



# **Northern Rockies Coordinating Group**

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

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

**Tuesday, January 19, 2021**

### **Participants:**

**Board Members:** Darron Williams, Ray Hart, Bryce Rogers, Aaron Thompson, Mike Granger, Josh Harvey – Chair, Jake Ganieany, Mike DeGrosky, Rich Cowger – Vice Chair, Patrick Loneran, Steve Holton, Ryan Melin, Dan Warthin, Ralph Rau

**Deputies and Others:** Craig Goodell, Ryan Patrick, Kathy Pipkin, Aitor Bidaburu, Coleen Haskell, Jeni Jeresek, Patrick Murphy, Dave Williams, Jordan McKnight, Sarah Lee, 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)**

- Last week was the annual meeting of NMAC/CGAC. NMAC will be meeting this week to address some topics that came out of that meeting.
- Two primary members of NMAC have taken extended details. Will be talking about rotating the positions those individuals hold.
- Pacific Northwest has activated a team through the state of Washington to assist with vaccine distribution.
- Workforce management will also be a topic of discussion soon.
- NWCG will be having a monthly meeting tomorrow. Training will be a discussion topic.

### **Northern Rockies GACC and Operational Updates:**

#### **NRCG Operations (Craig Goodell)**

- Attended NMAC/CGAC meeting last week. Discussed the Covid-19 Wildland Fire Response plans that were completed last year. Discussed path forward to maintain these plans and update those with lessons learned.
- IWDG will be meeting with parent group tomorrow. Primary issue will be moving to a three-tier incident response system. If move this way, there will be a big lift to support.
- Will be attending the IMRR AAR on Thursday.
- Did share the contractor 300 level class request with CGAC and it generated much discussion. NMAC requested a detailed briefing paper from the NRCC.
  - **Action Item: Craig Goodell will work with Ryan Patrick and others on this request.**

#### **NRCC Update (Kathy Pipkin)**

- Activity did increase last week with the wind event. Had seven fires for 21,685 acres in two-day period; five large fires resulted.
- There was a brief with ICAP at NMAC/CGAC meeting last week. Did a final user testing last week and was recommended to go ahead and accept the product; is based on Microsoft Forms.
- FEMA Region 3 has also requested assistance with the inauguration in the form of a T2 short IMT. Eastern Area will fill.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **Update of the NR IMT Evaluation Form – Decisional - Kathy Pipkin**

- Please reference both versions in the prereading materials.



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- Did not receive a lot of response or feedback.
- Patrick Lonergan – Recommend that line officers provide feed back on this as well.
- Mike Granger – Would be good to distribute through the WFAAs.
- **Action Item: Josh Harvey – Will take forward to the WFAA group.**

#### **BLM Contracts - NR Solicitation Plan – Informational - Aaron Thompson**

- Was BLMs turn for BPAs for solicitations.
- Solicitor made an opinion that can not legally do these contracts any longer and a decision was issued.
- Do have a recommendation for a path forward that is consistent with other GACCs:
  - Recommendation is that USFS would take on this workload.
  - BLM would assist in any way possible, such as to maintain inspectors and could look at contribution to fiscal agreement in order to help provide support for the financial obligation.
- Mike Granger – DOI is under different rules as the DOA, resulting in different authorities.
- Ralph Rau - NPS solicitor indicated that they can do these types of agreements. Fiscally adjusting the cost share will not solve the problem. USFS recently underwent a procurement and contracting realignment. Do not have the funding to staff the COR organization as it needs to be supported under the current workload. Have approached to board for an individual to help provide this support in an interagency capacity. Do not currently have the budget or capacity to take on additional workload. Is a board issue and not a Forest Service specific one.
- Mike DeGrosky – Important to remember that this was not a BOD member decision. All agencies have capacity issues.
- Aaron Thompson – Is a legality issue for the BLM, not a capacity issue.
- Ralph Rau – Perhaps could explore if could shift the funding of other positions at the AFD, that could perhaps provide a way to free up funding to provide a solution.
- Dan Warthin – NPS found itself in this situation last year. Spent a great deal of time on this issue with the same solicitor. CO was able to convince that individual that NPS could proceed with what it had.
- Sarah Lee - Issue has to do with the state and local governments language.
- Aaron Thompson – Will need to address these immediate contracting needs.
- Mike DeGrosky – May be an issue between agency legal counsels that needs to be addressed at a national level.
- Aitor Bidaburu – Will elevate this issue to NMAC.
- Aaron Thompson – Would like to hear from Ryan Patrick regarding solutions to this immediate need.
- Ryan Patrick – Need exits to form a group to review the financial plan as a tool to get the group where it needs to go, particularly regarding capacity and fiscal contribution. Would suggest Jeni Jerecek and Sarah Lee and Jordan McKnight. Ryan Patrick will head the group and would like a BOD liaison.
  - Unable to vote on Final Solicitation Plan as it currently stands.
  - Ralph Rau volunteers as on BOD liaison.
  - Aaron Thompson volunteers as on BOD liaison; additionally, will add BLM CO as a SME.
  - **Action Item: Ryan Patrick will head up formation of a group to review the financial plan as a tool to formulate a path forward to both meet the discussed immediate contracting needs and revise the Final Solicitation Plan in preparation for a future vote.**



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### **Final Solicitation Plan – Decisional - Ryan Patrick**

- Unable to vote on Final Solicitation Plan as it currently stands.
- (See previous topic for associated Action Item.)

### **NRCG Firenet365 Training Virtual Delivery Updates – Informational - Melissa Wegner**

- Postponed until the February meeting.

### **HRSP Coordinator Needs – Review – Informational – Ralph Rau**

- Debby Hassel has agreed to keep this for now; however, did retire.
- Need exists to build depth in this capacity across the region.
- Suggestion to connect to the IC group regarding this need and associated structure that is needed.
- Will make contact with Debby to initiate this effort.
- All should be aware that if Debby is not available, will not have a coordinator in the Northern Rockies.
- **Action Item: Kathy Pipkin will pull a report out of IROC to see how many qualified individuals exist in the region and will share with the BOD.**
- Willing to let the issue go if it is not identified as a need by the Board.
- Mike DeGrosky – Kathy Pipkin's suggestion is a good first step.

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

- DOA for Operations - No changes from previous memo, except date.
  - Vote conducted.
  - **Approved – unanimous consent.**
- DoA for Center Manager – Edits are noted on draft.
  - Felt that bullets #11 and #14 are duplicated with the Operations officer.
  - Ralph Rau – Agree with comments on draft.
  - Aaron Thompson – Agree with comments also.
  - Craig Goodell – Feel there is value in the cross over and overlap.
  - Kathy Pipkin – Agree with Craig Goodell; value in being able to allocate resources as part of job duties.
  - Mike Granger – Perhaps should state as “in the absence of”.
  - Mike DeGrosky – Could also utilize verbiage of “working closely with”.
  - **Action Item: Mike Granger will compose a revised draft for BOD review and will conduct a vote on the February meeting.**

### **Structure Protection Guidelines – Decisional – Rich Cowger**

- No changes from previous memo, except date.
  - Vote conducted.
  - **Approved – unanimous consent.**

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **BOD member attendance at T3 IMT close outs – Informational – Ralph Rau**

- Postponed until February meeting.



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#### **Filling of NRCC Meteorologist Position – Informational – Mike Granger**

- HR has the position and are currently evaluating. Expect this position to be advertised shortly.
  - There will be changes regarding supervision - Mike Granger will be listed as the official supervisor, with input from Kathy Pipkin and Craig Goodell.

#### **Announcements**

- Mike Granger will be retiring in April.

#### **Review of Action Items: (Josh Harvey)**

- Postponed in the interest of time.

**The next scheduled NRCG Monthly Team Meeting is February 16, 2021 at 10:00 Hours Mountain Time**



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**Board Members:** Ray Hart, Bryce Rogers, Aaron Thompson, Mike Granger, Josh Harvey – Chair, Jake Ganieany, Rich Cowger – Vice Chair, Steve Holton, Ryan Melin, Dan Warthin, Ralph Rau

**Deputies and Others:** Aitor Bidaburu, John Monzie, Jason Jared, Greg Morris, Craig Goodell, Ryan Patrick, Kathy Pipkin, Jeni Jeresek, Melissa Wegner, 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)**

- NWCG Monthly Meeting tomorrow.
- Wrapped up all chairs meeting virtually last week; went well.
- NMAC will be meeting Thursday.
- Starting to see more mission assignments in support of Covid.
- Adjustments to changes in NMAC leadership; BIA will continue to chair.
- Greg Morris – Inquired around assignment length expectations for the upcoming season; would like to see some clarification from the national level provided.
  - Reiterated that the standard with ESF functions and mobilizations will be the standard 14 day assignment length.

### **Northern Rockies GACC and Operational Updates:**

#### **NRCG Operations (Craig Goodell)**

- IC Committee will meet on Thursday afternoon; will finalize rosters and discuss awards.
- Suggestion for NRCG to provide an award to Dr. Harry Sibolt.
  - Mike Granger – Concur with this suggestion. Request a write up from Craig Goodell regarding this award.
  - **Action Item: Craig Goodell will work with Kathy Pipkin regarding this award.**
- Continuing to work on interagency agreements, including a service first for NRCC and another for the NRTC.
- Will be transitioning to new position on March 15. This will be last NRCG meeting.
- Aaron Thompson – Expressed appreciation to Craig Goodell for all of his contributions and efforts during his time in this position.

#### **NRCC Update (Kathy Pipkin)**

- Have had some fires on the east side, in addition to some prescribed burning.
- Working with the ICs to get the selections accomplished.
- Working through the selection process for the Assistant Aircraft Coordinator.
- Assistant Center Manager position package has been completed for the BLM.
- Staff at NRCC is still utilizing maximized telework. Have between one to two people in the office.
- Working on annual updates and trainings.



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### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **Northern Rockies Solicitation Plan – Decisional Topic – (Ryan Patrick)**

- Vote to approve:
  - BIA GP – Support
  - BIA RM – Support
  - BLM – Support
  - FWS – Support
  - IDL – Support
  - MT DES – Support
  - MT DNRC – Support
  - MT State Fire Chief's Association – Support
  - MT Sheriffs & Peace Officers Association – Support
  - ND FS – Support
  - NPS – Support
  - USFS – Support
- **Vote Approved – unanimous consent.**

#### **NRCG FireNet365 Training Virtual Delivery Updates - Informational Topic - (Melissa Wegner)**

- Training must be delivered in an interagency environment.
- Acknowledged the challenge to overcome the backlog from both furlough and Covid.
- Do have all classes up and running; two contractor delivered leadership courses have been postponed until fall. All other courses are a go.
- Are utilizing FireNet365 for a virtual interagency delivery platform. Have had very good success.
- S420 course will be 100% in FireNet365.
- Have received positive feedback.
- Confidant in quality of training being provided.

#### **Clarification around Cost Share - Decisional Topic - (Ralph Rau / Ryan Patrick)**

- Intent is to clarify and identify the objective around recalculating the Cost Share.
- Ryan Patrick – Last recalculated fair share in 2016. This accounted for multiple factors, including the NRCC workload. Intent this time around is to reassess all factors and pieces that are contributing elements in determining fair share. Intent is also to simplify and streamline. Also researching how other coordinating groups financial plans are structured.
- Ryan Patrick – Will provide a summary for the BOD to review.
- **Action Item: Product will be reviewed at the April Spring Meeting.**

#### **IDL AD – Mike Almas - Informational Topic - (Josh Harvey)**

- IDL will be sponsoring Mike Almas as an AD.
- IDL will be providing approximately \$2000 of personnel time at the AD rate for team preparation work.

#### **Northern Rockies Operations Officer – Update - Informational Topic - (Aaron Thompson)**

- Position was a 301 and are having to reclassify PD.



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- Are working on advertising a 120 day detail.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **BOD member attendance at T3 IMT close outs - Informational Topic – (Ralph Rau)**

- Movement is towards more reliance on T3 IMTs.
- Need to address if it is worth considering a different level of BOD engagement?
- Josh Harvey – T3 IMTs do a tremendous amount of work and would endorse if there is availability from the BOD. Level of support is appreciated by the agency administrators as well. Appreciate approaching from a severity standpoint.
- Greg Morris – Concern expressed around BOD attendance and availability in general; may wish to look at a more formal process around BOD attendance in general.
- Mike Granger – Support situational approach to attendance.
- **Action Item: Greg Morris will collect suggestions and thoughts around BOD attendance at T3 IMT Close Outs for discussion during the March Meeting. He will also reach out to IC Committee regarding their input and expectations.**

#### **FIRESCOPE REMS Working Group – Informational Topic – (Kathy Pipkin)**

- Working Group is reviewing REMS in California and additionally is reaching out to NWCG regarding a potential standard for REMS.
- Are asking for input regarding the California review.
- Opportunity for NRCG to weigh in during this process.
- Mike Granger – Support sharing NRCG's process.
- **Action Item: Kathy Pipkin will share NRCG's process back with these contacts.**

#### **IC Vetting Process – Informational Topic – (Ralph Rau)**

- Process is in place; however, some functionality is still challenging.
- In particular, the transition process from when someone opens a task book and takes training assignments how that gets to the board.
- ICs would like to be included in this transition process and assist with this gap identification.
- Ralph Rau volunteers to continue to work on this process, with another additional BOD member.
- Aaron Thompson volunteered to work with Ralph Rau in this clean up effort.
- **Action Item: Ralph Rau and Aaron Thompson will take on this cleanup effort of the IC Vetting Process and prepare a revision for review prior to fall.**

### **Other Items:**

- Fire Restrictions website is down, and solutions are being discussed.
- This topic will be discussed in depth during the March meeting.

### **Review of Action Items: (Josh Harvey)**

- Deferred in the interest of time.

