interagency effort; emphasis on Agency Administrators and level of risk education and engagement.
 - This assists in building that interagency bridge to help make a connection to the agency as wildland fire is interagency work.
- Reviewed specific findings in the document.
- Overall, keeping it short, brief and avoiding a controversial perspective had good value.
- Desire is to improve how we navigate these challenges at this strategic level.
- BOD Question: Is there a better time to do this to increase participant willingness?
- WFAA Question: Is there value to inform and educate agency administrators that can come out of this for the ongoing incident?
 - Specifically, some kind of on-site incident support?
 - Speaks to the effort of developing agency administrator core competencies.
- Group discussed the fact that by currently discussing this issue now; by default – have chosen a lessons learned approach.
- Need exists to identify if trying to do both - to provide real time support or a lessons learned intent?
 - Both have various aspects associated with each approach. (Example: Hesitation for transparency from interviewed individuals during ongoing incident due to intent perceptions.)
- Group discussion on how to create an environment in an ongoing incident where individuals are comfortable to speak freely.
- Emphasis placed on the importance of knowing why the team is there so that it can be communicated clearly, and in writing, to those participants.
- Historically, FAST teams have gone out with a letter.
- WFAA USFS – parallels with what is done with RMAT.
 - Delegation of authority is issued and established credibility.
- WFAA FWS – discussed experience as part of a large fire review.
 - Similar experience with make-up of panel and experience levels.
 - Perhaps the delegators would be the WFAA.
- Group discussion on this team in the future being tasked by the WFAA.
- Need expressed to give some thought to what is the intention and how to get to that piece.
- WFAAs – One of the responsibilities of the Agencies Administrators is to “Lead the Learning”. This provides a unique opportunity.
 - Speaks to developing core agency administrator competencies.
- Discussed if a Northern Rockies Line Officer course training, in addition to the agency specific requirements, may not be beneficial?
 - Could discuss many of the topics that have been addressed at this meeting.
- Briefing on best practices from this report may also be of value.
- Group discussion on relevance to 581 course.
- Group supportive of the idea of doing 581 or mini-581 on a zone basis.
- WFAAs discussed role associated with this topic.
 - How to close off this team’s work (which in the future should be WFAA chartered work).
 - There is a lot of interest amongst the WFAAs on having a conversation on how can we

invest in this and what would the WFAA role be in going forward; whether it is live incident or local training centric.

- WFAAs discussed concern on how the rest of the agencies are lined out in contrast to the USFS.
- Group consensus that the Geographic Area level is a great start to address those realities and differences.
- Dave Williams – recommend there is value in addressing in a real time centric approach to this learning opportunity; question would revolve around the “how”.
- Group discussed value of going smaller and going more often; in addition to going early as well.
 - Assists with building the trust.
 - Could utilize with other models as well – Type 3 fires.
- Discussion on a small team with practical experience. May wish to consider hybrid – go primary intending to conduct lessons learned but when you leave – might do a close out with the Agency Administrator with “here are some things you may want to consider right now”.
- IDL BOD – in order for it to be effective, needs to be real time driven.
 - Clear cut vision of what it is initially; to the degree of over communicating.
 - This assists with overcoming perceptions.
 - Reminder from Agency Administrators through a phone call prior to the teams arrival.
- Group acknowledged that different things are learned “in the moment” and “after the fact”.
- BLM BOD – something similar with sage grouse habitat large fires; becomes the normal and not perceived as a threat.
- Discussed suggestion to come up with something individuals could utilize.
 - (Example: Crisis response card.)
 - Could help foster along this risk assessment and provide a tool that could be utilized.
- Discussion on keys to success – short, pointed and simple to understand.
- Action item for the WFAA – would recommend that Dave Williams come up with a draft charter for the WFAA and a cover letter for the document distribution.
- Discussed importance of recognizing that this does not replacing FAST teams.
 - Also, important that Dave design this so that it can be handed off to someone else; only part of a shared position.
 - Perhaps value in floating the structure at the IMT Team Meetings. Also, value in the idea of having some joint line officer meetings between the agencies.

Wednesday, October 31 – General Session

Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed all and expressed appreciation for everyone's attendance and dedication.

NMAC Update (Aitor Bidaburu)

NWCG and FMB updates:

- Season interactions went well; strategy discussion and back and forth worked well
- Upcoming – NMAC is planning for annual NMAC / GMAC meeting Jan 14th. Encourage agenda topic submission.
- Lots going on with NWCG training – PNU is working on a number of things that fundamentally change how training in the future may be delivered. Bringing in technology and reducing redundancy. Going through a modernization effort.

- FMB – Fire Management Board – Chartering the Predictive Services Oversight Group; intent to form a longer standing oversight group. FMB funds the program and has all the FTEs for it. Will be a more detailed report out on this at the NMAC/GMAC meeting.
- Questions?
 - Mike DeGrosky – Can you please provide an overview of appropriate content for agenda items?
 - Covers a broad range of topics both national and geographic in scope. Military Mobilization is on the agenda already. (Examples: AARs from Fire Seasons, Team Rotation Issues, National Mob Guide language, Coordination between the GACCs.)
 - Mike Granger – Discussed HEQB feedback from earlier in the year; was advised it was a 310-1 issue. Will be discussing at CGAC. Was also discussed during WFAA meeting reference speed to competency. Will be bringing forward to discuss non-traditional ways of recognizing qualifications through the system.

Northern Rockies End of Year Report (Kathy Pipkin)

- NRCC Cost Share Document reviewed. (See Handout)
- In GACC did over 10,000 resource orders.
- Felt it was an average year for number of resource orders; although statistics are slightly higher. This may be due to our season beginning late.
- Helped Missoula Dispatch out with dispatching the tankers and fixed wing.
 - To do this, had to bring in a detailer.
 - This increased aviation work load a great deal.
 - Will be working on a long term plan for the future.
- In the future, would like to work on county reporting for North Dakota to be accurately reflected in the SIT report.
 - Mike Odell – Would not have those numbers until much later after reporting times.
 - Kathy Pipkin – once the numbers are obtained, reflecting in the year to date would be beneficial.
 - Mike Odell – agreed that can be done.

Norther Rockies Operational Update (Craig Goodell)

- Team Utilization – had between two to four assignments.
- On the CGAC call last Friday – discussion on other GACCs teams having higher utilization last season. Concerns about work/rest. Discussion on adjusting availability in the future. This would affect us in the bigger picture. Suggest talking about at higher levels – how we can get additional agencies that work in resource management signed up in agreements, so that we may utilize their individuals and increase resource pool.
- ICAP will be open 11/26-1/18; Connell's Team re-applying this year.
- Jordan McKnight – USFS Operations Position will begin mid-November. Some supervision re-alignment will occur at the AFD.
- Attended IC meeting yesterday. Discussed IC call; generally participants liked timing and format. It was suggested that when go to PL 4 and have MAC active – to move the zone report out to the afternoon MAC call.
- Implemented the Northern Rockies Critical Mission Request last season. Will be continuing with this for next season.
 - Mike Granger – Concern expressed on impact of limited pool of resource during season

- already and impact of this on how resources are allotted and timeframes associated.
- Mike DeGrosky – Would argue that is all the more reason to utilize.
- Ken Schmid – need exists to shift our plans due to resources being spread so thin.
- Craig Goodell – that was the main driver of this program.
- Mike DeGrosky – like that the language was changed from “surge” to this more accurate description.
 - Do not wish to get in the habit of holding resources in anticipation of a request.
- Craig Goodell – that is not the intent; incorporated in a more pro-active approach with resource that are known to be coming available.
- Mike Granger – may be good to see this addressed in the Leader’s Intent Letter.
- Ken Schmid – How did the IC call timing work for NRCC?
 - Kathy Pipkin – it was a crunch; with the needed preparation. However, adjusted to the new schedule.
 - Craig Goodell – some of the information was utilized on multiple calls throughout the morning.
- Mike DeGrosky – Was the workload change worth it?
 - Kathy Pipkin – for NRCC it was the same.
 - Craig Goodell – perspective was that timing worked well for information flow.
- Mike Granger – Craig will follow up on suggestion to move the zone report outs to the MAC Calls.
 - Action Item – Decision to be made on suggestion to move the zone report out to the afternoon MAC calls by the February Meeting.

Northern Rockies Contracting Update (Tim Murphy)

- (See PowerPoint)
- Most agencies are on a three year rotation schedule.
- New solicitations – this year was the first time for medical solicitation in Idaho; fairly good turnout. Were available for southern Idaho also. Fair amount of use, especially by southern portion of Idaho. Montana – second year and a fair amount of use.
 - Action Item – NRCG Board needs to approve 2019 Northern Rockies Solicitation Plan – be prepared to discuss and make a decision on December Call.
- Another new solicitation was the chippers – some use in GACC.
- New solicitation – mulchers and masticators – did use masticators.
- Constant pinch point – engines. Numbers compared over the last three years. Number is only representative of contract resources.
- Received a letter from an attorney in Missoula regarding local government competing with contractors for business.
 - Have prepared a response to letter from attorney – currently it is with OGC.
- Discussed perceived issue of contract resources being held during periods of high fire activity outside the GACC.
 - Resources were not “locked down” during the season.
 - Often, NRCC receives resource orders with unrealistic date and time needed – those orders are turned back.
 - Once during this last season; MAC did decided to put contractors on a preposition order. This was not a “lock down”.
 - Need exists to continue to communicate this to all entities.
 - Another pinch point – water tenders. Numbers and use discussed.
- There was a lot of use of the Heavy Equipment Task Forces.