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**Deputies and Others:** Corey Buhl – Detailer, Kathy Pipkin, Aitor Bidaburu, Jordan McKnight, Coleen Haskell, Jeni Jeresek, Melissa Wegner, Dave Williams, Pam Jolly, Julia Berkey

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

### **NWCG/NMAC Update: (Aitor Bidaburu)**

- NICC processing orders for FEMA mission assignments.
- FMB meets on Friday; multiple other meetings occurring this week.
- Successful AC/IC meeting a few weeks ago.
- Fire activity is picking up in Southern and Eastern areas.
- Air Tanker contracts should begin trickling on.

### **Northern Rockies GACC and Operational Updates:**

#### **NRCG Operations (Corey Buhl - Detailer)**

- Second day of detail; integrating and briefings.

#### **NRCC Update (Kathy Pipkin)**

- Tentative offer given and accepted for Assistant Aircraft Coordinator; expect to be able to announce soon.
- Had a 50/50 fill from temporary hiring.
- Two dispatcher, meteorologist positions and Assistant Center Manager positions in various stages of the hiring process.
- 3 GACCs went to PL2.
- IWDG Group is continuing to move forward. Rocky Mountain has stated they intend to move forward with some of the recommendations that have come out of it; including typing of teams.
- Continuing to have a light IA in the Northern Rockies.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **Leader's Intents for 2021 - Decisional Topic - (Rich Cowger)**

- (See Draft in Pre-Reading Materials)
- Minor revisions mostly; no large changes.
- Vote conducted.
  - Approved – unanimous consent.

#### **DoA for Center Manager - Decisional Topic - (Mike Granger)**

- (See Draft in Pre-Reading Materials)
- Revisions reflected in this second draft.
- Ralph Rau – Draft references Step Up plan; is that plan up to date and easily accessible by all?





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- Kathy Pipkin – Are using “Step Up” and “Draw Down” Plan interchangeably – Draw Down plan is found in the NR Mobilization Guide. Is what was agreed upon last spring by NRCG.
- Aaron Thompson – Clarification on comments?
  - Mike Granger – All changes were incorporated in the text; comments are no longer valid.
- Vote conducted.
  - Approved – unanimous consent.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **IMT Selections – Identify BOD Special Session Meeting Time and Date – Decisional Topic – (Kathy Pipkin)**

- (See IMT Selections in Pre-Reading Materials)
- Need exists to identify Date and Time for BOD Special Session Meeting – ICs need to advise team members if they made the team so that they may attend the IMT meeting.
- Rich Cowger – Can this be approved during this meeting?
  - Kathy Pipkin – Yes; if that is how the BOD wishes to proceed.
- Aaron Thompson – Are there any critical vacancies that have not been able to fill on the master rosters? Are there additional individuals on other teams that can be spread to other teams to cover those vacancies?
  - Kathy Pipkin – Vacancies without names are in yellow on the spreadsheet; there are not enough extra names to move around to cover those.
- Mike Granger – Each team representative should be in communication with their respective team. Turman’s team is looking fairly good.
- Mike DeGrosky – Believe that the ICs and IC committee have done a quality job of preparing the rosters. Prepared to support as submitted.
  - Rich Cowger – Second.
  - Josh Harvey – Second – move to vote.
- Vote conducted.
  - Approved – unanimous consent.

#### **Restrictions Coordination Website – Informational Topic – (Julia Berkey)**

- (See briefing in pre-reading materials)
- Subcommittee has been working on a solution to the website issue.
- For this year, currently pursuing creating a basic interactive map that is hosted by the DNRC.
- Hopeful on retaining the new domain and expanding on the capabilities into the future.
- Dan Warthin – Will this address areas outside of Montana?
  - Julia Berkey – This solution does only focus on Montana due to other states already having other ways to address restrictions.
- Mike DeGrosky – As the Liaison to this committee, can advise that not seeking a GACC wide solution as only Montana does not have an alternate solution to address restrictions. Will be important for the committee to take back and address the needs of Yellowstone National Park.
- Ralph Rau – Appreciate the work and support from this committee on these efforts.
- Patrick Lonergan – Hopeful that this new initiative will address some of the inadequacies of the old system.
  - Julia Berkey – For 2021 - unable to address those; however, hopeful to address some of those



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in the future.

- Mike DeGrosky – Intent is for DNRC to provide a short-term fix; not to take control of the restrictions workload into the future. That will need to be addressed by the board at a future time.

### **NRCG Recognition for Support / Award for Tim Murphy – Decisional Topic – (Kathy Pipkin / Aaron Thompson)**

- Recommendation that NRCG develop a plaque that would be presented to any NRCG BOD or support position when they retire or move on.
- NRCG BOD may consider back tracking and provide Tim Murphy with this as well for his years of support.
- Identify who would be responsible to initiate getting the dates and plaques.
- Mike DeGrosky – Have historically recognized individuals when they rotated off the board. A standard protocol would be good. Would like to more formally recognize Tim Murphy's service.
- Mike Granger – At one time, did have an informal process in place to recognize board members with a knife obtained from donations. Supportive of the plaque recommendation.
- Ralph Rau – Supportive of both the plaque recommendation and recognition of Tim Murphy.
- Josh Harvey – Suggestion to present to Tim Murphy at earliest in-person meeting opportunity. Suggestion to have IMT meeting as the annual presentation time stated in this formal process.
- Mike Granger – Important to recognize individuals in front of their peers.
- Dan Warthin – Suggestion that could utilize the Fall NRCG Meeting for presentation as well.
- Action Item – A small group consisting of Aaron Thompson, Rich Cowger, Josh Harvey, and Kathy Pipkin (as needed) will draft a proposal for moving forward to be discussed at the NRCG May Monthly Meeting.

### **Support for NRCG Operations Position – Informational Topic – (Ralph Rau)**

- Tim Murphy has retired and served as an assistant or deputy to NRCG Operations, though there was never any delegation, etc. that documented that.
- Believe the board needs to discuss how it wants to support the NRCG Operations (Vice Goodell) in the future and be intentional about that.
- There are many options that could be considered; is not a Forest Service issue, but a discussion that the board needs to have to determine what collectively the board would like to see in place.
- Needs to be thoughtful, proactive and have a delegation in place.
- Mike DeGrosky – Agree; suggestion for Corey Buhl to work on this during his detail.
- Mike Granger – Is also a good learning opportunity for agency individuals that could provide that support.
- Action Item: Corey Buhl will work on this item during his detail and will prepare a proposal for discussion at the May meeting.

### **Review of Action Items: (Rich Cowger)**

- Deferred in the interest of time.

**The next scheduled NRCG meeting is the NRCG Spring Team Meeting April 5-9, 2021**

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## Tuesday April 6, 2021 General Session

### Welcome and Introductions – Josh Harvey

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

### National Update and Report – Aitor Bidaburu

- NMAC last week moved to PL 2.
- NICC will begin issuing daily SIT reports Monday through Friday.
- Are still seeing quite a few ESF4 response orders for Covid Support.
- IMRR Group is forming its recommendations. Should be delivering some of those to NMAC here shortly.
  - Effort began as a need to keep IMTs and functional areas informed.
- Long Term Detail positions for NMAC members have ended. Will have one retirement approaching at the end of June.
- Plans are going forward regarding surge aircraft this year. Includes both fixed wing and helicopters.
  - Type 2 helicopters will be reverting to pre-surge numbers.

### Northern Rockies Operations Spring Report – Corey Buhl

- May have up to 20 of surge aircraft in the Northern Rockies this year.
- Will have six IHC USFS crews that will do staggered starts.
- Other agency IHCs will also have staggered starts.
- Smokejumpers should have a load available by mid-May.
- Each base will conduct rookie training separately.
- For Missoula Smokejumper base, the goal is to have 70 jumpers and a couple of aircraft by June 11<sup>th</sup>.
- Grangeville is planning on having 28 jumpers for this season.
- Proposal for providing support to the NR Operations position – Recommendation to bring operations individuals from each agency into a pool to pull from when needed.
  - Greg Morris – A Delegation of Authority (DoA) would be needed for this to occur. Also, are there any primary qualifications that are needed?
  - Corey Buhl – Could add a statement to the existing DoA and attach the list of names.
  - Ralph Rau – Appreciate the approach to build depth within each agency.
- Action Item: Corey Buhl will draft a modification to the existing NR Operations position Delegation of Authority and include an attached list of pool names comprised of submitted agency individuals for BOD review prior to the May meeting.

### NRCC Spring Report – Kathy Pipkin

- Year to Date Fire Statistics for the Northern Rockies – 635 fires 70,062 acres.
  - Are seeing the effects of the drought in the eastern portions.
  - For reference (at this time) in years past:
    - 2019 - 98 fires for 2,201 acres.
    - 2020 – 300 fires for 9,741 acres.

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- Horse Pasture – 5000 acres 45% contained; fire behavior remains active. May be looking at night burnout operations. No critical resource needs currently. Currently no Red Flag warnings in effect right now.
  - Attempting to formalize the mobilization guide update process.
    - Working on a form to request changes. Would then ensure it goes through the appropriate NRCG committee for vetting. Hope to submit for the May meeting.
  - Dispatch Steering Committee NRCG Liaison needs to be identified.
    - Steve Holton – Will be happy to serve in this capacity and would request some guidance and direction regarding expectations and needs.
    - Kathy Pipkin will contact Steve Holton direct.
  - Will have the Dispatcher's Workshop virtual this year.
  - Dispatch Review Committee continues to meet weekly. Will be beginning interviews and then compiling recommendations.
  - Staffing:
    - Meteorologist position – recommending panel has met and put forth names.
    - Assistant Aircraft Coordinator – tentative offer accepted.
    - Assistant Center Manager – announcement has closed and are awaiting a referral list.
    - Advertised for a temporary from FWS; however, have not had any success. Are looking for solutions.
    - Will be down three positions. Currently do not have enough staff to cover all of the desks seven days a week. Almost every dispatch office in the GACC is in the same situation. May have a difficult time bringing in dispatchers during critical times.
      - Barriers to staffing exist within each agency.
      - Also, there are challenges in establishing interagency agreements for staffing support.
      - Availability of qualified individuals is also a challenge.
  - Working on a Year End Report and hope to share at the May meeting.

**Northern Rockies Contracting Update – Ryan Patrick**

- Have hired a Contract Specialist; appreciated the interagency support with the hiring panel.
- Continuing to work with approximately 40 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) training providers to get information and updates distributed.
  - Does seem to be a lack of training providers in Northwestern Montana. Are looking for solutions currently.
  - Have had two successful contractor meetings conducted so far. Were able to record these meetings.
  - Worked with the new Equipment Acquisition Group within the Forest Service. They put on four vendor engagement meetings as well.
  - Are starting the technical evaluation process for solicitations that are out there this year.
    - Appreciate agreement with DNRC to bring on short term workers to assist with this process.

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**NRTC Update and Trainee Priorities – Melissa Wegner**

- Have presented courses to 604 students; are not through the training season yet. 420 was very successful.
- Delivered these on multiple platforms.
- Completed ATGS refresher in a semi-in person.
- Very appreciative of all the work and effort that the staff put in to accomplish these results.
- Needs Analysis is not out yet. Unable to accomplish this item with current staffing as of yet. Has not changed much in the last few years.
- Will continue IMT support with a focus on finance this year.
- Priority Trainee applications are open until April 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- S-520 nominations are due April 30<sup>th</sup>.
- Will be assisting with the MAC simulation effort.

**NRK Spring Update – Anthony Krause**

- Are well supplied currently.
- Resupply and deliveries may be an issue in the near future.
  - Hose and pump parts may be particularly challenging.
- Issues with national contracting support and the implications.
  - Transition to National Contracting support has been challenging.
  - Are working on delivery contracts; however, nothing in place as of yet.
  - Nothing in place for phone batteries or oil. Solutions are being explored.
- Are well stocked for Covid equipment and supplies.
- Did hire two new individuals this year; will be fully staffed on the floor for this season.

**NRCG Financial Plan – Ryan Patrick**

- Are looking to streamline and improve efficiency of this plan.
- Haley Hodge will present revision options.
- (See Presentation)
- Options are fairly broad.
- Did reach out to other Coordinating Groups to see what was working for them as well.
- Mike DeGrosky – Do not support Option #5. Do like the Fair Share approach and open to exploring multiple drivers and metrics.
- Mike Granger – Propose discussion on these options during an Executive Session with only contributing participants present.
- Ralph Rau – Would like to see more information on all options and on how other GACCs operate as well. Appreciate the quality presentation.
- Aaron Thompson – Not in favor of Option #5; like the Hybrid model as well. Support the concept of an executive session discussion.
- Ryan Melin – Disagree with excluding non-contributing agencies.
- Darron Williams – Northwest Coordination center does have significant differences. There are legislative differences with Oregon Department of Forestry. No differentiation on how resources are moved.
- Mike DeGrosky – Think Mike Granger was specifying association members versus agencies that may not have been able to pay their fair share.

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- Josh Harvey – Proposal to have a joint meeting with the WFAAs to discuss these options. Also, think the BOD should make recommendations to the WFAAs.
  - Ralph Rau – Do think there is more work that needs to be accomplished prior to approaching the WFAAs.
  - Aaron Thompson – Agree.
  - Jeni Jeresek - Getting the details for every alternative is a massive workload so it is going to take a while to accomplish.
  - Ralph Rau – Important to take time and ensure this is accomplished accurately.
  - Patrick Lonergan – Support all BOD participation. “Association” designation versus agency does not determine who is part of the cost share.
  - Josh Harvey – Proposal to have a decision regarding associated timeframes at the next BOD meeting.
  - Mike Granger – Agency could not agree to Option #5.
  - Dan Warthin – May be good to provide WFAAs with this situational awareness during Thursday’s session and they may be able to provide some perspective.
  - Haley Hodge – Do have some rough calculations (based on old data) that could provide associated with each option. No changes were made to the “Fair Share”.
  - Josh Harvey – Propose making WFAAs aware of this topic during Thursday’s session and then discussing in depth at May meeting.
  - Ryan Patrick – Feel emphasis needs to be made to identify included positions. (i.e. – safety, IT, smoke monitor).
  - Jordan McKnight – Believe more input from the BOD is needed for this group to proceed further. Task Group could possibly make further proposals to the BOD to flesh out the concepts.
  - Sarah Lee – Task Group needs to know from the BOD which way to go and how to look at the fair share split; then can move out to what is and what is not included.
  - Greg Morris – BOD needs to identify the framework prior to group crunching numbers.
  - Jeni Jeresek – Need BOD to agree to what positions should be included and which options the BOD is more interested in receiving further information.
  - Aaron Thompson – Could the group put forth a survey to each BOD for positions that need to be included in the fair share and opinions on how to identify volume of work?
  - Jeni Jeresek – Could put forth drafts once this data was gathered.
  - Sarah Lee – Willing to construct this survey.
  - Action Item: NRCG Financial Plan Task Group will construct and distribute a survey to each BOD that will identify needed positions and option preferences. Sarah Lee will take the lead on this survey. NRCG will put a placeholder on the May meeting agenda to discuss the results, if results are available by then.

#### NR IMT Evaluation Form Update – Josh Harvey

- Did solicit feedback from the WFAA group; however, only received minimal feedback.
- Were no suggestions or edits.
- Vote Conducted:
  - BIA GP – Support
  - BIA RM – Support
  - BLM – Support
  - FWS – Support

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- IDL – Support
  - MT DES – Support
  - MT DNRC – Support
  - MT SFCA – Support
  - MT S&POA – Support
  - ND FS – Support
  - NPS – Support
  - USFS – Support
  - Vote Approved – unanimous consent.
    - Action Item: Kathy Pipkin will finalize the updated NR IMT Evaluation form and it will be posted to the NRCC website.

#### Hand Crew Proposal – Andy Schell

- See proposal in the pre-reading materials.
- Proposal to reduce minimal staffing of hand crews for dispatching within the Northern Rockies from 18 to 15 in the Northern Rockies.
- Aaron Thompson – Support this proposal. BLM is an agency that is allowing this nationwide.
- Kathy Pipkin – Did work direct last year with individual dispatch centers to mobilize less individuals as suppression modules last year. This would be for mobilization within the GACC.
- Vote Conducted:
  - BIA GP – Support
  - BIA RM – Support
  - BLM – Support
  - FWS – Support
  - IDL – Support
  - MT DES – Support
  - MT DNRC – Support
  - MT SFCA – Support
  - MT S&POA – Support
  - ND FS – Support
  - NPS – Support; although, noted that NPS is one of the agencies that has not lowered the standards on this item.
  - USFS - Support
- Vote Approved – unanimous consent.
  - Action Item: Josh Harvey will draft a NRCG memo reflecting the allowance of 15-person hand crew mobilization within the Northern Rockies Geographic Area per the specifications put forth in the proposal.

#### NR IC Vetting Process – Ralph Rau and Rick Connell

- Had the IC committee review and prepare a recommendation on this process.
- Rick Connell – Understanding from the IC committee is that ICs are approached by individuals interested in becoming ICs and then provide appropriate counsel.
- IC Committee agrees that there is a process - home unit issues a task book, assignments and evaluations occur, and the qualification is obtained. Task book process is outside the purview of the NRCG Board to address.



- Also recommended that individuals in the training phase receive an evaluation from the agency administrator they are working for each time.
- IC Committee would then review all these evaluations and make a recommendation on each individual to the Board.
- Staying with the identified timeline is critical to successful accomplishment of this process.
- Mike DeGrosky – Have run into situations where individual's agency does not support the individual pursuing the IC position.
- Ralph Rau – Would like to have internal agency conversations with line officers prior to initiating IC task book. Also would like to see current IC for that individual's team involved in these conversations.
- Rick Connell – Emphasized importance of educating local government entities about the reality of this commitment.
- Mike Granger – Should be having these conversations with perspective ICs and agencies both early and often. Did not see in this proposal if individuals are approached by either an existing IC or their agency to pursue becoming an IC. This avenue needs to be open and provide for this opportunity. Overall feel the process is working; however, needs time to mature.
- Ralph Rau – Did the ICs have a sense of bench depth that was desired?
  - Rick Connell – There were a couple of individuals that were identified as potential applicants in the future. Do have more individuals that are self-identifying lately.
- Aaron Thompson – Felt the process worked very well last year. Concerned that several trainees were approved last year that were not prioritized for a particular team.
  - Rick Connell – Do want to ensure all are provided with a broad spectrum of opportunity. Last year two were not supported by the board; however, they do have a task book and could possibly go out as a trainee. That part did not work well from the process last year.
- Mike Granger – Is the responsibility of the board to consider all aspects of an IC applicant to ensure they represent the GACC at the highest standards.
- Ralph Rau – Important to also recognize that individuals do change. Believe that there is an opportunity to incorporate the ICs into some role in this process. Support the suggestion of the trainee obtaining an evaluation from the agency administrator.
- Mike DeGrosky – Appreciate the feedback regarding incorporating the ICs into this process. Support this incorporation for the future.
- Ralph Rau – Propose incorporating this into the current process. Would like to see any changes in place by the fall.
- Mike Granger – Support incorporating this into the current process. Would like to see a draft for review by the BOD prior to vote.
- Aaron Thompson – Support modifying language for review.
- Action Item: Ralph Rau will work with Rick Connell to produce revised language incorporating the IC role into the NR IC vetting process for BOD review prior to the May Meeting.

#### Action Items Review – Josh Harvey

- Reviewed Action Item listing line by line and made and updates.
- (See Updated Action Item Listing)

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## Wednesday April 7, 2021 General Session

### Operationalizing the Severe Fire Danger Index – Dave Williams and Matt Jolly

- Ralph Rau – Opportunity to increase our situational awareness. Last year, this group agreed to try and implement a new tool; however, that did not occur. Are going to be exploring this opportunity for this year.
- Dave Williams – Please refer to the one-page briefing paper that was distributed in the pre-reading materials.
- Severe Fire Danger Index (SFDI) is a valuable tool that research has developed which will be implemented with a few units within the Northern Rockies this year.
- Matt Jolly – Severe Fire Index Overview
  - (See PowerPoint Presentation)
  - Are Identifying ways to leverage the SFDI and incorporate into situational awareness.
  - Wildfire Safe Application has been in active development over the last year and a half.
  - Application is fully functional and can provide SFDI for the Northern Rockies.
    - <https://wildfiresafe.technosylva.com/>
  - Focus here is on the Unit level – Have set up a series of tables for several units in the Northern Rockies.
  - This information is important because these items tell us about the potential for extreme events.
  - 62% of all entrapments and fatalities occurred on 3% of all the days with similar conditions.
  - To successfully implement this forecasted information, will be necessary to change the culture.
  - Need a new process to inform operational decisions. Must be a partnership between operations and research.
- Dave Williams – Index that was just presented is highly valuable. Approached with the intent to pilot with units that had fire danger plans set up to receive this data. Wanted to ensure steps were taken to ensure all were informed on days that are “severe.” ICs in the field will be notified and requested to take a pause at 1200 hours to process the information. There is a link in the one-page briefing paper to the research paper describing SFDI in depth.
- Kevin Pfister – How far in advance is this data available?
  - Matt Jolly – Lead time is generally the day before, after 1430. Do have a seven-day forecast in WIMS now as well. Also, the National Weather Service does have the ability to update the forecast on the night shift, so that would be captured early that morning.
- Mike Granger – Culture needs to understand that this is an item that can identify days that are “different”.
- Greg Morris – Suggestion to begin this process at the “very high” level, rather than the “severe” due to the infrequency of occurrence. Do not wish to see this as a tool that is never taken out of the drawer. Do feel that it is useful at the lower level.
- Rick Connell – Data for NFDRS plan is limited to the last 10 years. Will that influence those peak days being identified as more prevalent?
  - Matt Jolly – Would produce the opposite; would have less days identified as severe. It is actually better to utilize the 10-year data set.
- Aaron Thompson – Are any of the Dispatch centers east of Helena identified as test centers?

- Dave Williams – Furthest east currently is Bozeman. Not all units are in a place where they can produce this product yet.
- Matt Jolly – Spatial forecast is available for all units. Are attempting with this to anchored back to real planning documents with the RAWs station and implement with the Fire Danger Operating Plans.
- Mike Granger – Would like to see a pilot on the east side as well.
- Matt Jolly – Are attempting to avoid “Fire Danger Fatigue”. Challenge is how to take “good information” and make it part of business.

#### Covid Coordination – Ralph Rau

- Need to have a discussion on this for this year.
- Last year each of the zones had a coordinator.
- Also last year, the NR Operations Position set up a COVID Support Group.
- What needs to be done in terms of coordination for this year?
- Kathy Pipkin – Can assist Corey with resurrecting what was done last year and check availability of team members from last year.
- Corey Buhl – Question if what was done last year was valuable and how was it utilized by the zones?
- Kathy Pipkin – Can adjust the number of individuals associated with this year as well.
- Greg Morris - It was not clear to me what they were working on, as few updates went out. Think its valuable; but, need a better communications plan and to know what they are actually doing.
- Aaron Thompson – Having Dr. Harry Sibold available to support the IMTs was truly valuable. Also, there was value in the “masks” memo that was distributed.
- Kathy Pipkin – Felt there was value provided from the group throughout the whole duration. Agree the communications need to be improved.
- Action Item: Corey Buhl will reach out to the former Covid Support group members and the units within the GACC in an effort to ready stand up of this group, if needed. He will provide an update on this effort at the May meeting. Goal of June 1<sup>st</sup> to have all the information in place.
- Greg Morris – Request clarification on how these individuals were paid?
  - Kathy Pipkin – They were paid off the NRCG Cost Share Support.
- Action Item: Corey Buhl will provide Ralph Rau with a written paragraph on this topic for the Out of Area Team Briefing letter.

#### Clarification – Incoming Crews to GACC – Minimum Staffing Question – Kathy Pipkin

- Kathy Pipkin - Will yesterday’s vote also be a blanket acceptance of 15 for incoming crews into the GACC?
- Mike Granger – Support this for consistency purposes.
- Aaron Thompson – Also support.
- Josh Harvey – Is there a concern that this will cause ICs to order additional crews, due to the reduced number of individuals?
- Mike Granger – Believe this would be minimal.
- Josh Harvey – Are there any objections to amending the vote language from yesterday?
  - No objections.
  - Action Item: Josh Harvey will amend the forthcoming memo language to reflect a 15-person staffing minimum for both crews mobilized within and incoming to the GACC.

**Awards – Kathy Pipkin**

- Reviewed Award presented for Tim Murphy at IMT meeting.
- Reviewed Award presented for Mike Granger at the IMT meeting.

**Story Map of Complex Incident Management Teams - Jesse Bender**

- Incident Workforce Development Group Website:
  - <https://www.nwcg.gov/partners/iwdg>
- Incident Workforce Development Group story map:
  - <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/9d3aea07bbdb4e23a734ba3fcacc6217>
- Reviewed history and charters of Incident Workforce Development Group.
- Reviewed story map.
- Data shows that both the Type 1 and 2 IMTs are facing numerous challenges, including burnout resulting in work and life balance issues.
- Covid-19 pushed all to accomplish business differently. This has increased the amount of successful remote support positions.
- Major changes are needed to address these issues.
- Need for change is at the heart of all recommendations.
- Memo was issued under the Fire Management Board (FMB) and signed by all three parent organizations.
- Draft Action plan is in place and will be presented to parent groups in the next few weeks.
- Both story map and websites will be updated as this process progresses.
- Aaron Thompson – Believe that if the lukewarm reception to the pool concept is the biggest push back, then that is something that can be overcome.
- Mike Granger – Believe this is a good move in the right direction.
- Greg Morris – A piece of this acceptance will come from addressing what the qualifications look like in the future.
- Jesse Bender – Pacific Northwest is at the forefront regarding piloting training adaptations.
- Mike DeGrosky – What is the current status of this effort?
  - Jesse Bender – This is occurring and will continue to evolve over the next few years. It may look slightly different upon completion; however, it is happening. That is one of the reasons that the FMB memo was issued.
- Rick Connell – Confirmed that are not discussing changing incident complexities one through five. Is it accurate to say that this group is not having conversations around significantly reducing IMT roster size?
  - Jesse Bender – Correct; would move to a pool concept to fill out the Remainder of the roster positions other than the Command and General Staff.
- Jesse Bender – Emphasized importance of leadership providing guidance throughout this process.
- Rich Cowger – Does this mean a GACC will retain the same number of teams?
  - Jesse Bender – Yes; however, it does offer the opportunity for GACCs to re-evaluate a sustainable number of area teams.
- Jesse Bender – In ten years, the pool concept will be the normal for team participation.
- Mike DeGrosky – Are concerns around loss of team cohesion being addressed?

- Jesse Bender – Yes; in ten years, the pool concept will be the normal for team participation.
  - Mike DeGrosky – Rapid “team development” will then need to become a standard practice for all teams.
- Patrick Lonergan - Agree that this seems to largely be a distribution of the existing. Think all are missing opportunity by not focusing efforts on accessing other agencies (at all levels). I also think may need to re-evaluate reliance on participation on teams being a side duty. Are probably in a place where certain primary positions on teams need to be full time jobs to support keeping the team whole, and to work on all these side projects that never are finished. Additionally, may need to look at hiring seasonal employees to fill mission critical team positions. A lot of this has roots in funding and that should be re-evaluated. By all practical measures, there are endless funds for suppression costs on incidents. Would argue that making sure teams have full rosters and the equipment is just as important and should be viewed as a suppression costs being pre-paid.
  - Jesse Bender – Discussions around cost and composition of interagency teams are always complex. Success in these discussion areas currently remains limited.