- Options this year allowed the teams to add an additional piece of equipment.
 - Important to note that solicitation is for the Northern Rockies only.
- Fair amount of use of Heavy Equipment in general.
- Mike DeGrosky – excellent analysis; is it possible to do an average over a period of time for the same kind of statistics, including costs over time? Believe this information may be needed for the legislature.
 - Yes; with Barb Whiteman's assistance.
- Of note - first time for response of private contract equipment in Glacier National Park.
- Video – Montana Loggers Association - expect draft by the end of November; final by the end of the year.

Northern Rockies Safety Report (Dave Williams)

- Slow year and thankful for it; no significant safety issues or trends.
- Daily safety call was implemented.
- Several injuries and close calls; however, no FLAs.
- Only a couple of Safenets in the region that were address with the home units.
- Things to keep an eye on:
 - Were some significant complications with medical direction with the USFS that affected the teams. (Example: OTC Medication)
 - Changes in USFS direction are occurring and coming.
 - Safety positions – lots of things are changing in risk management. Many of the long standing ADs are not educated on the latest information.
 - Need to understand how this is communicated and differences between incidents.
 - Change may be coming to move more risk management into the safety positions role.
 - Feedback on any of these topics is encouraged and will be fed back up the chain.
- Questions?
 - Diane Mann-Klager – If there are number of different risk management styles/techniques – maybe that speaks to the need for the charter/tasking for the assessments so that more of those lessons learned are obtained to help analyze which tools are working in which situations.
 - Dave Williams – This one focuses in more on the strategic level versus addressing the local unit level.
 - Maintaining this separation assists with navigating the changing environment at this time.
 - Mike DeGrosky – discussion on behind the scenes bureaucracy on Safenets. Have we had any in our GACC that you felt the information needed to get out but was capped?
 - Upon receiving a “heads up” on a Safenet submission - typically ask questions right away upon notification and assess on a case by case basis.
 - Ken Schmid – Any thoughts on how to get the most current information to the ADs?
 - Discussed fact that this issue is not just focused on safety; affects every position and is complex . Have spoken to national training individual about this issue.
 - Mike DeGrosky – do you think it would be worthwhile to set up an NRCG Risk Management Committee?
 - Would be tricky given the agency specific changing environment at this time.

Northern Rockies Cache Report (Anthony Krause)

- Reviewed 2018 Issue Totals. (See Handout)
- No injuries and 97% fill rate.
- Did provide a fair amount of cache support to other regions.
- Noticing an increase in amount of water handling. Actively working to increase by about 20% in the next two years.
- Bringing in older equipment due to usage reports.
- Took the lead and spurred change in the medical person – replacing 500 person kit with beefed up 100 person kit.
 - Transporting oxygen in kits was an issue.
- Changing our business model this year.
- Updating pump kits to the new national standard; including new fittings.
- Road signs kits – starting to build 30 of those each year.
- Overhaul and modernization of cache vans occurred.
- Have doubled and tripled batteries use with digital radios.
 - Implemented a battery recycle system.
- Working with the teams to update preorders.
- Upgraded to a semi at zero costs.
- Tied in with two job corps to run the hose camp with great success.
- Questions?
 - Mike DeGrosky – Are you planning to talk about preorders at the Team Meeting?
 - Yes; in addition to addressing multiple break out groups and other topics.
 - Kathy Pipkin – suggest that it come in a letter from the top down from NRCG to ICs
 - Action Item – assign to the working group planning the team meetings and tasking to IC committee
 - Craig Goodell – IC Committee has produced a product in relation to this – a preorder they would like to see for the initial mobilization.
 - Mike DeGrosky – would like Anthony included in that group.
 - Kathy – would like Dispatch Steering Committee involved as well.

Northern Rockies Team IT Update (Patrick Murphy)

- Identified some lower cost and stable wireless options this year. This was the only new significant equipment added this year.
- Trends:
 - Industry is moving away from satellites and towards long distance wireless communication and data transmission. (Mountain top to mountain top.) When available as a contracted option; will be moving that way as well.
 - Paying a daily rate – but less than a satellite vendor. Don't get charged per unit of data; get significantly better speeds as well. Valuable for mobile data connections. At this point, no point in buying this equipment at this time.
 - Can be strung from point to point to point.
 - May in the long term allow us to be able to place camps closer to the incident and have better connectivity at spike camps.
 - Less expensive option with better service.
 - JT Wensman – experience with one of these this summer was positive.
 - USDA has issued guidance that all mobile devices now have to have Mobile Iron. Comes

with security issues that are difficult for field use.

- Additional purchases of iPads and mobile tables will not be prudent at this time.
 - Mike Granger – FWS (perhaps DOI) does have the stipulation that if specific types of technology are utilized for Law Enforcement and Fire – then that type of security is not required, if not connected. May need to explore through DOI in the future, if need arrives.
- Plotters – in previous years have had old, but robust models.
 - No longer a viable option.
 - Newer models have their own issues and tend to be more fragile.
 - Transportation to camps has been an issue. Need to have options in place to supplement those machines in camp.
 - Explored renting options with little success.
 - Recommend looking at national coping services that are contracted as an option to meet this need. Significant expense; however, discussion with the business committee could be had to explore contracting options.
 - Mike DeGrosky – another option would be remote printing.
 - Patrick Murphy – another option would be utilization of private vendors in the local area.
 - Mike Granger – another option would be explore “copy trailer” option in the Northern Rockies. ICs have had positive experiences with these; however, cost is significant.
 - **Group discussion and consensus for Patrick Murphy to go to the business committee with this issue.**
- Briefed group on status of One USDA initiative with 2210's in USFS being assimilated into the CIO. Will provide further information once it is known.

Recognition of Outgoing Member Ken Schmid

- Group Thanks given for service.

NRTC Update / Priority Trainee (Melissa Wegner)

- GATR Meeting next week in Georgia.
- Changes coming in future training.
- Reviewed 2017-2108 Training Session Completions. (See Handout)
- Total number of nominations includes all received.
- Front office position will be filled this year.
- Futuring out – next month have a Remote Education (RED) Workshop.
 - Distributed last week; can take more nominations.
 - As of last week had 50 nominations.
- From the field – paying attention to interests that were expressed.
 - Have been working with CISM and suicide awareness.
 - Has affected many of our first line supervisors; organic conversations have occurred last season.
 - Will continue to work on this topic.
 - Bear Awareness – will work with Alaska on how to implement in the Northern Rockies for entire field, not just fire.
 - Satellite Delivery Kits – built several last year; includes a variety of equipment.
 - NTDP – Chartered with taking the lead in delivery; virtual reality training.

- Idea is experience without exposure.
- Priority Trainee Program
 - Last year had 118 confirmed mobilization of our priority trainees.
 - Suggestion from two committees that for the google form, addition of supervisory approval notification email.
 - Will have it open for three months again this year.
 - Welcome suggestions and will be putting explanation of the process on the web site by February of this year.
 - Mike DeGrosky – Had discussion last two days on critical shortage positions; if could get some information out on where we need to find people to fill those gaps.
 - **Melissa** – can work with Judy to identify that data.

IMT Evaluations, Composition and Recruitment (Judy Heintz)

- Thumb drive for each BOD member that contains all received IMT Evaluations.
 - Exception of the NIMO Team; have not received as of yet
- 29 mobilizations of teams in the GACC last year.
 - Reviewed mobilization statistics. (See Thumbdrive document.)
 - Type 2 team use in GACC – 162 days
 - All had an out of GACC assignment
 - Had visiting type 2 teams for 72 days
 - Almas – first and last mobilization – 65 days out total; (**get stats from Judy**)
 - Sampson – out for total of 29 days; no out of GACC assignments this year
 - Hosted NIMO
 - Number of Days BUYT was out – 88 days; 30 of those were two out of GACC assignments early in the season.
 - Had visiting BUYTs for 33 days.
 - Thumb drive has team statistics on it; in addition to the Ten Year Statistical Composition Document.
 - Also included some other noteworthy comparisons.
 - Was a robust discussion at the IC meeting yesterday about the Eastern Area team letter.
 - ICs have pro-actively reached out to the individuals on their teams and have received reassurances that they will continue to be able to participate.
 - Other GACC Team Solicitations actually refer to dropping teams in the near future.
 - Need concurrence from the board on IC's for next year.
 - **BOD concurrence given.**
 - ICs also had a robust discussion on recruiting team members from non-traditional sources.
 - **IMT Team Meetings April 16-18 at Hilton Garden Inn, Missoula MT** – Dispatch Steering Committee also wants to meet concurrently.
 - Bin Item – **Discussion on BOD involvement with IMT Team Meeting Agenda Development – Working Group - Steering Committee development**
 - **Mike DeGrosky, Rich Cowger and Kathy Pipkin will participate on that working group.**

Rapid Extraction Modules / Medical Units Review (Mike DeGrosky)

- Need exists to put together a group to discuss; need to identify a lead.
- Roy Robinson has offered to be the DNRC representative.
- Craig Goodell – at the Operations Committee they put together a sub-committee to address this; that is the role Roy is going to fill.
- Mike Granger – this is needed to identify if this need exist here in the Northern Rockies and explore efficient and cost effective ways to provide this in our GACC
 - Mike DeGrosky – Does the sub-committee understand their tasking?
 - Sub-committee needs to vet if REM is needed
 - If so - under what circumstances are they necessary?
 - What are the options currently available?
 - Craig Goodell – sub-committee will look at the overall picture and will also look at differences in configuration; will identify what is truly needed.
 - Mike DeGrosky – history has shown that reliance on a REM can actually delay getting an individual to care. Look at a need driven capability.
 - Diane Mann-Klager – Need to ask: Is it being put in place because someone is looking at their risk assessment and using it as a mitigating factor for increasing risk?
 - Dan Warthin – need exists to identify those pressure points drivers.
 - Craig Goodell – some of the drive is coming from the Dutch Creek protocols.
 - Mike DeGrosky – also, some may be vendor driven.
 - Diane Mann-Klager – is part of the assessment to identify what is available locally?
 - Yes; group will be looking at what is available locally for REM design.

Fire Closeout Protocols (Ken Schmid)

- Attempt to standardization.
- Review of draft document.
- Feedback on draft from group is encouraged.
- Discussion on where this document would reside.
- Mike DeGrosky – encourage BOD to stay focused; no need to duplicate the effort of the Agency Administrator at close out.
 - Focus only on NRCG / MAC related items.
 - Write up should be short and concise.
- Suggestion for a short, fill-in-able form for Close Out Briefings
 - Action Item – Create a short, Close Out Briefing Form (short, fill-in-able)
 - Follow up on form and protocols for Spring Meeting.
- Craig Goodell – Suggestion that NRCG Documents an incoming team needs be better organized on the website under a separate link; one easily found by an incoming IC.
 - Patrick Lonergan – Suggestion for NRCC or Craig Goodell to email in brief packet to incoming IC.
- Craig Goodell – Suggestion for each team liaison board member to ensure that Team's closeout is covered as part of liaison duties. Out of GACC teams would need some other protocols.

Resource Benefit Fires – Ensuring Accurately Reflected in Prioritization (Mike DeGrosky)

- Root issue is driven by structure of 209 reporting system.
- Full Suppression goal fires utilizing confine/contain strategy fell to the bottom of the list and only had weekly reporting.
 - USFS position is that those fires have a full suppression goal utilizing a confine/contain strategy.
 - Confusion exists at multiple levels.
- Mike DeGrosky – If these fires were just run through Criterion like every other fire, without checking that box, would it change how that fire was ranked?
 - Kathy Pipkin – all of the options were reflected, regardless if it was a resource benefit fire.
 - Mike DeGrosky – are they falling to the bottom of the list because they are resource benefit fires or because they are not ranking out in Criterion?
 - Craig Goodell – only ranked as large fires.
- Greg Morris – actions were that a cognitive decision was made to change Criterion to move a specific fire down. 209 is limited with either it is a Full Suppression or something other than full suppression.
- Group discussion on allowing for discretion room through final board ranking; not through criterion.
- Greg Morris – non-daily reporting requirement does not facilitate the conversation in a proactive way.
- Diane Mann-Klager – this is one of those hard issues to define. Need to come into agreement as to what is actually occurring.
 - May be an item for the PIO messaging discussed earlier in the week during the WFAA meeting.
- Mike Granger – attempting to line out what the decision space is and how to handle for the Northern Rockies. Discussion will continue; however, limited decision space for an Action Item.
- Diane Mann-Klager – Messaging to the public could assist with both internal and external communications.
- Greg Morris – one piece is recognizing that the current reporting 209 system is not nuanced enough to accurately reflect what is occurring on the ground.
- Julie Polutnik – Intelligence group is looking in the future at WFDSS as the authoritative data source for what comes across to the 209.
- Craig Goodell – Tim Sexton's group is also discussing this issue at a higher level.

South African Crew Program – Future Use Discussion (Tim Murphy)

- Reviewed historical origins of program.
- Utilized for one 14 day assignment.
- Nationally there does not appear to be an interest to pursue this; response is quiet.
- No interest within the NWCG to explore a government to government agreement.
- If elect to explore within the Northern Rockies, would be contractor to sub-contractor agreement.
- Going to South Africa soon; will hold further discussions. Contractors advise there is potential for additional resources.
- Mike DeGrosky – although increases capacity; this issue may be one that is brought up in the

legislature. Need to be able to answer potential questions with clear talking points.

- Ken Schmid – ongoing issue; number of crews continues to decrease.
- Mike DeGrosky – need to be ready to address with facts and statistics.
- Mike Granger – no interest expressed at the higher national levels; need exists to have information in front of us to justify any actions.
- Diane Mann-Klager – Do we have those numbers?
 - Greg Morris – yes; Kathy can produce those numbers. Due to the timing of our season, Northern Rockies has found that it has to be self-reliant, for the most part, for crews. This is a way of supplementing resources. Agree that we need to be able to tell the reason behind the action.
- JT Wensmen – have a meeting next week with Lieutenant Governor and Senator in regards to the letter that was mentioned earlier.
- Dan Warthin – the contractor is the one bringing in the South Africans. This is a key element in this issue.
- Mike Granger – **Item tabled for future discussion.**

NRCG Handbook (Kathy Pipkin)

- Tasked to develop a template for an NRCG Handbook.
- Reviewed draft document. (See Handout)
- Appendices include NRCG relevant documents (chair rotations, IMT meeting payment agreements; close out procedures could be added and reside in this document as well).
- **Action Item – Edits due back to Pam prior to the January Conference Call; will discuss edits on the January Conference call. Goal of finalization by Spring Meeting.**
 - Edits need to include changing charter language to current language – year rotation from one to two – Kathy will redo and send.
 - Suggestion to add “NRCG Decision Document” to appendices.

Predictive Services Oversight Group (Bryan Henry)

- (See PowerPoint Presentation)
- Historical Predictive Services Program review.
- A few years ago the FMB began an investigative, three phase initiative with a goal of providing more structure.
- Over the years, Meteorologist and Intelligence functions evolved into different directions.
- Desire for a Fire Behavior Specialist at each GACC.
- Currently, identifying individuals that will participate in group membership.
- Mission for predictive services has little change from charter in 2001.
- Concern expressed if regional needs will still be able to be addressed with this national motion and direction.
 - National leaders give assurance that it will continue to meet all needs.
- Charter places a heavy emphasis on coordinating with our stakeholders.
- Regular products, with increased emphasis on verification, will continue.
- Benefits:
 - Provides governance structure.
 - Better two way access with stakeholders.
 - Direct access to FMB with budget possibility.
 - Re-development of Seven Day Fire Potential Product.

- May have funding to fill needed vacancies.
- Concerns:
 - Unwillingness to seek input from core members. (Example: Nuisances in systems that PSOG is not aware of – AWIPs hiccups)
 - May lead to a difficult start.
 - On the ground impact of this currently – in order to get the data, have to pay a subscription to a local vendor.
 - Succession Planning for group
 - Communication lines are not open, currently, between all levels.
 - Have been promised more transparency once the group is established.
- Additional Information
 - Lack of Transparency has been a hard item to work around.
 - For instance - learned that there are four proposed solutions for the meteorologists; know status of two options; management unwilling to state the status of the other two.
 - Julie Polutnik – Intelligence did not even know that they were a part of this initiative until two months ago.
- RMCC submitted some recommendations for the Charter; however, it does not look like any were adopted into the charter.
- Encourage GACCs and Coordinating Groups to continue to submit recommendations and input.
 - At a minimum will continue to generate discussion.
- Field initially advised that they would be part of the process; however, charter was released prior to input request.
 - Grievance filed on behalf of USFS and BLM meteorologist; reflecting lack of input. USFS responses indicated input would be forthcoming with implementation of structure.
- Mike Granger – if FMB is going to cover the costs of those positions; that would reduce the agency contributions. However, what would be all of the impacts of that reporting structure?
- Ken Schmid – in the new structure, would only need to look at the funding for the non-existing positions. (Example: fire analysts)
- Mike Granger – Key elements are that there is representation on the CGAC and to ensure the ability for the GACCs to have local input towards the specific products that are produced.
- Ken Schmid and Dan Warthin – encouraged all to have an open mind during this national direction motion.
- Colleen Haskell – in the RMCC response, concern was expressed that if there was going to be state representation since it was FMB. Aitor's briefing this morning led towards it being more inclusive.

Northern Rockies GIS Data Standards Group (Greg Dillion)

- 2018 Update reviewed. (See Handout)
- Historical origin of the group reviewed.
- Group was tasked with developing standards and developing a common approach to meeting national standards.
- One large piece was engaging the GIS community in the Northern Rockies.
- Other large piece was common approach developmental phase.
 - Ensured meeting National Standards.
 - Also implemented enhancements at the regional level that benefit the users.
 - Produced GIS Users Guide.
 - Developed a Firenet Site.

- Developed a user group.
- Conducted an AAR with positive response.
 - Working to streamline for next year.
 - Another challenge has been talking with national individuals and relieving concerns that the Northern Rockies was doing something slightly different than the National level.
 - Will implement some regional changes based on the conversations next year.
 - National level will also be considering changes based on the work done in the Northern Rockies.
 - Talk of an attempt to develop an Initial Attack platform in the future.
- Remote Situational Unit Pilot
 - Were supportive of this initiative; however, due to season – did not occur this year.
- Recommend group consider in the future a full time GIS Coordinator for Fire. (See Proposed NR Fire GIS Coordinator Position Handout)
 - Precedent is set in other GACCs.
 - Group put in a great deal of time this year dedicated to this; all as collateral duties.
- Mike Granger – How do we go ahead and support a request from another GACC for remote situational unit support without a resource order?
 - Kathy – history of the situation last season was that ultimately the resource order never came.
- Mike Granger – Was there opposition to what we were telling our teams to do?
 - No; however, one team ran into connectivity issues and challenges - the extra step of uploading into the Northern Rockies work flow was causing challenges. Due to that, on their next roll - they also went directly to the national work flow.
 - Action Item – BOD to review recommendations and discuss on January Conference Call.