#### Complex Incident Management Teams Discussion – Mike DeGrosky

- Mike Granger – Important to all be on the same page as to how this is presented to the WFAA group during the Executive Session.
- Josh Harvey – Only plan on introducing this effort to the WFAAs tomorrow.
- Mike DeGrosky – One other GACC is moving ahead pro-actively. Would recommend that Northern Rockies GACC be proactive as well.
- Rick Connell – IC Group desires to wait the process it out this year and possibly move forward next year, with the lessons learned from those piloting this effort.
- Greg Morris – Encourage movement forward in a proactive capacity. Would provide an opportunity to provide initial input during development of the process. Would like to see the GACC come up with some type of transition plan as well.
- Aaron Thompson – Am a new member of this national effort. Recommend that concept is socialized to the WFAAs on Thursday. As a coordinating group, need to be proactive towards this effort in this GACC. Need to evaluate the IMTs in number and amount of sustainability and re-address sharing of resources across GACC boundaries.
- Mike DeGrosky – Support this as an awareness item for the WFAAs on Thursday. Also support addressing as a board in a proactive capacity. Concerns around NWCG training unit aspect of implementation.
- Patrick Lonergan – Also support approaching in a proactive manor. Important to include the IC Committee in these discussions.
- Aaron Thompson – The training aspect is currently being pursued by the Pacific Northwest through re-assessing the S-420/520 courses.
- Dan Warthin - The AWFCG attempted to use a pool concept six years ago in Alaska. A mistake occurred in not getting good involvement from all parties affected by the new direction. The tough issue encountered was "team cohesion". Think having the IC Committee provide what "right" looks to them will help.
- Mike DeGrosky - Concern is, as Melissa pointed out the other day, the NWCG Training Unit has training packages that they have not revised in 20 years.

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- Greg Morris – Would encourage group to ask Melissa Wegner to become involved in this training aspect, in an effort to be pro-active for this GACC.
  - Josh Harvey – In favor of tasking the IC Committee with taking a look at the pool concept. Also, group may want to consider a new future committee.
  - Patrick Lonergan – Encourage direction to the IC Committee to begin discussions around this concept.
  - Rick Connell – Will be important to identify what is and is not within purview in any tasking to the IC Committee. Reality is that ICs will be discussing this whether there is a board tasking or not.
  - Action Item: IC Committee Chair, Rick Connell, will bring an update to the Board regarding discussions around this topic for a standalone BOD meeting to be held on Tuesday May 27<sup>th</sup> at 0900 hours, Mountain Time for a one hour block. Pam Jolly will send a Team Meeting invitation to the BOD.

**Best Value Contracting Inspectors and Inspections – Mike DeGrosky and Ryan Patrick**

- Up until this point, the DNRC has been hiring the majority of the equipment inspectors.
- Over time, managing this system has become more and more of a supervisory and administrative burden. Was a good work around at the time; however, lacked some on business practices.
- DNRC approach Ryan Patrick regarding revised business practices.
- Have met once and discussed with both Ryan Patrick and Tracey Nimlos.
- Item needs to be resolved between DNRC and contracting.
- Item added to the agenda to ensure transparency.
- Ryan Patrick – are working to produce a larger piece for review by the Board. Are under a separate, related tasking from the NRCG Board.
- Greg Morris – Appreciate the consensus that pre-use inspections are needed. Appreciate the DNRC's contribution to these efforts. Also feel that the USFS has taken on a significant portion of the contracting workload.
- Mike DeGrosky - DNRC feels that the pre-use area is a logical opportunity for cost sharing.
- Andy Schell - Have asked the task group to add as a recommendation the need for inspectors to be made known to Agency Administrators and to pass that information down. Was not aware previously of how short this resource is and there are many employees in the respective workforce that can fit that bill and want to help out with fire; but, don't know of the need or how their services could be used.
- Ryan Patrick – One of the issues with the inspectors is the difference in pay rates between the inspector positions. Agency participation is a key element in moving forward.

**Consideration of New Tools and Applications to Enhance MAC Prioritization Process – Mike DeGrosky**

- Last year received a presentation on a triage tool from Matt Jolly that had intended to implement withing the Northern Rockies. However, that did not occur.
- DNRC will be utilizing this in Severity applications soon.
- Think this has the potential to become a resource for MAC prioritization setting.
- Proposal for Matt Jolly to present again with a focus on piloting as a prioritization setting resource.

- Dan Warthin – Suggestion to utilize during the MAC exercise.
- Action Item: Corey Buhl will follow up with both Matt Gibson and Matt Jolly on this proposal.
- Action Item: Corey Buhl will distribute a poll to BOD members regarding a date for the MAC Exercise.

### Annual IMT Team Funding Inquiry – Rick Connell

- Request update for this year on this annual item.
- Group discussion around each agency providing this for its respective team per liaison representation.
- Greg Morris – USFS can no longer move money between personnel and operations.
- Aaron Thompson – Clarified that this is not part of the current NRCG Financial Plan.
- Dan Warthin – Do have a question on the mechanics of how that is accomplished?
  - Group Discussion – Varies depending on the agency; not handled in a consistent manor across the teams.
- Liaison Representation for funding will be as follows:
  - Team 1 – USFS
  - Team 2 – FWS
  - Team 3 – IDL; needs confirmation with agency from liaison.
  - Team 4 - Liaison for team is MT DES and that agency advised they were not able to help out last year.
    - Bob Jones – BIA will cover this item if any other agency cannot contribute.
  - Team 5 – NPS
  - Team 6 – DNRC
  - Team 7 – BLM
- Action Item: Kathy Pipkin will capture this information and reflect as a new item in either the Team Plan or the Handbook.
- Action Item: Rick Connell will advise the ICs and each will work with their designated funding source direct.
- (Addendum: After this meeting was adjourned, the Chair advised in an email that clarification around this topic was needed and an agenda item for further discussion on this topic was added to the upcoming May meeting agenda. Per the Chair's email – "At this point it needs to be clear there has not been a commitment made by all the participating agencies for annual ongoing funding.")

### Attendees

#### Northern Rockies Coordinating Group Board of Directors

Josh Harvey – Chair, Rich Cowger – Vice Chair, Darron Williams, Ray Hart, Bryce Rogers, Aaron Thompson, Mike Granger, Jim "James" Forsythe, Jake Ganieany, Mike DeGrosky, Patrick Lonergan, Steve Holton, Dan Warthin, Ralph Rau

#### Wildland Fire Agency Administrators

Paul Santavy – Chair, Diane Mann-Klager, Jodi Camrud, Bryan Mercier, John Mehlhoff, Michael Archer, Keith Lannom, Craig Foss, Sonya Germann, Thomas Claeys

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**Alternates and Additional Participants**

Jeff Moyer, Greg Morris, Kurt Steele, Corey Buhl, Ryan Patrick, Kathy Pipkin, Pam Jolly, Aitor Bidaburu, Jordan McKnight, Coleen Haskell, Jeni Jeresek, Melissa Wegner, Dave Williams, Bob Jones, Sara Lee, Amber Honsaker, Laurence Thomson, John Houston, Kendal Wilson, Haley Hodge, Cody Griffiee, Rick Connell





# **Northern Rockies Coordinating Group**

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

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

**Tuesday, April 27, 2021**

### **Participants:**

**Board Members:** Darron Williams, Ray Hart, Jim “James” Forsythe, Josh Harvey – Chair, Jake Ganieany, Mike DeGrosky, Rich Cowger – Vice Chair, Patrick Lonergan, Steve Holton, Ryan Melin, Dan Warthin, Ralph Rau

**Deputies and Others:** Sarah Lee, Rick Connell, Jordan McKnight, Pam Jolly

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

## **Special Session**

### **Complex Incident Management Teams Path Forward Discussion**

#### **IC Committee Data Review – Rick Connell**

- (See spreadsheet with data)
- Expressed appreciation for the data analysis work.
- Ralph Rau – Does the IC Committee have a common vision of what positions would comprise a core team?
  - Rick Connell – Not specifically; however, did propose completing a tradeoff analysis.
- (See Trade-off Analysis)
- Josh Harvey – Concern from agency leadership regarding maintaining efficiency across new configurations.
- Rick Connell – IC discussions show consensus that 55 individuals would be roughly the smallest that could be efficient.
- Sarah Lee – Important to initiate forward motion for the NRCG to be proactive and manage transition in a way that is best for this area. If some type of task group is not formed, then it would be 2023 before the GACC would be implementing any type of change.
- Mike DeGrosky – Historically, teams were smaller in size. Do share the concerns over cohesions; however, do feel work force is highly skilled and can accomplish rapid team development. Important to acknowledge what is substantiable.
- Rich Cowger – Feel that vetting is needed for some of the concepts expressed. Validity in listening to IC’s concerns around team cohesion.
- Sarah Lee – Propose establishing a small task group (two ICs, two dispatchers) to flush out what managing a pool in the Northern Rockies looks like and determine what can work in our area. Important that group would be focused on processes, system allowances and prohibitions.
  - Mike DeGrosky – Support this concept.
  - Ralph Rau – Support as well.
  - Patrick Lonergan – Support.
  - Josh Harvey – Support.
  - Mike DeGrosky – Would suggest including Kathy Pipkin as team coordinator. Would like all to take a stakeholder approach.
  - Ralph Rau – Important not to impart on the task group any preconceived notions.
  - Rick Connell – Volunteer as an IC for this task group and will recruit another one.
  - Sarah Lee – Volunteer to assist with this task group as well.



# **Northern Rockies Coordinating Group**

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

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

**Tuesday, April 27, 2021**

- Josh Harvey – Feel that Aaron Thompson’s connectivity with IWDG would be a good asset to this group.
- Ralph Rau – Important to designate a lead BOD member as well.
- Jordan McKnight – May be important to include WFMT representation and how that will be incorporated into the future.
  - Josh Harvey – Suggestion to include Joe Sampson on this task group as well.
- Action Item: Rick Connell will take the lead on this task group. Josh Harvey will compile a formal tasking.
  - Task Group members: Rick Connell, Kathy Pipkin, Aaron Thompson, Joe Sampson, Josh Harvey
- Action Item: A small task group comprised of subject matter experts (SMEs) will be established to identify what managing a pool in the Northern Rockies looks like and determine what can work for this area. Important that the group will be focused on processes, system allowances and prohibitions. Rick Connell will take the lead on this task group. Josh Harvey will compile a formal tasking.
  - Task Group members: Rick Connell, Kathy Pipkin, Aaron Thompson, Joe Sampson, Josh Harvey, and an additional dispatcher.

**The next scheduled NRCG Monthly Team Meeting will be held May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 1000 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, May 18, 2021**

### **Participants:**

**Board Members:** Ray Hart, Bryce Rogers, Aaron Thompson, Jim “James” Forsythe, Josh Harvey – Chair, Jake Ganieany, Rich Cowger – Vice Chair, Patrick Lonergan, Ryan Melin, Dan Warthin, Ralph Rau

**Deputies and Others:** Bob Jones, Andrew Schell, John Monzie, Jason Jarrett, Corey Buhl – Detailer, Kathy Pipkin, Aitor Bidaburu, Jordan McKnight, Coleen Haskell, Jeni Jeresek, Melissa Wegner, Tara Dana, Dave Williams, Tracey Nimlos, 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)**

- Nationally are at PL2.
- ESF4 in support of Covid and FEMA is beginning to scale back. FEMA is standing up its own internal contracting ability.
- MPHAT group is studying the new CDC guidance; will be more to come.
- NMAC is working on some draft memos regarding recommendations from IMMR. Particularly regarding providing remote IMT support, NWCG glossary of terms library, FMB items and some IROC virtual availability capabilities. Also, there is a large greening initiative.

### **Northern Rockies GACC and Operational Updates:**

#### **NRCG Operations (Corey Buhl - Detailer)**

- Lolo IHC is in Minnesota; one IHC crew left to come on.
- Smokejumper operations are going well; do have a coordination meeting tomorrow.
- MAC Exercise Update – unable to go through prioritization exercise due to technical glitches on program that were going to utilize. Could proceed with a two-hour preparedness discussion regarding MAC activation.
- Ralph Rau - Noted that BOD never received a calendar invitation for Thursday’s MAC Exercise.
- Note: Ray Hart, Jim Forsythe and Ralph Rau are unavailable for meeting on Thursday.
- Dan Warthin – Noted the importance of this preseason exercise. Time is already set aside for this Thursday. Would like to see that time utilized and addressed in some format.
- Aaron Thompson – Request agenda in advance, as Agency Administrators may not need to be involved now.
- Ralph Rau – Agree with Aaron Thompson’s agenda statement above.
- Corey Buhl – Request BOD send in email items they would like to see discussed on an agenda.
- **Action Item: Corey Buhl will compile and agenda for Thursday’s meeting and send to Pam Jolly for BOD distribution.**

#### **NRCC Update (Kathy Pipkin)**

- Working on the east side dispatch program review revealed some items that would impact all dispatch centers. Working on a staffing analysis for future presentation. Also looking at definition of baseline staffing in relation to complexity levels. The latter was accomplished in the Northwest.
- Detail outreach for several NRCC positions has closed. Will be reaching out to involved agencies.
- Have begun publishing the Morning Report that is posted on the [Intelligence Page](#) of the NRCC website.



# **Northern Rockies Coordinating Group**

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- NRCC is staffing Monday – Friday from 07300 – 1600; NICC is currently in seven day a week staffing.
- Concerns over NRCC staffing for the upcoming season. Acknowledged that NRCC dispatch is not the only dispatch center, nor programmatic area experiencing staffing concerns.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **Clarification - Annual Agency Commitment of IMT Funds – Josh Harvey**

- At the end of the Spring NRCG call there was a brief discussion regarding IMT funds that are provided and which agencies are responsible. Prior to making any commitments it appears there is a need to have some discussion and clarification provided as to previous funds were one time or on going. At this point it needs to be clear there has not been a commitment made by all the participating agencies for annual ongoing funding.
- Josh Harvey - IDL would be willing to support one team with \$2000 per year.
- Aaron Thompson – Need to support IMTs. Concern if \$2000 is adequate. Recommendation to add to the Northern Rockies Financial Plan as a fair share cost.
- Ralph Rau – Already arranged for this year for Team 1; funded for \$2000. Not appropriate for the cost share. Would not be able to implement differently for this year.
- Rich Cowger – Acknowledge are not a fiscal contributor. Noted funding mechanism support for IMTs is crucial.
- Aaron Thompson – Have provided Team 7 funding for this year. Feel as an interagency board, have a need to support interagency NRCC and IMTs. Would like to see it in the financial plan in the future.
- Ralph Rau – Agency is doing the very best it can to provide support at the highest level possible given operational budget. Any participating agency is welcome to step up and fund additional positions at the NRCC.
- Aaron Thompson – Appreciate the importance of agency specific issues. Noted importance of staffing level discussion and continuing to address issues for the future.
- Josh Harvey – No proposed solution today. Would like for any BOD that have any thoughts or ideas to please send those to the Chair.
- John Monzie – DNRC will provide this funding for this year.
- Dan Warthin – Challenge for agency is the exchange of funds.
- Action Item: Address again in the fall with intent to identify common solution.