IMT Succession Plan (Doug Turman)

- Broke succession plan into two parts – what does it look like and positions.
- Many factors need to be considered; including work life balance.
- One challenge is the finance piece and agency specific policy involved.
- Another challenge is holding the team to 58 individuals; and attempting to right size once on scene.
 - Expressed belief that other regions mobilize with more individuals.
- Another challenge is getting individuals through the training challenges; and all that is involved.
 - Sarah Lee – some of the home units have been requiring Command and General Staff be signed off as a Type 2 prior to being signed off as a Type 1.
 - Difficult to train these individuals up and have them go back to home unit; only to have them advised they need to be signed off on a Type 2 level first.
 - Task book is the same for both.
 - Mike Granger – systemic problem that was discussed earlier in the week.
 - Diane Mann-Klager – perhaps needs to be more than a Speed to Competency Memo; needs to reflect the actual requirements and understanding of the performance based system.
 - Sarah Lee – only asking people to follow the policies we have; not requesting any change. Requesting people follow the existing policies.
 - Dave Carter – need to identify if need exists for doing away with Type 1 and Type 2 designations. There are differences in some instances. It is a question of core

competencies.

- Mike DeGrosky – system was designed over a decade ago; problems then are not the same as the problems being experienced now.
- Mike Granger – in agreement that there are some positions that typing requirement may need to be re-evaluated.
- Other strategies that were implemented – opportunities to utilize and bring along additional trainees; providing that critical on the job training.
- Another strategy is bringing along multiple individuals; allows for someone available to fall back on.
- Another opportunity was utilizing individuals in a remote capacity.
- Also crucial - being able to tap into individuals from other GACCs.
- Our plan currently looks like most sections are in fairly good shape for the next couple of years.
- Questions:
 - Mike DeGrosky – Key items to see if practical for a succession template:
 - Do you think you could practically, for identified trainees, establish target date for completion?
 - Same question or those identified as future players?
 - Doug Turman – yes to both.
 - Mike Granger – Could you produce something that is three years out?
 - Doug Turman – the third year becomes challenging to predict. Everyone that is listed as a trainee – probably one more year, and they are all ready to roll.
 - Mike Granger – posing the same question to the ICs in the room.
 - Rick Connell – question is even simpler; and one for the Agency Administrators – all positions will be needed at some point.
 - Mike DeGrosky – without specific targets, if the Agency Administrators just keep encouraging people to apply for all positions – we are going to continue to get what we are experiencing now.
 - Mike Granger – also gives the BOD a visionary document to ensure viable teams.
 - Joe Sampson – provided background on IC committee discussion.
 - Diane Mann-Klager – on the question of “what do we need to give to Agency Administrators” – we have Agency administrators and line officers that don’t understand the basics of this training. It requires time away from the office and their regular duties. It requires this over time to have them reach fully qualified. Need to be able to say here are the people we are willing to put up and sacrifice their contribution to the office in order to support this effort.
 - Greg Morris – this ask provides for the needed specifics that help the Agency Administrators have these strategic conversations with managers.
 - **Board is tasking to each of the teams for a succession plan for at least two years by the team meeting.** Doug has produced a template that can be utilized.
 - Mike DeGrosky – boards responsibility to ensure a viable team system in the Northern Rockies. Need exists to take action on this item.

IC Reports

Request each IC address the following during report out:

1. When is the most effective time for the BOD representative to show up?
2. How can we better support the ICs?
3. What did we do this year?
4. What should we be doing?

Rick Connell

- Were able to get one command and general staff individual all qualified at the type 2 level.
- Team is reapplying this year.
- Have talked with at least one from the Eastern Area that feels they will be able to come back.
- Creative measures – most individuals still accomplish day job work while mobilized.
- Do have holes that are more challenging to fill – Medical Unit Leader. Not a large resource pool in the Northern Rockies. May need to take some action to recruit from elsewhere.
- Would like to see AD term no longer used; as not all ADs are retired individuals. Use the term “retirees” instead of ADs, if needed.
- Board – show up anytime; would love to have you.
- To better support the ICs – in need of a new team trailer.
 - Would like to see every GACC have some information that is easily found on their GACC webpage for incoming teams.
 - This does exist already in the Northern Rockies.
 - Work is year round – team statused for hurricane mobilization.
 - Number of FMOs that might want to be tasked to be an IC in the future – need to look at unit’s workload and staffing as an element.

Joe Sampson

- Successful year with trainees – able to sign off three command and general staff.
- Resource shortage standpoint – trouble with getting 14 day and 14 + day commitments.
 - Brings about need for three people deep.
 - Some positions not easily swapped every few days; others it works out OK
- Opinion that Board should be present at close out and also; present, if possible, during delegation and leaders intent conversation initially.
- Board can support IC by:
 - Assist with driving recruitment and participation.
 - Still a stopgap with no one chasing compliance to make individuals available when the letters come down.
 - Agency Administrators relationships with the team is improving greatly; experienced success with this year.
 - Above assisted with Resource Shortage issue – worked direct with the agency administrators to utilize zone and local unit resources to the greatest extent possible.
 - International incident highlighted success of working with partners.
 - Highlighted issue of completion versus suppression - percent completion vs % suppression.

Mike Goicoechea

- 42 days out
 - One out of GACC Type 1 IC – got a good start in his book. May ultimately be brought into his current GACC.
 - Started on another for Operations Chief.
 - Did get one Plans Chief signed off; and another on her Type 2. Also one signed off on Finance in Type 2.
 - Multiple other good starts in their books.
 - Logistics in priority spot that no one is showing interest in stepping into; current individual is getting close to going out.
- Obviously not enough resources in the system. Issue showing up to the fires with full suppression labels; however, not enough resources.
 - Large difference in education level of contractors (example: preparation and burnout operations) and experience level of agency individuals.
- Would be good for BOD to go to delegations and intent conversations; has both pros and drawbacks. If unable to attend, showing up a few days afterwards would be good. Also support attending at the end.
 - Mike Granger – What is the value of board showing up on an out of GACC assignment?
 - Joe Sampson – would think it would be a good idea.
 - Mike Granger – think board should discuss value of this action.
- Board can support by:
 - Acknowledging agency specific pressures for home unit workload. Board needs to have this conversation sooner rather than later. Many on teams have the potential to be affected.
 - Extended while out of GACC both times due to lack of Type 2 teams in the system or that the unit was unwilling to go out of area for a Type 2 team.
 - Greg Morris – pressure to extend has been trending towards increasing; would like to get feedback on how that is working for the teams.
 - Mike DeGrosky – good to hear the feedback as to extension rational; as the ones the board heard were different.
 - Group discussion on various team extension rational.
 - Appreciated the increase in the funding.

John Thompson

- Resource shortages and challenges on the team:
 - Did have some shortages after the roster was built; did have some fatigue from multiple levels including resource managers.
 - Had some individuals that chose to move up that created some gaps; were unknown during recruitment.
 - On incidents managed:
 - Had to get creative on some of the support positions – relied more on some trainees working outside the box.
 - Consistent shortage on crews. Believes this region needs to take some risks and establish crews.
 - Driven by agency organizational staffing levels.
 - Greater agency specific capacity needed.
 - Challenge with contract crews is that they are not all on the same experience level.

- If it is an agency Type 2 or Type 2 IA that shows up – pretty certain on what they bring to the table.
- Ideally, would like to see the board show up late morning or afternoon. Would like to see at close out; however, supportive of BOD presence at the delegation and leader's intent conversation.
- Can support the ICs by:
 - Valuing IC input.
- Took our first assignment out of GACC, staged for five days. Took advantage of the time to continue conversations from the team meeting.
 - Feel staging is effective for a certain amount of time; afterwards, see it as a fine timeline.
- Next assignment to the Payette was a good experience. Bar was set high to perform and team did well.
- Did an assignment up on the Kootenai – mobilized to the Davis Fire; heard rumors that would be taking Gold Hill; however, timeline was not clear. In hind sight, this may have not been the most effective approach.
- Appreciate the extra funding.
- What should BOD be doing?
 - Remember and acknowledge that we are all volunteers.

Jay Winfield (for Bob Fry)

- Interesting year as it was a conglomeration of team members from three different teams.
- Early July had some key positions back out (aviation) – was a scramble to locate resources; found one out of GACC. Rolled with the team twice and assisted with finding longevity for that position.
 - Hiring was a factor in this occurrence.
 - Was a challenge in filling positions in both command and general staff and regular positions.
 - Was a re-build year and proud of team – performed well and were professional.
- Task Books – know of five that were completed.
- Mode for team is to bring as many trainees as possible.
- Would like to see board show up anytime; however, specific times would benefit the Northern Rockies Board – delegation and leader's intent meeting and closeouts.
 - Reference out of GACC assignments question – believe this is also critical to show up.
- Board can support the IC by:
 - Off season work – requires extensive hours and workload.
 - Recruiting shortage positions.
 - Funding – do appreciate the increase; however, restrictions and sideboards of this region seem a bit more stringent.
- Three different rolls this year – two in GACC, one out of GACC.
 - Davis Fire on Kootenai.
 - Then went to incident in Utah. Rich Cowger was present at that one.
- Creatively trying to solve resource shortages – how addressing:
 - Two FNDY resources.
 - Attempting to recruit DES individuals.
- What should the BOD be doing?
 - Building our bench.
 - Demonstrate willingness to take some risks to build that bench.

Roger Staats – (for Mike Almas)

- Agree with what has already been presented.
- On creative measures for resource shortages – for the last couple of years, team has exceeded the maximum allowable number of trainees. Where are those trainees going?
 - Recommend stipulation that if going to train – need to be willing to commit.
 - Team makeup is reflective of resources from multiple GACCs – without those folks, would not have a team.
 - Fairly staffed up as a team this year.
 - However, when down to fourth assignment – was harder to obtain individuals.
- Resource Shortages – when went out of GACC, had the resources we needed to get the job done.
- Most effective time for the BOD to show up – agree with the rest, delegation and leader's intent meeting.
- BOD can support the ICs by:
 - Appreciate the support and direction from NRCG; especially in the last few years of cleaning up older direction.
 - Appreciate the funding increase.
 - Trailers require maintenance.
- Had four assignments this last year – out 65 days.
 - Colorado was an exceptional assignment. Have not ever seen so much gratitude.
- Success in having some signed off in various positions.
- Do carry a lot of ADs and retirees. They are good about passing knowledge along.
 - This is what we should be doing – passing on the best knowledge and experience that we can.
 - No one interested in stepping up to IC position
 - Except one individual who is a GS-7.
 - IC workload is not reflective of a GS-7.