#### **Northern Rockies Pre-use Inspection Procedures – Informational Topic – Andy Schell**

- Last draft review spurred more questions and in depth thinking.
- Attempting to decipher what are the respective NRCG procedures, as opposed to issues with Missoula Dispatch or DNRC contracting.
- More information to come.

#### **Support for NRCG Operations Position – Decisional Topic – Corey Buhl**

- Current delegation covers what was intended with bullet #11.
- No modification to Delegation of Authority (DoA) is needed.
- Do still need names from each agency of support individuals to attach to DoA.
- Action Item: Corey Buhl will compose an email requesting names and send to Pam Jolly for distribution to BOD with a requested reply due date.



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### **Covid Coordination Update – Informational Topic – Corey Buhl**

- Reached out to individuals from last year's task group.
- Recommendation is that full stand up is not necessary currently. Could reach out to certain elements of the task group if implementation is needed this year.
- Ralph Rau – Request a small write up that explains what will be done this year for reference and sharing purposes.
- **Action Item: Corey Buhl will compile a small, explanatory write up and send to Pam Jolly for distribution by due May 26<sup>th</sup>.**
- Vote on above Recommendation:
  - BIA GP – Concur.
  - BIA RM – Support.
  - BLM – Support.
  - FWS – Support.
  - IDL – Support.
  - MT DES – Support.
  - MT DNRC – Support.
  - MT SFCA – Support.
  - MT CFWA – Support.
  - MT S&POA – Support.
  - ND FS – Support.
  - NPS – Support.
  - USFS – Support.
- **Vote Approved – unanimous consent.**

### **IC Path Forward Memo – Decisional Topic – Josh Harvey**

- Ralph Rau – Important to keep document whole and noted importance of inclusion of the announcement and having roles outlined.
- Dan Warthin – New verbiage reflects email dialog.
- Patrick Lonergan – Application portion references Trainee ICs, that verbiage may need to be removed.
- Aaron Thompson – Will NRCG selection criteria be for trainees in the future?
- Ralph Rau – Agencies need to do due diligence coordinating with all entities when opening task books. It is an agency roll to open task books. Question is, does there need to be a step on whether or not to approve a trainee for a NR IMT.
- Josh Harvey – Do see role as NRCG BOD as checking in with ICs regarding IC trainee progression.
- Patrick Lonergan – If authority does not reside with the NRCG BOD, then probably are better off not having a review process step.
- Jim Forsythe – Is there a step where the NRCG BOD is involved with assigning individual IC trainees with particular ICs?
- Ralph Rau – Suggestion to add verbiage to assign a BOD as a contact or mentor.
- Aaron Thompson – Will the NRCG be approving trainees for the Northern Rockies IMTs?
- Dan Warthin – Opening a task book and performing as an IC trainee for a specific region are two separate items. Noted internal agency depth building that occurs.
- Proposed revised language provided by Dan Warthin:



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- Replace the following verbiage:
  - **Application to the NRCG Board**  
The NRCG Board is delegated by the agency line officers to select ICs for the Northern Rockies Incident Management Teams. Board members have numerous opportunities to interact with IC trainees while they work on their task books. Board members have a responsibility to bring any concerns forward or training focus that they believe an IC trainee may need while working on their task book to contribute to the trainee's success. Board members should recall that the purpose of the task book is to train the individual to become an IC.
- With the following suggested verbiage:
  - *"The Northern Rockies Wildland Fire Agency Administrators have delegated the NRCG Board selection of IC's for the Northern Rockies Incident Management Teams. The Board entrusts the IC's/IC Committee as very experienced, capable, and savvy folks to responsibly train and promote current IC trainees to the Board so all parties involved can discuss issues and concerns early and as needed in the trainee process. The Board will take trainee development/qualification attainment and IC role suitability under advisement from the IC's/IC Committee for informed decision making. The Board has the sole authority to choose the individuals who will lead the teams that represent the Northern Rockies."*
- Vote on proposed verbiage:
  - BIA GP – Support.
  - BIA RM – Support.
  - BLM – Support.
  - FWS – Support.
  - IDL – Support.
  - MT DES – (Had to drop off meeting.)
  - MT DNRC – Support.
  - MT SFCA – (Had to drop off meeting.)
  - MT CFWA – Does not support.
  - MT S&POA – Does not support.
  - ND FS – Support.
  - NPS – Support.
  - USFS – Support.
- **Vote Approved – majority vote.**
- **Action Item: Draft will be revised to include above verbiage and additional suggested verbiage to assign a BOD as an IC trainee contact or mentor. Revised draft will then be distributed for BOD review and time will be allotted to this topic on the June agenda.**

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **NR Fire Support Cost Share Agreement – Decisional Topic – Tracey Nimlos**

- (See pre-reading materials)
- Reviewed agreement specifics.
- Vote of Signatories:
  - BIA – Support.



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- BLM – Support.
- FWS – Support.
- IDL – Support.
- DNRC – Support.
- ND FS – Support.
- NPS – Abstain (Jeremy Lusher will need to review and decide.)
- USFS – Support.
- Vote Approved - unanimous consent.
- Action Item: Tracey Nimlos will finalize agreement and send to Pam Jolly for pdf signature conversion and routing.

### **Differed to the June Meeting:**

- SIM Card Activation – Tara Dana
- Dispatch Improvement Tasking – Josh Harvey

### **Review of Action Items: (Josh Harvey)**

- Differed in the interest of time.

**The next scheduled NRCG Monthly Team Meeting will be held June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 1000 hours, Mountain Time.**



# **Northern Rockies Coordinating Group**

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

**Tuesday, June 15, 2021**

### **Participants:**

**Board Members:** Aaron Thompson, Jake Ganieany, Rich Cowger – Vice Chair, Ryan Melin, Dan Warthin, Ralph Rau

**Deputies and Others:** Scott Hayes, John Monzie, Greg Morris, Aitor Bidaburu, Corey Buhl – Detailer, Ryan Patrick, Jay McAllister (Acting for Kathy Pipkin), Sarah Lee, Jeni Jeresek, Tara Dana, Rick Connell, Morganne Lehr, Billy Philips, Melissa Wegner, Anthony Krause, Dave Williams

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

### **NWCG/NMAC Update: (Aitor Bidaburu)**

- Increased activity throughout the west. Are at PL 3 Nationally as of this morning.
- Crews are a bottleneck currently. Are seeing increase in UTFs for multiple resources. Generally, do not see this until mid-July.
- NWCG meeting on Wednesday; NMAC will be meeting on Thursday.

### **Northern Rockies GACC and Operational Updates:**

#### **NRCG Operations (Corey Buhl - Detailer)**

- Connell's IMT2 is mobilizing to the Robertson Draw incident.
- Are assisting Billings Dispatch Center, as that center is currently understaffed.
- Intent is to keep crews active and committed within GACC.
  - Have a crew up from the Rocky Mountain GACC assisting.
  - Northern Rockies two contract crews mobilizing as well.
- Enough air attack coverage currently.
- Brought on a couple of Type 1 helicopters early that will be assigned and kept active.
- Will be looking at potentially moving to PL 2 within the GACC; will be running those numbers later today.
- Helena is operational.

#### **NRCC Update (Jay McAllister)**

- Will be re-evaluating beginning seven day staffing early due to activity.
- Operating fully in the cloud with WildCad now.
- Aaron Thompson – Noted that Eastern Montana received lightning and has several fires currently. Concerning fire weather day. Dispatch centers are understaffed.

### **Old Business**

#### **IC Path Forward – Revised Draft – Decisional Topic – Rich Cowger**

- (See revised IC Path Forward draft in pre-reading materials)
- Vote postponed due to a lack of a quorum.





# **Northern Rockies Coordinating Group**

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

**Tuesday, June 15, 2021**

### **AFD Annual Operating Plan and NR Financial Agreement Survey Results – Decisional Topic – Sarah Lee, Jeni Jeresek**

- (Reviewed Survey Results in Pre-reading Materials)
- Reviewed two one-page proposal sheets.
- Intent was to simplify and streamline according to needs and to ensure the plan was equitable.
- No signed agreement in place for this current fiscal year.
- DNRC needs a signed agreement and a bill dated by June 30<sup>th</sup> to be able to pay BLM.
- **Action Item: Will distribute both status quo plan and the proposed new plan for BOD review. Will schedule a special session for June 22<sup>nd</sup> at 0900 for one hour for a vote on approving the status quo plan for this fiscal year.**

### **SIM Card Activation – Decisional Topic – Tara Dana**

- (See proposal in pre-reading materials.)
- In person vote needed as only four BOD participated in the online vote.
- **Vote postponed due to a lack of a quorum.**
- Highlighted this issue as an awareness point until a vote can be accomplished.
- **Action Item: Will add a vote on this item to the agenda for the June 22<sup>nd</sup> special session meeting.**
- Sarah Lee - Unable to add to cost share due to preparedness nature; must be suppression for cost share.
- Rich Cowger - State Fire Chiefs can contribute to this cost.

### **IMT Transition Protocols/Revision – Informational Topic – Rick Connel**

- Item is an almost a two-year-old recommendation from logistics and planning areas.
- With Covid and the emergence of the virtual environment, none have had time to dedicate to this topic.
- Recommendation to drop at this time and bring forward from the ICs at a later time, if still needed.
- **Action Item: Item will be dropped from the Action Items Listing.**

### **Process for Requesting Mobilization Guide Changes – Decisional Topic – Jay McAllister**

- (See draft in pre-reading materials)
- **Vote postponed due to a lack of a quorum.**

### **Remote Incident Support Team (RIST) Briefing – Informational Topic – Morganne Lehr**

- (See RIST Operating Guide Draft in pre-reading materials)
- Expanded past the Situation Unit last year; went further into other functional area support.
- Provided background evolution of this capacity.
- Referenced the draft RIST document that has been compiled.
- National discussions occurring around a potential future support code.
- In past years, have stood up prior to PL 3. Also, have charged to the incident when possible, and to the support code when needed.
- Discussion to determine if there is support to switch from NR RSU Framework to the new National RIST Framework.
- Would continue to be funded as RSU has been funded in the past.



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- Future topic on how to continue to plan for this effort.
- Propose continuation of right sizing the organization and scaling up or down for an appropriate level of support.
- Intent is to work more in a team capacity with the Southwest RIST.
- Also, looking for direction on primary contact for moving forward.
  - Ralph Rau – Would still see this under the Operation Position. Also, due to suppression fund nature associated with cost share, could not be stood up ahead of time.
- Billy Philips – Anticipate with activity and weather may see requests soon.
- Ralph Rau - Fully support when have fires that NRCG support RIST with the cost share, as have done in the past. Setting up ahead of time like was done last year, which is best, is where have had issues simply because have had trouble figuring out how to fund.
- Aaron Thompson – Support as well.
- Ralph Rau – May approach as a business model in the future as a “team 8” for the Northern Rockies.

### **Extending Monthly NRCG BOD Meetings to 90 minutes – Decisional Topic – Rich Cowger**

- **Vote postponed due to a lack of a quorum.**

### **NRCG Recognition for Support – Decisional Topic – Kathy Pipkin**

- (See Nomination Template in pre-reading materials.)
- **Vote postponed due to a lack of a quorum.**

### **BOD member attendance at T3 IMT close outs - Informational Topic – (Greg Morris)**

- (See NRCG IMT Visit Recommendations in pre-reading materials)
- Board needs a better system of identifying who will attend and when; including identifying surrogates to attend in lieu of BOD representative.
- Recommend attempting to have the same individual for both in briefing and close out, if possible.
- Also, feel getting together with agency administrators separately is advantageous.
- Additionally, feel that spending some time on the incident and before close out with both the IC and the Agency Administrator is valuable.
- **Action Item: Revisit who is assigned to what team; place on July’s agenda.**
- Rick Connell – Recommend developing a specific process.

### **BOD Attendance at Connell IMT In-Briefing**

- Rich Cowger will attend at 0800 hours on Wednesday, June 16th at Red Lodge Ranger District.

### **New Business**

- No new business to come before the board.

### **Review of Action Items: (Rich Cowger)**

- Deferred in the interest of time.