Doug Turman

- Had two assignments – both out of area.
- Notable difference in agency administrator engagement.
 - Went from very little to possibly a bit much.
- Another interesting piece – were in a region that had a lot of contracted resources.
 - Some extra associated work.
 - Experience level differs.
- Having the Board present is valuable.

Summary of take home messages from the ICs: (Mike Granger)

- Board presence at in briefings; delegation and leaders intend meetings; in addition to closeouts.
- Board presence at out of area assignment meetings as well.
- Agree with resource availability increase when ask is in other GACCs.
 - Do agree need exists to discuss further.
- Agree there is a need to discuss funding further in reference funding restrictions. Need to look at ways we can facilitate meeting this need in different ways.
- Acknowledged commitment to teams is a volunteer workload and a work/life burden; it is deeply appreciated. Board does not take this aspect lightly.
- Mike DeGrosky – need exists to convey to Agency Administrators that there is value in having a board presence at those meetings and have that communicated down. Intent is to open

cohesiveness across the GACC.

- Mike Granger – Advised Joe Sampson of the conversation that occurred earlier in the week of a joint rotation with the RMCC Teams.
 - Will be asking for data from the RMCC on these specifics.
 - Would like feedback from the IC Group on this proposal.
 - Wish to ensure that being proactive and not repeating previous events.
 - Joe Sampson – group did discuss; concern of an increased ask already with current set up.
 - Initial response from the ICs is not favorable to go into RMCC rotation.
 - Would be an increased workload and longer season.
 - Expecting already to be asked to go out of GACC more due to a new normal of fire season reality.
 - JT Wensman – counterpart on RMCC board did not know of this proposal.
 - Dave Carter – Great Basin is in the same predicament.
 - Bob Jones – initially do not support the mesh; as it does not address the problem. Problem is not enough people.
 - Joe Sampson – there is already a process in place for team shortages. Prefer current system.
 - Mike DeGrosky – have committed to some further analysis; however, may not be any benefit to our teams.

Round Robin

Montana State Fire Chiefs' Association (Rich Cowger)

- Light year; heading back today – **willing to help with Structure Protection Plan, along with Patrick Lonergan**
- Also facing staffing challenges at multiple levels.
- Have seen a notch up in the professionalism of the departments across the state.
 - Important to note as resource shortages are discussed.
 - Many local agencies are making progress towards meeting qualifications.

Idaho Department of Lands (J.T. Wensman)

- Significant issue with prison camp crew – rape committed while on an incident. Review conducted recently with Interagency review team. Working on finalizing written report by years end. Department of Corrections crew stood down.
- Did a slight re-organization earlier this year; slight learning curve currently; however, by this time this year, exposure should occur.
- Just received a new Director; started in October. Individual does have some fire experience.
- This year going to have some sort of administration change within the state. Do not anticipate any wholesale changes.
- Working on doing a fire program analysis. Going to reach out to USFS partners as well. Did a fire program review in 2015 – one of their recommendations was to do an analysis. Cannot make any position or budgetary requests until this analysis is done.
 - Looking at shuffling the deck on some funding mechanisms.

U.S. Forest Service (Greg Morris)

- Folks need to be aware of the national push to stovepipe contracting and IT support individuals.
 - Response is that it is funded by interagency support.
 - [Letter from NRCG Supporting Maintaining those positions may be useful.](#)
- Pressure from the agency for increased Timber and Fuels – means looking at a lot more of getting work done in the woods; may impact availability.
- Met our fuels target this year.
- Filled Air and Smoke positions.
- Are seeing some competition for Air Quality – impacts multiple units potential for accomplishments. Large issue. Need to pay attention as an interagency group.
- Filled most positions; Fire Hire is a large issue. Lily Huskey was just hired in the Workforce Development position.
- Hired Jordan McKnight as Operations position. Will also be working on standardization initiative and working with Dave Williams on operational risk management.
- Budget is relatively flat; including the slight increase recently received from the initial number.

Montana Department of Natural Resources & Conservation (Mike DeGrosky)

- Met new State Forester – Sonya Germann this week; Sue Clark was also present. They are currently sorting out which will be the primary for the NRCG duties.
- Have several key retirements occurring:
 - Bruce Suenram
 - Doug Williams
 - Paul Fieldhouse
 - In the process of refilling Doug's position; Bruce's position subject to possible reorganization within the bureau. Paul's position will undoubtedly be filled in some way.
- Ask in April about the Budget and Resources.
 - Do not anticipate budget going up.
 - Will undoubtedly be looking for some support.
- Believe pressure to increase pace and scale is somewhat do to state.
- Putting a lot of emphasis on implementing fire program strategy.
 - Many items going on; may have to make choice on what we do or don't do.

Thursday, November 1 – General Session

Round Robin (Continued)

National Park Service (Dan Warthin)

- Dave Soleim may retire soon.
- Jay Lusher will be holding a staff meeting in Denver next week to discuss vacant positions.
- Budgets unknown at this time.
- Seasonal hiring – southern parks are in the process of hiring.

Bureau of Indian Affairs – NW, RM (Bob Jones)

- New Fire Director.
- At Rocky Mountain Region, changing an AFMO position some.
- Dispatcher position still vacant.
- Two helicopters still in Rocky Mountain; stayed busy.
- Did meet target in fuels, not a lot of acres.
 - Cut the budget in half.
 - Pulled off a broadcast burn this year.
 - Hoping for a cooperative agreement with BLM next year.
 - Some replacements going on with engines.
- Cooperative agreements are expiring at the end of the year; attempting to extend to the end of March.
- Worked on the Native American Crew Plan.
 - May need a few more edits due to recent changes.

Bureau of Land Management (Ken Schmid)

- Billings and Miles City will be combining into one district; will still be a local FMO in both areas. Should not be much of a large effect.
 - Will still be two dispatch centers.
 - Looking at possibilities of increasing efficiencies in aviation.
- Openings in North / Central Montana.
- Flat budgets; did pull some funding that were being looked at.
- Cache continues to be a big issue.
 - Negotiating costs of a new building.
- Will be starting as the new Branch Chief Position in Boise, November 26; Corey Buhl will be acting for 120 days.
- Mike Granger – with the changes coming, do you see a possibility for increasing the number of veterans crews?
 - No, funding is just not there overall.

North Dakota Forest Service (Mike Odell)

- State Forester retiring at the end of October. Will be looking for an internal acting.
- Looking at trusts.

Montana Disaster and Emergency Services (Jake Ganieany)

- President approved Flooding Appeal.
- Full staff; however, losing a mitigation coordinator next week.
- FEMA is working to staff positions in the near future – four positions. Can work on planning and communications.
- Budget – working with National Guard to obtain training earlier. Will be able to get money for funding of training equipment this year.
- All hazard team returned from Liberty County in FL; successful deployment. Will bring back a lot of good experience. In hindsight, they wished they had brought more logistics and PIOs.
 - This year focus was on short IMT teams for local county EOC support.
 - Meeting Saturday in Butte on All Hazard Type 3 IMT formations.
- Working on flooding and hazard mitigation grant money that came in – projects. Short timeline

- for those application deadlines.
 - May be a permanent program with the new Disaster Response.
- Do have some money from the FMAGs – working with DNRC and county managers.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Mike Granger)

- DOI reorganization – still operating as independent regions at this point.
- Budget is flat.
- Positions – do have a couple open and intend to fill. DOI Supervisory ratio decision has had a significant impact; in addition to the grade that jobs are advertised at. Significant impact on both entry level position and upwards motion in the organization.
- FWS burned more acres than the BLM in the Northern Rockies.
 - One was a large fire in the sage grouse habitat.
- Exchange of suppression responsibilities – put this out there a while back; hesitancy detected from the group.
 - One thing that has been working well – have joined forces in the Jordan area; joint operational effectiveness experienced.
- Interagency Eastern Montana Crew – worked out really well this year. Went out four times this year.
 - Bunkhouse facility assisted greatly with this effort.

Committee Report Outs

Aviation Committee (Bob Flesch)

- Good sharing last season.
- Good communications with national offices to obtain resources.
- Group has not met as of yet.
- In 2018, Helena was not a VLAT base – it will be approved for 2019.
- No additional USFS rappel programs until 2020.
- Next year there will be three lead plans, in addition to BLM staffed one in Dillon.
- IR challenges experienced this year.
 - Exploring a regional contract option to meet this need.
- UAS were utilized on occasion; trend may increase.
 - BLM has two drones with IR cameras.
 - Two Fireflies are located in Havre, MT.
 - Need to ensure they produce a product that the individuals on the ground need.
 - Mike Granger – Do you see this capability and usage increasing?
 - Yes – see it rapidly expanding.
 - Ken Schmid – Advantages and positive experiences with drones and driver capabilities are leading towards greater usage.
 - Mike DeGrosky – close to having an agency policy in place.
 - Greg Morris – Agency policies differ as well.
 - Ralph Rau – As a board, may want to think about forming a subcommittee within the Aviation Committee to stay on top of this rapidly changing program.
 - **Bin Item – Discussion on future interagency use of drones.**
- DOI Agencies in Alaska are looking to combine aviation assets into one program; want to have it implemented by next year.
 - DOI counterparts in Northern Rockies should be aware and stay advised of this changing environment. Will generate lots of questions for next year.