**The next scheduled NRCG Monthly Conference Call is July 20, 2021 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, June 22, 2021**

### **SPECIAL SESSION**

#### **Participants:**

**Board Members:** Darron Williams, Bryce Rogers, Aaron Thompson, Jim "James" Forsythe, Josh Harvey – Chair, Jake Ganieany, Rich Cowger – Vice Chair, Patrick Lonergan, Steve Holton, Ryan Melin, Ralph Rau,

**Deputies and Others:** Avery Thompson, Matthew Hall, Jay Lusher, Greg Morris, Sarah Lee, Jeni Jeresek, Tara Dana, Pam Jolly

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

#### **Old Business**

##### **AFD Annual Operating Plan – Decisional Topic – Sarah Lee, Jeni Jeresek**

- (See Pre-reading materials.)
- Pre-reading materials contain the spreadsheets for the "Status Quo" and "Proposed" NRCG Financial Plans. There are additional sheets within each Excel workbook that can be unhidden to view detailed information, but only the summary sheet is shown to prevent confusion and the ability to compare apples to apples.
- The decision language for the meeting is:
- Option 1 - Stay with "Status Quo" financial plan for FY2021 billing purposes and approve the "Proposed" for FY2022.
- Option 2 - Stay with "Status Quo" financial plan for FY2021 billing purposes and continue working\* on proposed changes for FY2022.
- \*If the vote is to continue working on proposed changes for FY2022, there needs to be a clear deadline and action items developed, since this tasking originated in September 2019.
- Sarah Lee - Intent is to avoid the BOD getting into a deadline situation in FY22, as the task-group cannot continue devoting so much time to this tasking.
- Nothing has changed in the "Status Quo" financial plan for FY2021. (Reviewed in a screen share format.)
- Vote - Option 1: Stay with "Status Quo" financial plan for FY2021 billing purposes and approve the "Proposed" for FY2022.
  - BIA NW – Support
  - BIA GP – Support
  - BIA RM – Support
  - BLM – Support
  - FWS – Support
  - IDL – Support
  - DNRC – Do Not Support
  - ND FS – Support
  - NPS – Support
  - USFS – Do Not Support
  - **Vote is not approved.**



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**Tuesday, June 22, 2021**

- Vote - Option 2: Stay with "Status Quo" financial plan for FY2021 billing purposes and continue working\* on proposed changes for FY2022.
  - BIA NW – Support
  - BIA GP – Support
  - BIA RM – Support
  - BLM – Support
  - FWS – Support
  - IDL – Support
  - DNRC – Support
  - ND FS – Support
  - NPS – Support
  - USFS – Support
  - **Vote is approved – unanimous consent.**
- **Action Item:** – Request for agencies that opposed Option 1 to submit feedback to Sarah Lee for recommended changes. Future timeframe will look to approve the FY2022 NRCG Financial Plan at, or before, the fall NRCG Meeting.

### **SIM Card Activation – Decisional Topic – Tara Dana**

- (See proposal in pre-reading materials.)
- In person vote needed as only four BOD participated in the original online vote.
- Vote was then postponed from the June meeting due to a lack of a quorum.
- Reviewed history of this topic and reviewed proposal.
- Rich Cowger – Can assist with paying for this item.
- Ryan Melin – Could pick this cost up if could receive a bill prior to FY2021 June 30<sup>th</sup> deadline. Would need the bill to come from a federal agency or the coordination center due to internal agency processing requirements.
- Aaron Thompson – BLM could cover this for this year as well.
- Tara Dana – Could coordinates BLM payment with the provider SIM card activation contact.
- Sarah Lee – Noted that this item could be added into the proposed financial plan for FY2022.
- **Action Item: BLM, per Aaron Thompson, will pay for this for FY2021. These will be activated for this year only. Topic will be readdressed at the fall meeting.**

**The next scheduled NRCG Monthly Conference Call is July 20, 2021 at 10:00 Hours Mountain Time**



# **Northern Rockies Coordinating Group**

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

**Tuesday, July 20, 2021**

### **Participants:**

**Board Members:** Jim “James” Forsythe, Jake Ganieany, Rich Cowger – Vice Chair, Steve Holton, Dan Warthin, Patrick Lonergan (*note: individual only participated in one vote then departed meeting due to schedule conflict*)

**Deputies and Others:** John Monzie, Jordan McKnight, Ryan Patrick, Melissa Wegner, Tara Dana

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

### **NWCG/NMAC Update: (Aitor Bidaburu)**

- Unable to participate in this meeting.

### **Northern Rockies GACC and Operational Updates:**

#### **NRCG Operations (Corey Buhl - Detailer)**

- Unable to participate in this meeting.

### **NRCC Update (Kathy Pipkin)**

- Unable to participate in this meeting.

### **Old Business**

- Tabled all decisional items due to lack of quorum.

### **New Business**

#### **Contract Response Letter – Decisional Topic – Ryan Patrick**

- Topic first discussed during July 8, 2021 MAC meeting.
- Please see the attached response letter in regard to the letter received by Everard Law Office on behalf of the Northern Rockies Wildfire Contractor Association requesting a change from a three (3) person crew to a two (2) person crew for contract engines with no deduction in pay.
- The response letter has been reviewed by the USDA Office of the General Counsel Missoula Branch Office.
- It is recommended that a response letter come from the NRCG due to the letter received from Everard Law being addressed to multiple member agencies of the NRCG.
- Summary: Request was denied. Not possible to make modifications to this agreement at this time.
- Agreement is coming up on the re-solicitation cycle next year. This issue can be reassessed at that time.
- Ability to order a two-person engine already exists within the resource ordering processes.
- Vote to approve draft:
  - FWS – Support
  - MT DES – Support
  - MT DNRC – Support
  - MT State Fire Chiefs’ Association – Support
  - MT County Fire Wardens Association – Support



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- MT Sheriffs & Peace Officers Association – Support
- NPS – Support
- USFS – Support
- **Vote Approved – unanimous consent.**

### **Priority Trainee Program Update – Informational Topic – Melissa Wegner**

- Continue to move both Northern Rockies priority trainees and other national priority trainees.
- Overhead desk has been operating smoothly.
- Program is functioning well across the board.

### **Review of Action Items: (Josh Harvey)**

- Deferred in the interest of time.

**The next scheduled NRCG Monthly Conference Call is August 17, 2021 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, August 17, 2021**

### **Participants:**

**Board Members:** Aaron Thompson, Jim “James” Forsythe, Jake Ganieany, Rich Cowger – Vice Chair, Patrick Lonergan, Dan Warthin, Ralph Rau

**Deputies and Others:** John Monzie, Andy Schell, Melissa Wegner, Tara Dana, Dave Williams, Kathy Pipkin, 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)**

- Unable to join this meeting.

### **Northern Rockies GACC and Operational Updates:**

#### **NRCG Operations (Andy Schell – Acting for Cory Buhl - Detailer)**

- Critical Fire Weather across most of the GACC.
- Had 28 new fires for 10,000 acres of growth.
- Briefly reviewed individual fires of significance.
- Character Complex increased in size, experienced extreme fire behavior, evacuations in place and ordered a T2 IMT.
- West Lolo Complex was active and increased size.
- Trestle Creek Complex was active; communities threatened and transfer command at end of shift today.
- Limited resources and zero IMTs available.
- California, Washington and Oregon all had significant activity yesterday and are forecasted for more activity today.
- Sampson’s Team 5 going available on 19<sup>th</sup>.
- Dan Warthin – Team Liaison for Sampson – team does not have a Finance Section Chief and won’t be available on the 19<sup>th</sup>.

### **NRCC Update (Kathy Pipkin)**

- Joined late; no further updates.

### **Old Business**

#### **IC Path Forward – Revised Draft – Decisional Topic – Josh Harvey**

- (See revised IC Path Forward draft in pre-reading materials)
- Vote was postponed from June meeting due to a lack of a quorum.
- Jim Forsythe - Suggestion to push to fall.
- Aaron Thompson – Feel that need exists to move on this quickly, prior to fall selection timeframe.
- Rich Cowger – Concerns on mentoring section as well; do understand this needs to be addressed soon.
- Jim Forsythe – Hesitation is also with the mentoring and shadowing aspects. Not realistic with current schedules. Question the necessity of this document.



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**Tuesday, August 17, 2021**

- Ralph Rau – Do believe need exists for something and also believe the ICs are in agreement that there is this need. Have a responsibility as a board to articulate some sort of a process.
- Dan Warthin – Agree on the mentoring and time aspect concerns. Do feel could keep the mentoring with the ICs. Would like to see closure on this document.
- Rich Cowger – Think the ICs should take the lead on mentoring. Do think there should be a guiding document.
- Dan Warthin – Motion to strike the mentoring paragraph; leave the previous paragraph and then proceed on this issue.
- Aaron Thompson – Second the motion and support, as long as IC trainees would still come before the board to be approved.
- **Action Item: Dan Warthin will provide the revised draft to Pam Jolly for finalization and signature preparation.**
- Vote to approve revision as stated above:
  - BLM – Support.
  - FWS – Support.
  - MT DES – Support.
  - MT DNRC – Support.
  - MT State Fire Chiefs' Association – Support.
  - MT County Fire Wardens Association – Support.
  - NPS – Support.
  - USFS – Support.
- **Approved – unanimous consent.**

### **Process for Requesting Mobilization Guide Changes – Decisional Topic – Kathy Pipkin**

- (See draft in pre-reading materials)
- Vote was postponed from the June meeting due to a lack of a quorum.
- Item will be postponed until the September meeting.

### **Extending Monthly NRCG BOD Meetings to 90 minutes – Decisional Topic – Josh Harvey**

- Vote was postponed from the June meeting due to a lack of a quorum.
- Rich Cowger – Would personally like see meetings left at 60 mins; with special sessions as needed.
- Ralph Rau – Many of the meetings do go over in time. If not extended, then need to actually have a hard stop at the 60-minute timeframe. Need exists to be respectful of everyone's time.
- Aaron Thompson – Agree with above; also need to look at SOPs and discuss what a quorum means for non-fiscal decisions.
- Rich Cowger – Need exists to designate a specific timeframe and make efficient use of that time.
- Aaron Thompson – Motion to extend meetings to 90 mins.
- Ralph Rau – Second that motion.
- Jim Forsythe – Need exists to prioritize agenda in a more efficient manner.
- Dan Warthin – When was chair of the Alaska Coordinating Group; made an effort to focus on decision items prioritized over informational items. SOPs included a “map” of items on a month-by-month basis that need to be discussed. Could craft this to fit NRCG. Will distribute to all the BOD for review.





# **Northern Rockies Coordinating Group**

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

**Tuesday, August 17, 2021**

- Vote:
  - BLM – Support.
  - FWS – Support.
  - MT DES – Support.
  - MT DNRC – Support.
  - MT State Fire Chiefs' Association – Support.
  - MT County Fire Wardens Association – Support.
  - NPS – Support.
  - USFS – Support.
- Approved – unanimous consent.
- Action Item – Pam Jolly will extend all future calendared meetings to 90 minutes.

### **NRCG Recognition for Support – Decisional Topic – Kathy Pipkin**

- (See Nomination Template in pre-reading materials.)
- Vote was postponed from the June meeting due to a lack of a quorum.
- Item will be postponed until the September meeting.

### **New Business**

#### **Stafford Act Agreements – Extensions – Informational Topic – Ralph Rau**

- All three agreements expire at the end of the year.
- Unlikely that with current workload will be able to have signed agreements by December.
- Will need to have one-year extensions initiated.
- Wanted to ensure all are aware.
- Is a line officer decision. Discussion will need to be held on identifying who from each agency will accomplish this work and coordinate with the USFS, who takes the lead on writing.
- There is agency specificity on requesting extensions.
- Recommend asking for one year extension on all three.
- Dan Warthin – Does WFAA group need to be aware?
- Ralph Rau – Yes; have brought to USFS Leanne Marten. Conversation needs to be had amongst line officers.
- Recommend signatory work with their line officers.

### **Review of Action Items: (Josh Harvey)**

- Differed in the interest of time.

**The next scheduled NRCG Monthly Conference Call is September 21, 2021 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 21, 2021**

### **Participants:**

**Board Members:** Ray Hart, Bryce Rogers, Jim “James” Forsythe, John Monzie, Rich Cowger – Vice Chair, Patrick Lonergan, Steve Holton, Ralph Rau, Dan Warthin,

**Deputies and Others:** Jeff Moyer, Bob Flesch, Burke Honzel, Jason Jarrett, Corey Buhl – Detailer, Kathy Pipkin, Jordan McKnight, Jeni Jeresek, Melissa Wegner, Dave Williams, 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)**

- Conditions have moderated nationally resulting in NMAC moving to PL4 yesterday at 1700.
- NMAC reassessing needs for the MAFFS, Scoopers and Australian 737 Tanker and making plans for release.
- IMT coordinators for remain in place through the end of this week due high demand, especially for IMT replacements coupled with fewer IMTs being available due to end of season roster issues affecting all GA’s.
- Crew coordinator for Type 1 IHCs remain in place as on-going demand remains high and there are fewer available due to large numbers timing out.
- T2 and T2IA crews (agency/contract) can be coordinated directly between NICC and the GA’s, NMAC no longer providing oversight on these resources.

### **NWCG**

- See attached open tasking for T3IMT All-Hazards training that the Incident Positions Standards Committee (IPSC) is working on.

### **Northern Rockies GACC and Operational Updates:**

#### **NRCG Operations (Corey Buhl - Detailer)**

- Smokejumpers – Grangeville plane is off contract as of last weekend; do still have few on for miscellaneous overhead; same for West Yellowstone. Maintaining a load in Missoula that are currently on 30 min call back, max telework. Will maintain this through the upcoming warm and dry period.
- IHC crews are scattered – Lolo done the 28<sup>th</sup>, Idaho Panhandle will be done upon return. Lewis and Clark are likely returning this weekend.
- Doing well in GACC; did get some crews in from out of area.
- GB T4 IMT in-briefing for Haystack is today; and will assume command tomorrow at 0600 hours.
  - Ralph Rau – Jamie Tripp will cover in-brief for the BOD as well.
- Replacement request out for Winfield; however, do not believe are going to get it.
- Having calls with all Northern Rockies ICs – trying to put together a mix and match team from Command and General staff for support.
- One T2 IMT available national out of Rocky Mountain; however, there are two rationales in for that team – this is being decided now.



# **Northern Rockies Coordinating Group**

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

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

**Tuesday, September 21, 2021**

### **NRCC Update (Kathy Pipkin)**

- NRCC is going to five day coverage beginning this weekend; will be staffed as needed over the weekend.
- Have started returning to virtual work with the increase in Covid numbers; minimum staff in the office.