Businesses Committee (Sarah Lee)

- Met last week.
- Discussed Medical issues at length; including purchasing.
 - Also, discussed vendor driven requests.
 - NCF put out an expectation letter when the medical changed; this assisted IMTs a great deal.
- Beginning to work on 2019 supplement; do not expect major changes.
- Training – will continue with regular schedule for 2019.
- Land Use Agreement tool – being addressed by a task group with an ultimate goal of a product on the webpage.
- Task Group continuing to look at donations.
- Task Group to look at National Rental program (NERV) – will go national in 2019.
 - Expected to have operating guides for the GACC.
- Working with Team Finance staffing and trainees.
- Discussed ATV / UTVs – discussed confusion that exists; not discussed a great deal at last IMT team meeting.
- New business chair – Amanda Boatwright, BIA.
- Questions?
 - Mike Grangers – Medical Unit leader – Agency Administrators requested an ad hoc committee to address; would ask someone from the business committee be involved as well. Jeff Gardner – would be available to fill that role.

Dispatch Steering Committee (Jamey Graham)

- Updated Charter – sent in this week for approval.
- Going to meet next week – will be planning the spring meeting; want to combine with the IMT meeting again this year.

Equipment / Logistics Committee

(Not on the call)

Fuels Committee (Ryan Melin)

- Action Item for this Fall – approve sharing of resources for prescribed burns.

Incident Commander Committee (Joe Sampson)

- Good discussion on REMs
 - Found largely not standardized.
 - General conscious is that there is a need for standardization.
 - Is there a need for them?
 - Discussed utilization of existing crews and skills
- On Medical issues:
 - Discussed massive amount of orders for medical personnel.
 - Discussed OTC medication issue.
 - Discussed Norovirus outbreak incident.
 - Greg Morris – Action Item - recommendation that NRCG draft an issue paper on this subject.
 - Discussion on proper usage of 8 Line.

- Discussion on Copy Trailers and usage.
 - Overall consensus was that there was great value in these resources.
 - Expense was discussed as well.
 - Recommend solicitation for copy trailers.
 - Sarah Lee – those are on a national VIPER contract; none in our area.
 - Mike Granger – need to be looking at the potential to solicit for copy trailers. Patrick will be looking into options with the Business Committee.
- Talked about tent order packages and heating and cooling systems. Discussed need to pre-order these.
 - Worked on a general, short, pre-order list tool – calling it a “Dispatch List”.
 - Kathy – when list is formalized; please give to NRCC. It will be placed on the website and all dispatch centers will be advised to go to the site, pull the list and begin work on it as soon as the team is ordered.
- Discussed confusion on ATV / UTV inspection requirements and regional policy. Discussed with Business Committee.
 - Mike Granger – Operations Committee is working on that and may be making a recommendation to exclude Working Capital Fund vehicles.
- Good discussion on completion versus containment processes. Have heard Tim Sexton’s team is working on it. Tabled this topic till spring to see if there is more direction coming. Led to a bigger discussion on unwillingness to call a fire something other than full suppression fire.
 - Greg Morris – high degree to resistance to change and control. Causes confusion at all levels and with partners and public. Discussed with WFAAs.
 - Julie Polutnik – intelligence is looking at that as well. Looking at in the future, WFDSS being the authoritative data source for that information.
- Good discussions on IR frustrations that were experienced last season.
- Good discussions on FireNet – experiences were across the board. Intent is good. Experienced file sharing issues.
 - **Proposal – have a room set up at IMT team meeting to get ADs and Retirees through that process.**
 - Billy Philips – additional training on FireNet available in the next few weeks through remote education.
- Discuss need to revamp ICS forms and standardizations across the GACCs.
 - Discussed regional IAP standardization.
 - Discussed example of incident within an incident plan. Definition of “incident within an Incident” is very broad.
- Had good discussions with the Business Committee; good interactions.
 - Discussed IBA, IBS and IC interactions. Also discussed delegations.
 - Sarah Lee – agree with Joe; finding we don’t have enough IBAs. Now no prerequisites to be an IBA. Educations learning curve exists; are putting on a related webinar.
- Information / Training – being asked to do and provide much more.
 - PIOs are a difficult resource to obtain.
 - Seeing a trend where the host units are starting to staff up PIOs, contributing to this resource deficit.
 - Expectations for social media support are and increasing trend.
 - Training – suggestion that to push the annual needs analysis to the ICs earlier. Would also assist with the successional planning.
- Discussed surge capacity resource force experience this year. Supportive of form; awaiting feedback from out of area resources.
- Heavy Equipment Task Forces – discussed associated issues.

- Discussed IMT SOPs – continuing streamlining work.
- Discussed team successional planning.
- Discussed Eastern Area letter and team member participation. All teams have eastern area members.
- Increased USFS Pace and Scale will affect availability.
- Trend is continuing – in danger of losing another team in the next few years.
- Agreed as a group that some positions lend more to typing than others.
- Signed off multiple trainees – several out of GACC.
- Spring IMT Team Meetings – Proposing to look at changing the format a bit; smaller General Session portion and refocus timeframes.
 - Mike Granger – discussed the board taking a bigger role in the IMT Team Meeting - Steering Committee and need to address issues that arise during the year.
 - Joe – would like to be a part of that.
 - Bin Item – ICs for 2019.

Native American Crew Committee (Rob Miramontez)

- One of the biggest changes is moving into the Red Book.
- No AD pay plans attached as of yet.
- Follows the 2015 medical standards.
- Highlights – goal is 50 crews. Question on what are the actual statistics on that?
 - Kathy – six is a more accurate number.
 - Rob – will be discussing this in the plan further.
- Also says would like to have each tribe or agency staff an IA Crew – question on accuracy?
 - Kathy – reality is that three units that can staff one crew.
- Forest Service urban crews are no longer referenced in the book.
- A few additional edits expected soon. Should be finalized in the next few weeks.

Operations Committee (Corey Buhl)

- Discussed PSOG; reviewed charter and identified some Northern Rockies insights.
 - Biggest concern is that FMB does not represent the state agencies.
- Will be calling a meeting to discuss priorities after 420 trainings.
- Was working with Aviation on multiple items
 - Helena VLAT base.
 - IR concerns and alternatives.
- Also discussed ATV / UTV policy – will follow up further with Sarah. **Will make those edits and have draft policy ready for Spring meeting.**
- Priorities Trainees – desire for supervisory approval for those. Craig working with Melissa on that.
- Discussion on REM Modules – **task group formed to work on guidelines for that – briefing paper will be completed by Spring Meeting.**
 - Consensus was that it was a valuable tool; needs definition for what it is reflective of for the Northern Rockies.
- Critical Mission Task Force – task group in place to further develop that; will be seeking an IC for representation as well. Includes multiple levels of feedback from various groups – dispatch, finance, etc. **Will be ready to go prior to the spring meeting as well.**
- Heavy Equipment Boss – discussed a change to 310-1.
 - Mike Granger will be addressing further at CGAC.
- Next Ops committee meeting March 12th and 13th.

Prevention and Education Committee (Chris Barth)

- Met October 16th and 17th in Helena.
- Reviewed information sharing within the group and interaction options.
 - Will be looking into FireNet options to increase file sharing.
- Followed up on Fire Restrictions Survey.
 - Looking at increasing outreaching and training.
 - Action Item to look at restrictions site changes.
 - Talked about alternative to that current site – possible storyboard option.
- Discussed parcel assessment course and wildfire risk assessment trainings.
- Update on Fire Adapted Montana – diverse group of practitioners that will exchange and work with each other to create fire adapted communities – met last week.
- Northern Rockies Strategic Fire Prevention plan – not in need of updating at this time.
- Northern Rockies strategies under restrictions and closers plan – in need of revision; goal of completions by April 2019.
 - Encourage comments and suggestion on language of Stage 1 and stage 2 restrictions; monitoring how restrictions are working and questions on boundaries, exemptions and exceptions.
 - Developing training to support restriction coordinators.
- Discussed enforcement – how and if enforcement is occurring in the GACC.
- Next meeting in the spring in Missoula

Training Committee (Jesse Best)

(Not on the call)

Zone Report Outs

North Idaho Zone

- Good sharing across interagency partners both inside and outside the zone.
- Good interaction with the “Hands Across the Border” agreement and sharing aviation resources.
- Worked well – Type 3 team stand ups.
- Aviation – had good access to aircraft due to the way the season went.
- The one short haul did work out smoothly; good outcome.
- Good coordination overall with resources.
- Standing up the Grangeville Task Force – continues to be a successful strategy.
- Shortage of teams led to utilization of NIMO – went well. Enabled sharing of type 3 team with the Kootenai.
- Liked the timing of the IC in the morning. Format wise – is there a way to just report out on 209 updates?
- One of the biggest shortages was the PIO and prevention.

Northwest Montana Zone

- High number of large fires.
- Lower numbers of starts.
- Good sharing with Canada.
- Mini-MAC stood up for about a month.

- Talked a good bit about the IC call in the AM:
 - Zone proposes moving zone call to later in the afternoon; perhaps to the MAC call to alleviate timing challenges.
- Question on what committees need zone representatives and for what purpose?
 - Mike Granger – it is up to the committees themselves to solicit representation.
- Talked at length on restrictions:
 - Much related to private lands – work with counties to obtain consistent verbiage.
 - How to deal with local government to provide some guidance on campfires.
 - **Bin Item – Prevention and Education Committee tasking for Restrictions Evaluations – more discussion needed on this item.**
- Conducting agency administrator workshop this year. Board representative invited.
- Another big change – absorbing the Plains Dispatch Unit for the DNRC; occurring over the winter and functioning by March 1st. (Plains District of the Lolo NF is going to the Missoula Dispatch Center.)

Southwest Montana Zone

- Fire Season Overview:
 - Below average for the zone (fire starts down approximately 60% across the zone), Zone MAC Calls active July 17-Sept 11, Success with Prevention Team
 - Lolo: 71 fires for 91 acres (10 year average 131 fires for 36,353 acres)
 - DNRC – SWLO: 44 fires for 23 acres (10 year average 110 fires for 2701 acres)
 - Bitterroot: 44 fires for 1082 acres; largest fire Reynolds Lake at 1,068 acres (# of starts was down 40%)
 - CSKT: 42 fires for 4033 acres; 2 large fires Garden Creek and Rattlesnake for 2,052 and 1,374 acres respectively (10 year average 56 fires for 4,942 acres)
 - Large fires on zone all managed with local T3 IMT's
- Personnel Changes:
 - Lolo:
 - Detailed Forest Supervisor: Joe Alexander
 - DNRC - SWLO:
 - ACM/Missoula Dispatch: Holly Carr
 - Bitterroot:
 - Detailed Forest Supervisor: Kurt Steele
- Vacancies:
 - Lolo:
 - Forest Supervisor
 - Three District Rangers (Ninemile, Plains/Thompson Falls – one panel expected to have recommendations for each location in the next couple weeks - and Seeley Lake)
 - Fire Planner (June 2019)
 - Forest FMO (Oct/Nov 2019)
 - Bitterroot:
 - Forest Supervisor
 - Assistant Center Manager
 - Assistant Supt IHC
 - Additional six positions at the crew lead, assistant crew lead, IA dispatcher and senior firefighter level.
- Issues/Concerns:

- Zonewide:
 - There is an effort to examine efficiencies that can be gained by combining (pairing/sharing/zoning) programs on the Bitterroot and Lolo NF's.
- Lolo:
 - Budget concerns: currently only a \$255,000 operating budget for Fire and Fuels on the Forest after the new FS budget reform has been applied.
- Significant Events:
 - Missoula Dispatch Zone
 - Some changes coming in the dispatch structure as we look to consolidate a couple of 4th tier centers.
 - In 2019, Plains/Thompson Falls and Superior Ranger Districts of the Lolo and the Clearwater Unit of the SWLO will be dispatched out of Missoula Dispatch. Plains Unit of the NWLO will be dispatched out of Kalispell.
 - Helena took over dispatching the Lincoln Field Office of the Clearwater Unit this year with no issues reported.

Central Montana Zone

(Not on the call.)

South Central Montana Zone

- Overall slow season for the zone with no Type 1 or 2 incidents. No restrictions were implemented.
- Two type 3 extended incidents (Bacon Rind and Horseshoe). They went well with great interagency cooperation at all levels.
- The zone had worked to get Bozeman Interagency Dispatch access to Gallatin and Park County tactical frequencies. This was utilized to support the Horseshoe Fire as it was emerging and provided valuable direct access for resource ordering.

Eastern Montana Zone

- Average to below average fire season.
- Dispatch side is struggling with a GS-3 PD and 90 day fire requirement.
- Scott McAvoy is taking a detail.
- Realignment of some fire programs.
- Multiple Vacancies.

North Dakota Zone

- Busy spring season; beginning to get a busy fall season.
- Lots of good cooperation across the zone working on large fires.
- Formulated some new committees and training.
- Working on a MAC plan for the zone.
- Participated on a type 2 IA crew.
- Did have the BIA contractor helicopter damaged and no longer used; contractor worked through to get an upgrade; however, carding process took a while.
- Hosted a rookie firefighter training.
- Hosted a Mini-MAC for a brief period.

Interagency Fuels Management

- Mike DeGrosky – looking for additional alternatives for prescribed burn cooperation efforts that are cost effective.
- Current Cooperative agreement is limited to \$2500 dollar amount.
- Ralph Rau – would like to see discussion on NRCG role in the management of fuels in the Northern Rockies. **Possible future action item?**
- JT Wensman – currently have a grant with BLM that expires in 2020 with no intent to renew. Would be interested in any solutions that are found.
- Diane Mann-Klager – **will provide an example of a cooperative agreement that BIA has with North and South Dakota.**
- Craig Goodell – have the option of Good Neighbor Authority been explored?
- Mike Granger – was tasked to the Fuels committee; however, is more of a Grants and Agreements issue. **Tasking - Mike DeGrosky, Mike Granger, Ken Schmid's counterpart, USFS and JT Wensman will look at Diane's example.**

Taskings and Timelines

1. Delegation of Authority for Operations and NRCC Manager
 - a. Corey Buhl – by January Conference Call
2. Leader's Intents for 2019
 - a. Diane Mann-Klager, Mike DeGrosky – by February Spring Meeting
3. Structure Protection Guidelines
 - a. Rich Cowger – by February Spring Meeting
4. MAC Plan Changes
 - a. JT Wensman, Kathy Pipkin – by February Spring Meeting
5. Mob Guide Updates (PL Descriptions)
 - a. Craig Goodell, Jake Ganieany – by February Spring Meeting
6. Out-of-Area Team Briefing Letter
 - a. Patrick Lonergan – by February Spring Meeting
7. Private Resources Letter
 - a. Mike DeGrosky – by February Spring Meeting
8. NRCG Operating Plan Revision
 - a. Craig Goodell, Kathy Pipkin – by February Spring Meeting

Conference Call Discussion

- Group discussion and consensus to skip November conference call.
 - o **Next Conference Call – December 18th.**

Bin Items

- Alpha 491 course:
 - o Has been refreshed.
 - o Scenario driven.
 - o New 491 Plus - has hourly data now; running it takes time.
 - o Accuracy and quality of data is becoming much more critical.
 - o Issues with weather stations need to be address quickly.
 - o Northern Rockies will have a refresher sometime within the first two weeks of May. Julie Shea has taken the lead.

- Doing the first beta test last week of January – nominations are due today.
 - Communicating percentiles will be important.
- Spring MAC Exercise:
 - Is there a need to conduct every year? Or should it be every other year?
 - Opportunity to include Agency Administrators in a MAC Exercise.
 - Challenging with Agency Administrators schedule.
 - Another option – other GACCs are incorporating with the M581 course.
 - M581 course is April 29-May 3rd.
 - Group discussion on positive aspects of this option and inclusion of agency administrators.
 - BOD will review and make a final decision on the December Conference Call.
- Dispatch Recruitment issues – Kathy will discuss at February Meeting.
- Restrictions Evaluations – Mike DeGrosky will communicate with the Prevention and Education Committee to ensure original tasking is being addressed.
- Team Trailers:
 - Not standardized.
 - Anaconda Job Corps may be an alternative to explore..
 - Acquired in various ways.
 - Mike Granger – BOD needs to think about how to cover this costs and provide for future maintenance.
 - Kathy Pipkin – other GACCs have acquired excess FEMA trailers.
 - Jake Ganieany – will discuss with FEMA liaison.
 - Mike DeGrosky – will also explore excess options through state agencies.
 - Ken Schmid – need a list from the teams identifying needs for BOD to review.
 - Mike Granger – Tasking of Team Trailer needs analysis for acquisition and maintenance and have ready by February Spring Meeting.
- ICs 2019:
 - Rick Connell's team is re-applying in 2019.
 - Discussed that IC application process was approved at this meeting. IC will be expected to re-apply as well.
 - Lack of trainees, and in some cases deputies is an issue.
 - Mike DeGrosky – highlights the need for the succession plans.
- Will address the remaining Bin Items on the December call:
 - Drone Sub-committee
 - Stove-piping Contracting and IT
 - Fire Closeout Form
 - South African Crews
 - P.T.L. Critical Needs
 - Northern Rockies Management Standardization

Spring Meeting – Dates & Location

- Group Discussion and consensus to meet the last week of February in Missoula, MT.
 - Group discussion and consensus on time frames:
 - Fall Meeting
 - Group Discussion and consensus to establish fall meeting first full week of November.
 - Spring Meeting
 - Last Week of February – Tues – Thurs;

- WFAA – commitment to meet face to face has always been with the Spring NRCG Meeting and at the IMT Team Meetings

The next NRCG Conference Call will be held December 18, 2018 at 10:00 hours Mountain Time



Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

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

Board of Directors Conference Call Agenda

Tuesday, December 18, 2018

Conference Call Line: 888-844-9904 | Access Code 3599209#

Participants:

Board Members: Ray Hart, Corey Buhl, Mike Granger – Chair, Jake Ganieany, Mike DeGrosky – Vice Chair, Patrick Lonergan, Ryan Melin, Dan Warthin

Deputies and Others: Tracey Nimlos, Michael Odell, Diane Mann-Klager, Jamey Graham, Rick Connell, Aitor Bidaburu, Tim Murphy, Craig Goodell, Kathy Pipkin, Judy Heintz, Coleen Haskell, Julie Polutnik, Pamela Jolly

Purpose: Welcome and a reminder that this is a public meeting for the purpose of conducting government business.

NWCG/NMAC Update: (Aitor Bidaburu)

The NMAC-GMAC meeting is the week of January 14th. Items of note: most have seen the Predictive Services Oversight Group that has been formed; documents on this are available for review. Also, there has been a committee stood up at the national level to deal with IMT succession issues. (Mike Granger) That last item came directly out of a request at the CGAC meeting last year.

Predictive Services Update:

Meteorological: (Michael Richmond / Coleen Haskell)

Over the last 30 days have had precipitation values have been above normal in extreme eastern Montana and portions of North Dakota. Otherwise, they have been below normal in the rest of the geographical area. In addition to below normal on snow pack. Temperature wise, have also been warmer than normal. Expecting a week El Nino. Short term forecast: have been in an area of three separate atmospheric rivers; experiencing rain and ice and this is expected to continue for the next several days and then expecting a change to colder temperatures on the weekend. This will lead into a transition to a snowier pattern during the following week. For the next couple of weeks, predicting near normal temperatures and above normal precipitation.