### **Old Business**

#### **Process for Requesting Mobilization Guide Changes – Decisional Topic – Kathy Pipkin**

- (See draft in pre-reading materials)
- Vote was postponed from the June meeting due to a lack of a quorum.
- NICC and other GACCS have gone this way and moved to a “working document” – is all on line with no hard copy print.
- This is to ensure it is outlined how changes are approved; through a formal process and that all changes go through the appropriate committees.
- Vote:
  - BIA NW – Supports.
  - BIA RM – Supports.
  - BLM – Supports.
  - FWS – Supports.
  - MT DES – Supports.
  - MT DNRC – Supports.
  - MT State Fire Chiefs’ Association – Supports.
  - MT County Fire Wardens Association – Supports.
  - MT Sheriffs and Peace Officers Association – Supports.
  - NPS – Supports.
  - USFS – Supports.
- **Approved – unanimous consent. Kathy Pipkin will finalize and post to the NRCC website.**

#### **2021 NRCC IC Recruitment Application – Decisional Topic – Kathy Pipkin**

- (See draft in pre-reading materials)
- Fine tuned the letter to this go around of applications.
- Need to discuss in the future “how does an IC stand down” – is a formal process needed?
- Vote:
  - BIA NW – Supports.
  - BIA RM – Supports.
  - BLM – Supports.
  - FWS – Supports.
  - MT DES – Supports.
  - MT DNRC – Supports.
  - MT State Fire Chiefs’ Association – Supports.
  - MT County Fire Wardens Association – Supports.
  - MT Sheriffs and Peace Officers Association – Supports.
  - NPS – Supports.



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- USFS – Supports.
- **Approved – unanimous consent. Kathy Pipkin will finalize and post to the NRCC website.**

### **NRCG Recognition for Support – Decisional Topic – Kathy Pipkin**

- (See Nomination Template in pre-reading materials.)
- Vote was postponed from the June meeting due to a lack of a quorum.
- Has been on the action items for some time.
- Reviewed nomination form for NRCG Recognition Form and revised.
- Rich Cowger – Fairly simply form by design; allows for flexibility
- Vote:
  - BIA NW – Supports.
  - BIA RM – Supports.
  - BLM – Supports.
  - FWS – Supports.
  - MT DES – Supports.
  - MT DNRC – Supports.
  - MT State Fire Chiefs' Association – Supports.
  - MT County Fire Wardens Association – Supports.
  - MT Sheriffs and Peace Officers Association – Supports.
  - NPS – Supports.
  - USFS – Supports.
- **Approved – unanimous consent. Kathy Pipkin will send final draft to Pam Jolly for finalization and distribution. Item will reside on the NRCG website.**

### **New Business**

No new business.

### **Additional Items:**

- Please send agenda items for the fall meeting into Pam Jolly as soon as possible.
- Ralph Rau will retire at end of October; Craig Glazier will be acting.
- Jamie Tripp's detail is over at the end of October; there will be new acting Deputy acting coming in.
- Ralph Rau – Would like to discuss Northern Rockies Critical Mission Task Force (Surge Capacity) review on the October agenda; in preparation for having it as an agenda item at the Fall meeting.
- Dan Warthin will be retiring at the end of December; Paul Cerda will be taking over.
- Tracey Nimlos will be retiring at the end of December.
- Ray Hart – Accepted a new position, start date of Oct 10, so this will be his last meeting.
- Bryce Rogers – do plan on getting a detailer into the NRTC position.

### **Review of Action Items: (Rich Cowger)**

- Postponed in the interest of time.

**The next scheduled NRCG Monthly Conference Call is October 19, 2021 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, October 19, 2021**

### **Participants:**

**Board Members:** Bryce Rogers, Aaron Thompson, Tate Fischer, Matt Hall, Rich Cowger – Vice Chair, Ralph Rau

**Deputies and Others:** Lawerance Thompson, Adriane Beck, Jason Jarrett, Paul Cerda, Corey Buh, Kathy Pipkin, Jordan McKnight, Jeni Jeresek, Karly DeMars, 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)**

- PL 2 Nationally; NMAC has scaled meetings back to once a week.
- Will be attending the NRCG Fall Meeting.
- Expect some memos and updates to be coming out soon.
- Video regarding health and welfare of firefighters will be coming out soon.
- There will be an NMAC memo coming out regarding formation of a task group to address IC, Deputy positions regarding interpretation and exceptions to fire business decision that those positions can not be AD. Will be a diverse group.
- NWCG meeting jointly with NMAC and FMB tomorrow.
- NWCG will be meeting with PSOG group; looking to revitalize and address services and national products.
- Information regarding January CGAC meeting will be coming out soon.

### **Northern Rockies GACC and Operational Updates:**

#### **NRCG Operations (Corey Buhl - Detailer)**

- Good discussion during Operations Committee Meeting.
- Do have some areas that continue in fire season; have had some crew, aircraft and miscellaneous orders.
- Plan on meeting with IHCs first week in November for season AAR.

### **NRCC Update (Kathy Pipkin)**

- Have published Mobilization Guide Change Form and email will be forthcoming.
- Have questions on IC Application Process: (*Decision to address these later during this meeting.*)
  - Need to identify notification protocol regarding IC stepping down; particularly notification to NRCG BOD Chair.
  - Once they step down, do they have to re-apply to occupy other roles?
  - If individuals want to change IMTs, what is the process?
  - Do trainees have to re-apply every year? IMT Coordinator tentatively answered as no to this, as long as staying on the same team.
- Activity since last call - 178 fires for 51,000 acres.
- Trying to get resources for Plant Creek fire (LNF).
- Obtained crews for the Patrick Creek (MT DNRC).
- Nationally light IA.



# **Northern Rockies Coordinating Group**

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

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

**Tuesday, October 19, 2021**

- Nationally, they are continuing to look at release dates for airtankers.
- NRCC has returned to Monday through Friday and as-needed staffing.

### **Old Business**

- No old business.

### **New Business**

#### **NR Critical Mission Resource Task Force Review – Informational Topic – Ralph Rau**

- (See email in pre-reading materials)
- Discuss in preparation as an agenda item for the fall meeting.
- Concept is sound; discussion is to better align and take care of those serving and increase efficiency.
- Experienced issues around fatigue and driving time between incidents.
- Opportunity to provide clear refinement.
- Jordan McKnight – received feedback from multiple functional areas and agencies. Overall, tool was well thought of and functioned well. Idea is to ensure all are on the same page with expectations of the tool and meeting policy.
- Corey Buhl – Intent going forward is to form a small, diverse group to refine the operations guide.
- Ralph Rau – Recognition that this is all interagency work. Suggestion around inviting extra, diverse individuals to flush out tasking at Fall meeting.

#### **Questions Regarding IC Application Process – Decisional Topic – Kathy Pipkin**

- Need to identify notification protocol regarding IC stepping down; particularly notification to NRCG BOD Chair.
  - NRCG Decision – Individual will notify the IMT coordinator; and then the IMT coordinator will notify the board.
  - Once they step down, do they have to re-apply to occupy other roles?
    - USFS - Think should consider for question 1. Don't think an IC stepping down and requesting to be the deputy would be automatic... should ask the question if another person is ready and qualified to step in as a deputy who has not yet had an opportunity to be an IC for one of the NR teams has that opportunity as are trying to build bench strength. Think this would especially be true for someone that is retiring and comes back through another agency. The team will likely know this and manage appropriately; just think BoD needs to be proactively thinking about that and making sure that succession planning is happening and then being implemented. NRCG BoD needs to proactively engage with ICs and ensure are supporting them on these items.
    - BLM - agree with Ralphs comments. One piece of the process that was daylighted this year was that obtaining executive's signatures and letters in a timely manner can be challenging. Wonder if there is a way to simply this.
  - If an IC trainee becomes qualified and wishes to take a team, have tentatively told them they do need to apply as an IC.
    - NRCG Decision – if moving from Deputy to IC or from IC to Deputy – do need to



# **Northern Rockies Coordinating Group**

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

**Tuesday, October 19, 2021**

**reapply.**

- If individuals want to change IMTs, what is the process?
  - **NRCG Decision - Affected IC's must both agree to the change.**
  - BoD will be notified when go through the selection process.
- Do trainees have to re-apply every year?
  - IMT Coordinator tentatively answered as no to this, as long as individual is staying on the same team.
  - BLM – Agree with Kathy's recommendation.
  - **NRCG Decision – If changing status, must re-apply; if not then do not have to re-apply.**

### **Other Items**

- Karly DeMars – Assisting with Fall Meeting preparations while Pam Jolly finishes detail.
- Tate Fischer – New FWS BoD member.
- Matt Hall – New MT DNRC BoD member.
- Recognition of Ralph Rau's pending retirement and that this will be his last NRCG meeting.
- Corey Buhl has accepted the Northern Rockies Operation's Officer position.
- Information regarding a future MAC AAR for the 2021 Fire Season will be forthcoming from Corey Buhl.

### **Review of Action Items: (Rich Cowger)**

- Deferred in the interest of time.

**The next scheduled NRCG Session will be the 2021 Fall NRCG Meeting that will be held virtually the week of November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021.**

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## **Tuesday November 2, 2021 General Session**

### **Welcome and Introductions – Josh Harvey**

- Welcome and a reminder that this is a public meeting for the purpose of conducting government business.
- Appreciated the cohesiveness of this group throughout last season.
- Proud of the effort and success that occurred last season.



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**National Update and Report – Aitor Bidaburu**

- Consecutive 99 days at PL 4 and 5; record setting year
- Experienced challenges with limited resource management; appreciate all the great coordination and communication with the Northern Rockies, including the strategic thinking that occurred over time.
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is being explored as an alternate pathway to qualification. Are in the final stages of developing a process that will be coming out in January of 2022. Process will provide RPL guidance. Does not circumvent requirements; however, provides an alternate pathway.
- Endorsements Project leverages a lot of the training and NIMS requirements. Would provide a pathway for many states, local and tribal resources. More to come at a later date. Planning phase has been extended through the end of the year.
- Incident Management Remote Response (IMRR) calls – provided a forum for IMTs to discuss challenges and concerns; largely centered around Covid mitigation efforts and protocols. One of the issues was providing this group an anchor point around information sharing. Will continue and be formally chartered so that it may be under a governance umbrella.
- Ongoing work with Incident Workforce Development Group (IWDG); formulated a phased action plan for Complex Incident Management concept. Available online on the NWCG website.

**Northern Rockies Operations Fall Report – Corey Buhl**

- Moving forward as the new operations officer; would like to cover a few items and give an opportunity for priority feedback.
- Intend on attending several agencies fall FMO meetings.
- **BIN ITEM:** AAR to review the MAC – would like to set a date for December.
- Need a deeper level of attention on our Northern Rockies and National dispatch systems. Was a critical shortage and the most UTF'd positions. Most expanded dispatches were staffed with ADs. Intend to work with Kathy Pipkin for a Northern Rockies Expanded Dispatch Plan.
- Intend on coordination with the Northern Rockies Fire Prioritization process.
- MAC Plan will need to be reviewed and updated this year.
- With NRCC being as short staffed as it is, feel that the Northern Rockies needs to identify a separate Team Coordinator from the Center Manager position. Is a significant workload.
  - Aaron Thompson – Interested in hearing more on this and it's potential.
  - Kathy Pipkin – Another approach would be to staff the overhead coordinator position.
  - Rich Cowger – Noted the significant off season work that is associated with the Team Coordinator.
  - Tate Fischer – Was the overhead coordinator position funded fully prior?
  - Kathy Pipkin – Lost a shared position with contracting approximately two years ago. Contracting then underwent organizational changes. Lost 13 pay periods of work.
- Aaron Thompson – Have proposed an IMT Coordinator position for GACCs to the national level.
- Intend to work on obtaining crew capacity for the Northern Rockies.

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**NRCC Fall Report – Kathy Pipkin**

- Reviewed Volume of Business report out (*located in pre-reading materials*).
- This is what most of the cost shares utilize. “Other” is divided among the other agencies.
- Had two full time detailers for four months. Utilized four individuals, rotating, to keep the center staffed. Requires four individuals on the aircraft desk to keep that desk running at the higher PL levels.
- This year tracked hours – took 20 people working 70 hours a week to staff from June to the first part of August. 57 days at PL 4 and 5. NR IMTs had 20 assignments within the NR; all IMTs were out multiple times.
- The season started in February with North Dakota and the last large fire was late October with Crown Mountain on the HLF out of Great Falls Dispatch.
- The first team assignment was May 9<sup>th</sup> with NR Buying to the SW, and then Great Basin. The first IMT Assignment was NR IMT4 to Robertson Draw on June 16<sup>th</sup> and the last IMT Assignment was a NR IMT2 Volunteers (an ad hoc T2 organization with IC Connell from NR team 4) to Alder Creek, Trail Creek and Sand Lake on Sept 24<sup>th</sup> released Oct. 7<sup>th</sup>.
  - [https://gacc.nifc.gov/nrcc/predictive/intelligence/ytd\\_historical/imt\\_assignments/2021\\_team\\_assignments.pdf](https://gacc.nifc.gov/nrcc/predictive/intelligence/ytd_historical/imt_assignments/2021_team_assignments.pdf)
- Preparedness Levels - NRGAs were at PL-4/5 for 57 days. The earliest NRGAs have ever gone to PL 4 with July 8<sup>th</sup> and the earliest for PL 5 on July 11<sup>th</sup>.
  - [https://gacc.nifc.gov/nrcc/predictive/intelligence/ytd\\_historical/preparedness\\_levels/PreparednessLevels.htm](https://gacc.nifc.gov/nrcc/predictive/intelligence/ytd_historical/preparedness_levels/PreparednessLevels.htm)
- NRGAs Fires as of 11/2/2021 - 2021 – 3,842 fires for 1,038,667 acres and NRGAs are still having fires. For reference: 2017 – 3,900 fires for 1,55,275 acres; 10 year average – 3,146 fires for 597,634 acres
  - [https://gacc.nifc.gov/nrcc/predictive/intelligence/ytd\\_historical/ytd\\_historical.htm](https://gacc.nifc.gov/nrcc/predictive/intelligence/ytd_historical/ytd_historical.htm)
- Top 25 fires during the last 10 years - 2021 has 5 in the list; 2017 has 6
  - [https://gacc.nifc.gov/nrcc/predictive/intelligence/ytd\\_historical/ytd-daily-large.htm](https://gacc.nifc.gov/nrcc/predictive/intelligence/ytd_historical/ytd-daily-large.htm)
- Team Assignments - NRGAs had 43 IMT assignments in the GACC for 2021, with 20 of those being NR IMTs.
  - NR IMTs all had at least 3 assignments with some having 4 and a few having 5.
  - 5 of NR IMTs had out of GACC assignments.
- Season is not finished; still processing resource orders through on call staffing
- Still have to accomplish NRCC AAR
- Moved the mobilization guide to a “live” document and change request form is now online. Working on getting this document more in line with being a supplement to the national guide.
- Currently majority of staff is working virtual; three prefer to physically work in the office.
- One vacancy for predictive services, GS-12 meteorologist position. Only vacancy that have on the approved listing. Will continue to search for ways to fill the overhead coordinator position. Since losing the position, have brought in detailers every year on NTE details.