GACC Situation: (Julie Polutnik)

Has been quiet on SIT reporting; most units working on Year To Date reconciliations. Have had 2,209 Total Fires and 130,508 Total Acres burned. Did read in the news that there was a 148 acre grass fire north of Billings last Friday; however, as of yet there is no report in the SIT program. Billings is staffing through the holidays due to fire potential and will only be closed on the 25th and 1st.

Northern Rockies GACC and Operational Updates:

NRCG Operations (Craig Goodell)

Rapid Extraction Module is forming for discussions. Staats is the lead and a meeting is planned for after the holidays. Have been working on preloading certification on the Canadian aircraft. ICAP is open into mid-January. Team 4 is reapplying this year. An email was sent reminding IC's of the selection priorities. Have been working with Judy and David at NRCC to do an initial analysis for succession planning; may look similar to some work Region 05 has done. Also, have been working with Melissa on the Priority Trainee program. It is a good tool for succession planning.



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NRCC Update (Kathy Pipkin)

Preparing for the next year and finishing up yearend information. Sent out a message to the board in reference to a potential shutdown; recommendation sent for federal agencies employees to be on a call when needed basis. Minimal staffing over the holiday.

Contracting Updates: (Tim Murphy)

Preparing for 2019 solicitation season; three preproposal meetings set. Currently tracking well for the 2019 plan. USDA has a proposal for September 19th to have a plan to stovepipe the contracting organization. This will be an impact and there will be more information coming.

Safety Updates: (Dave Williams)

None; unable to be on the call due to a hiring panel conflict.

Follow up on Old Business:

2019 Northern Rockies Solicitation Plan (Tim Murphy)

Mike Granger made a motion to approve. Mike DeGrosky seconds. **Motion to approve is carried.**

Dispatch Steering Committee – Charter Approval (Jamey Graham)

Only changes were to some of the role language and the committee members were updated as well.

Charter was approved – Mike Granger will sign.

ICAP Progress Update (Judy Heintz)

ICAP is currently open. ICs can select and have had applications from three individuals in the IC position, one of which was a trainee.

Fire Department New York - Trip Update (Tim Murphy/Tracey Nimlos/Corey Buhl)

Were approached for information on the application process and interest in a collaborative team hosting effort. Visited and explained the process of application. Process would be the same - some of their individuals would apply in job share positions, others in full positions. Were also approached with a question on if our geographical area were to run out of teams, would there be interest in hosting a Fire Department New York IMT, provided the Northern Rockies filled the operations and some support positions. (Tracey Nimlos) Would add that they have numerous people qualified in finance positions. There is a lot of potential there to supplement our own teams. (Corey Buhl) Would also add that it could be positive effort. (Mike Granger) For clarification, would this be a type 3 team? (Tim Murphy) Yes. (Mike Granger) Concern is with the Eastern Area team application protocol that has been implemented. Want to ensure that all are following



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each GACCs protocol. What opportunities are there for shadowing? (Tim Murphy) Opportunities are three fold; fully qualified individuals, trainee individuals and individuals that New York would fund and send for the purpose of shadowing and learning. (Tracey Nimlos) Their folks are NWCG qualified. (Mike Granger) Supportive of this effort. (Mike DeGrosky) Supportive; explores a non-traditional support mechanism. (Tracey Nimlos) Their one limitation that was expressed in that they do have individual overtime limitations. Discussed an option for a slot on a team – then could be filled similar to a job share with multiple individuals from their agency. (Mike Granger) Inquired about a cost clarification? (Tim Murphy) Would only pay for the individual that you get.

Group discussion and consensus to support this effort.

IMT Recruiting (Rick Connell)

Composed a recruitment flyer; concerned that it is not being distributed internally throughout the agencies. Group discussion on various internal agencies distributions. Expressed main concern that targeting is not occurring to the non-fire individuals. Discussed various agency internal distribution opportunities and made plans to distribute further. (Diane Mann-Klager) Reiterated agency administrator's commitment to emphasize recruitment efforts. Diane distributed previously and will distribute again with additional language.

Spring MAC Exercise Decision (Mike Granger)

Group discussion on positive aspects of M581 MAC and agency administrator inclusion exercise option. (Craig Goodell) Have had discussions and they advised that they could incorporate a component for the board into M581. (Mike DeGrosky) Favor incorporating into M581; rather than a standalone MAC item. (Tracey Nimlos) Forest Service supports having the exercise every year. (Ray Hart) Supports having the exercise every year. (Mike Granger) Question is as part of M581 or separate? (Mike Granger) Supports M581 MAC exercise. (Dan Warthin) Supports M581 and having it annually. Group discussion on purpose of the MAC exercise. (Mike DeGrosky) Role will be MAC sitting outside, participating as the MAC during an exercise in the course. **(Mike Granger) Will go with rolling it into M581 – April 29th – May 3rd. Will need to ensure all have these dates on their calendar and determine the date of the MAC afternoon exercise.**

Bin Item Discussions from Fall Meeting (Mike Granger)

- Drone Sub-committee – will table for future discussion with the Aviation Committee.
- Stove-piping Contracting and IT – (Tracey Nimlos) Forest Service USDA movement that is occurring. They are looking at the people themselves not being centralized; however, there would be a centralized contracting. Study for framework is ongoing. It is early in the process. For IT, all IT job series are being moved under the CIO. Patrick and Tara will have a new supervisor. There is an agreement for FY 19 for them to continue services to the fire community; however, afterwards it is up in the air. This is Department level movement and limits the decision space for NRCG.
- Fire Closeout Form – Corey will follow up on the draft with Ken.
- South African Crews – tabled for future discussion; will possibly revisit at the spring meeting.
- Priority Trainee List Critical Needs - this will be address by the work Craig and Melissa are



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accomplishing. Pam will forward Craig's mentioned example work to the BOD.

- Northern Rockies Management Standardization – was addressed in full at the fall meeting.

New Business:

None.

Review of Action Items: (Mike Granger)

- Ask that each BOD member review the list and, if listed as the lead, provide update on that topic.
- Will be removing those that have been completed since the last update.
- Draft regular PIO messages – discussion from Fall meeting.
 - Clarification on who PIO is working for – discussion on possibly Craig.
 - **Mike DeGrosky volunteered to work with Craig and Chris Barth to bring the PIO plan to completion.**
- Request Letter of Support from IDL regarding PIO Assistance – Mike Granger will take the lead.
- Rapid Extraction Module – Staats lead; meeting after the new year.
- Ensuring Resource Benefit Fires are accurately reflected in prioritization – lead requested. (Kathy Pipkin) More discussion needed; still a lot of questions on prioritization. Would like to see on agenda for face to face in spring meeting. Would like to discuss impacts.
- WFLC Leader's Intent on Positive Workplace environment – leads will be Diane Mann-Klager and Mike DeGrosky.
- NRCG draft an issue paper on Medical Units Discussion – spring meeting Anna will present. Will be prepared to make a decision on after presentation at spring meeting.
- Proposal to move the Zone Report Outs to the MAC Calls - (Craig Goodell) Supportive of this move; feels it would provide the information in a timely manner. Craig will move to the afternoon MAC call. This topic will be removed from Action Item list.
- Close Out Briefing Form and Protocols – Corey will follow up and have ready by the spring meeting.
- BOD to review GIS Data Standards Group recommendations – will be reporting out at the CGAC meeting on the remote SIT. This topic will be removed from the Action Items.
- Letter from NRCG Supporting Maintaining IT Positions and contracting - (Tracey Nimlos) Letter reiterating value of those positions to the fire organization, expressing the desire to maintain those services. List Greg Morris as lead; request draft if needed.
- Remove Spring MAC Exercise from Action Items list. Discussed previously on this call.
- Preorder Discussion – Dan will take the lead. (Dan Warthin) Have the taskings have been drafted yet? Dan will follow up w/ the IC Committee.
- Mike Granger will review all Taskings as a result of the Fall Meeting and send out after the first of the year.

Round Robin – Updates from Agency Participants:

BIA NW – Not on the call.



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BIA GP – a few fires, but not much. Working on getting agreement signatures. RPRL position in fuels being advertised soon.

BIA RM – Not on the call.

BLM – Have had some discussions on using instate severity due to fire potential; one fire last weekend. Vice – Ken Schmid position is out. Pam will distribute to the board. Working on the vice Judy position; currently assigned to HR. Have to redo job analysis; may be out towards the end of January. Lost our acting state director to another job. More information will be forthcoming for acting's.

FWS – slowed down; in the process of hiring seasonal firefighters; last year was challenging. After return from the holidays, will have a couple of permanent positions on the street out of CMR. Fire potential is significant.

IDL – Not on the call.

MT DES – Hazard mitigation grant requested and approved for a three month extension. DNRC has been great with good projects submitted. New deadline is April 24th, with March 1st deadline to the state.

MT DNRC – Fires on the east side; assisting counties on mutual aid. Had a couple hundred acre fire in Fergus County last weekend. Legislature session issues are steadily increasing. Many individuals out of the office on leave, and due to retirements. Looking for internal detailers to fill in behind retirements.

Montana State Fire Chiefs – Not on the call.

Montana Fire Wardens – No new updates at this time.

MT Peace Officers – Not on the call.

ND FS – Filled full time crew lead position. Larry retired; filled with acting. Legislative session occurring. Working on hiring.

NPS – Many out on leave; working on seasonal hiring; anticipating announcements on position fills after the New Year.

USFS – Hired Jordan McKnight as Assistant Director – Operations; will work at the AFD. After the New Year, will be focused on permanent fire hire positions; also will be working on temporary hiring and setting up to support the Southeast on prescribed fire. After January, focus will be with the states on Good Neighbor Projects. Multiple Forest Supervisor position vacancies and some higher level manager position realignments.

(Mike Granger) – Tremendous “Thank You” to Judy for all of her dedication and effort over the years.

The next scheduled NRCG Conference Call is January 15, 2019 at 10:00 Hours Mountain Time