**Northern Rockies Contracting Update – Ryan Patrick**

- Hired contracting position (Dianne Sigler); position arose from the above referenced shared NRCC position due to contracting reorganization.
- Underwent multiple contracting processes changes in addition to the reorganization.
- No longer allowed to do pre-award inspections; required to do technical board evaluation.

- Went fairly well last year with heavy equipment solicitations.
- Soliciting for water handling equipment this year; challenging to do inspection during the winter; short window for this to occur
- Working on regional consistency regarding these post award inspections. Are looking at the possibility of random selection inspections.
- Chris Loraas has also been an asset supporting contracting.
- Open to attending other agency meetings upon request.
- Kathy Pipkin – Question regarding expectation on contractors meeting vaccine mandate?
  - Ryan Patrick – Latest direction - for simplified acquisition, do not have this requirement. The decision that needs to be made is if that language will be put into future contracting agreements. This is evolving and could change.

**NRTC Update and Trainee Priorities – Melissa Wegner**

- Core schedule will be 100% virtual with exception of leadership classes 380 and 381.
  - Those two were the only courses that were not delivered last year.
- Will accept all Northern Rockies candidates that meet pre-requisite. Virtual environment affords unlimited space and seating.
- Processed 1,094 nominations and 503 students.
- Feedback from training officers was positive.
- Reminder that administrative officer position was removed from the organizational chart. Did hire Lydia Faller into the front office position.
- BIA is filling behind their position; additionally have Billy Philips who works with multiple initiatives including RIST and IMRR. Also have Matt Gibson, who also works on long term additional projects.
- NRTC completes course development work in addition to accomplishing training courses.
- Priority Trainee Program – statistics will be forthcoming soon. Interesting this year in that there were so few individuals available and the need was so high, that every qualification that had an available qualification was supported as a priority. Will be discussing at the fall geographical training representatives meeting.
- Northern Rockies has accomplished recognition of prior learning previously and will be looking closely at the national initiative.
  - Aitor Bidaburu – Be aware as the process comes out in January; be thinking about how the GACC wants to address these moving forward. May need to set up a panel and establish internal controls.
  - Aaron Thompson – Is there an understanding from the workforce as to the effectiveness of the virtual learning? What is the long term plan?
  - Melissa Wegner – Feedback is good; however, some is antidotal. Will be assessing individual courses for virtual opportunities moving forward. Future may contain a mix of both.

**NRK Fall Update – Anthony Krause**

- Supported a massive need for supplies concurrently, at the beginning of the season.
- Upward demand for water-handling, especially pumps and sprinklers.

- 
- Vendors aren't as available and trucking capacity is limited. Brought in a National Guard trucking unit to supplement.
  - Challenge with large pre-orders, especially with out of region teams.
  - Provided a lot of support to Minnesota, California, Colorado and other regions.
  - Serious challenges with staffing seven days a week for such a long period of time.
  - Working to fill two critical vacancies.
  - Success working with the IMTs identifying who needed critical gear.
  - Many items are not available, parts shortages as well.
  - Going into next season, may not have the parts needed for repairs in time.
  - Working with national to obtain numbers for new items.
  - New contracting system has also taken a while to get in a rhythm.
  - Craig Glazier – Can you expound upon the parts shortages and impacts to readiness for next year?
    - Anthony Krause – May not meet the June 1<sup>st</sup> date for all repair items. With supply chains, timeline is difficult to predict.

**Update BOD Zone, Committee & IMT Liaison Representation**

- [NRCG Board to Committee and Zones document](#) updated.
- IMT Liaisons list updated. (*This item is found in the IMT plan.*)

**NR Fire Prioritization Process – Corey Buhl**

- Last year faced some challenges with the fire prioritization process. For example, the Zones not understanding how fires ended up in the overall priorities.
- Propose looking at reviewing and updating the fire prioritization process at the GACC and how that impacts the Zone levels.
- Are newer programs out there that could be looked at to inform those decisions.
- Need more consistency nationwide on this approach.
  - Aitor Bidaburu – NMAC prioritizes geographic areas, not individual fires. There is a lot of intelligence that factors into the individual incident priority listing; both metrics and the board validation. Managing expectations and communication are both key. These priority lists for NMAC are to provide that overall higher intent on a national level. Would be good to have intent conversations as a board regarding delegating decision making to individuals.
- Current process is in need of streamlining; workload was tremendous on the intelligence desk.
- Currently utilize decision criterium program. Stratton's model has the potential to inform those decisions as well. Kathy Pipkin asked if some of those parameters could be tweaked for Northern Rockies specifics.
- Dan Warthin – Criterium is a great way to start; believe if could validate with science what the ICs and Agency Administrators are seeing on the ground, should be able to review and allocate limited resources on a daily basis. Support a hybrid approach.
- Aaron Thompson – Support a hybrid model as well. Comes down to when can success be achieved, which may not be on the highest value fire. Need exists to support the coordination center. Support streamlining.

- 
- Can work with Kathy Pipkin to modify the process and compile a future proposal for decisional vote.
  - Aaron Thompson – Also suggest revisiting in the future a potential decisional delegation to individuals at the coordination center.
  - Darron Williams – Appreciate the concept and agree communication is key. One thing that has worked well in the Northwest is bringing in someone to assist with IMT prioritization. Would relive pressure on dispatch as well. Important for decisional legal ramifications perspective as well.
  - Avery Thompson – Do feel the Northern Rockies Operational position should have some say as well; however, important to have an objective based decision model. Needs to be well established prior to fire season.
  - Bob Jones – Theme seems to be less resources nationally. Would be good to review intent of National Fire Plan; specifically the workforce planning aspects. Analysis needs to be conducted.
  - Tate Fischer – Support reviewing and tasking.
  - Josh Harvey – Support taking a comprehensive and multi-agency look at this process and the changes occurring in the fire environment. Support empowering operational individuals as well. Also, these individuals need a clear understanding of each agencies mission to make those decisions.
  - Matt Hall – Support tasking for reviewing this process. Also supportive of framework for where operational decisions need to be made.
  - Patrick Lonergan – Support re-evaluation of process to something more objectives based and simpler.
  - Steve Holton – Support simplifying the process.
  - Dan Warthin – Important as develop this to ensure that the “how” and “why” intent are well communicated.
  - Craig Glazier – Would like to see several proposals brought forward for review and decisional vote.
  - Action Item: Verbal tasking to Corey Buhl to develop a proposal for streamlining and simplifying the process. Proposal ultimately to be submitted for board review and decisional vote. Corey Buhl and Kathy Pipkin will identify elements for this framework and present for discussion during the January NRCG meeting.

**Supporting NR Operations Officer – Aaron Thompson**

- Experienced that the specified agency Individuals identified previously in the delegation were mostly unavailable to provide this support during the past active season.
- Corey Buhl – Suggest the board accepts whoever is identified by either Corey Buhl or Kathy Pipkin as available at the time and insert that language into the delegation letter.
- Aaron Thompson – Individuals need to have specific skill sets, rather than specific qualifications. Individuals would be responsible for authorization and spending of federal funds as part of the duties by allocating resources.
- Craig Glazier – Would support Corey Buhl identifying those individuals in advance and formalizing with a short list going into the season.
- Action Item: Corey Buhl will compile a short list of individuals for the Board to revisit during the March meeting.

- 
- Corey Buhl – Would like the latitude to identify individuals outside the list, should the availability of individuals on the list be exhausted.

**Contract Equipment Supervision – Ryan Patrick**

- Several issues observed this year.
- Issue of not having enough equipment supervision for the equipment that is out there; (heavy equipment bosses, feller buncher rollover and Lessons Learned feller buncher module events.)
- Daylighting for awareness of this becoming the normal.
- Heavy Equipment Task Force is a complex resource with multiple pieces of equipment and transports. Solicited with Region 4 this year. Contracting officer's time was being monopolized with issues around this resource and how it is being utilized.
- Looking at developing some SOP's around this issue as a preventative measure.
- Did brief the Operations Committee around this issue as well.
- Corey Buhl – Would be willing to work on a task group to revisit alternatives and ways to accomplish this and find a workful solution.
- Sarah Lee – Discussed with the business committee as well. Much of this had to do with the contract administration piece of this as well. Issues include proper payment, and items being out of the scope of the agreement. Is very complex on both the administration and payment sides. Concerns over seeing these on pre-orders for team. Also, concerns over the aftermath of large timber components that arise with utilization of this resource.
- Issue is ensuring there is the correct directive for this resource; instead of sorting it out after the fact. Having a specific plan in place, for each incident, would assist.
- Dan Warthin – With RPL, recommend looking at if are there individuals out there with this skill set that could alleviate this shortage.
- Jordan Mcknight – Internal agency red card meeting daylighted the challenges associated with resource supervision shortage. Are part of a Forest Service tasking to address certain aspects of this process. Potential future opportunity to identify items for application across the Northern Rockies.

**Dispatch & Cache Operations within the NR GACC – Rich Cowger**

- Feedback from IMTs this season highlighted staffing shortages with both the dispatch and cache systems. Also, each dispatch and cache seemed to have it's own operating procedures. Is there a way to identify consistent operating procedures for all the dispatch centers and caches throughout the Northern Rockies?
- David Lee – Is common to hear this after large seasons. Beyond the mobilization guide, there are no specifics as to how business is accomplished for different offices. Are opportunities for standardization and have been working towards those. If have items that would like to see standardized, request those be put forth in a tasking to be reviewed by the dispatch committee to see if those could be addressed.
- Rich Cowger will re-check with individuals who brought this up to identify specific items.
- David Lee – Dispatch Committee is doing a complexity analysis and are working to develop some criteria that guides dispatch center staffing levels. More to come in the future.

### Bin Items

#### MAC AAR Review Date Discussion – Corey Buhl

- Wednesday, January 5<sup>th</sup> – 0900 to 1200, Mountain Time
- Pam Jolly will distribute virtual calendar invites.
- Sarah Lee will facilitate.
- Corey Buhl will compile and distribute the agenda.
- Josh Harvey – For future planning, would like to tie the MAC AAR to the fall NRCG meeting.

#### NRCC Staffing Clarification – Kathy Pipkin

- Reviewed current approved organizational chart
- Aaron Thompson – With the potential for future funding, seeing this as a key shortage for the fire program. Would be open to shared funding position discussions.
- Tate Fischer – Would also entertain these discussions.
- Kathy Pipkin – Thank you all for your support.

#### Fire Prevention and Education Committee (FPEC) Items - Matt Hall

- Are looking for a tasking from the Board to re-establish a fire restrictions working group.
- Would like the NRCG Board to task the FPEC with reestablishing the Fire Restrictions working group to address the following:
  - Lots of room for improvement for the general Restrictions process. Some contradictory methods in the NR Fire Restriction Plan
  - Many counties went into Stage II, but some entities needed exemptions – even for emergency work
  - Would be valuable to have explicit instructions about things like exemptions.
  - Are the right things being restricted?
  - Are the Zones correct?
  - Are exemptions efficient?
  - Revise NRCG Fire Restrictions & Closure Plan to include more specific direction for Restriction Areas and necessary updates for MTFireInfo.org
- Matt will clarify if they are asking for a written tasking and report back.
- Aaron Thompson – Would request that they draft up this tasking for the boards review.
- Action Item: Matt Hall will follow up with the FPEC committee regarding the tasking format and, if needed, request a draft for a written tasking.

## Wednesday November 3, 2021 General Session

### Welcome & Introductions

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

### NRCG Financial Plan – Jeni Jeresek, Sarah Lee

- Will review the current plan and what has been accomplished since last year and conclude with a discussion on moving forward.
- Results from survey daylighted that not all agencies' contributions had been completely accounted for historically.



- Hoping to stay ahead of the deadlines this year to avoid rushing to obtain signatures at the last minute, like what occurred last year.
- Reviewed the current plan (*see pre-reading materials*).
- Reviewed last years proposed plan that was voted down.
- Intent now is to verify, with each agency, that their contribution amounts are accurate. Updated costs will be applied once verified.
- Does anyone have any suggestions for moving forward?
- Aaron Thompson – Recommendation for Board to take the next month to review agreement proposal (that was previously voted down last year) and then revisit this proposal (once updated with accurate costs) at a separate February 2<sup>nd</sup> (0900-1100) meeting. (Pam will send calendar invite.
- Bryce Rogers - I support it as well let's get the actual cost included
- Have started updating the FY22 plan and will be reaching out to each agency for updated salary figures associated with identified positions.
- Matt Hall – Support the effort to address early, prior to deadlines.
- Action Item – Jeni Jeresek and Sarah Lee will reach out to NRCG BOD members to verify accurate contributions and then provide a revised proposal that the board will discuss during a separate February 2<sup>nd</sup> (0900 – 1100) meeting.

**The Future of Remote Incident Support (RIS) in the NR – Morganne Lehr, Billy Phillips**

- Jordan Mcknight – Intent of this presentation is to review options for the future.
- Billy Philips – Reviewed 2021 RIS in the NR and provided brief history of this program.
- In 2021, expanded to more of a RIS Team concept. Brought in additional planning capacity and other team positions that had not been included historically (*see graphic*).
- Two significant concepts
  - Ability to utilize one person to support multiple incidents - gains efficiency.
  - Provides for additional staffing and builds capacity in individuals that are not able to mobilize with teams but are available to provide remote support.
- Had 46 trainees come through the RIST between several GACCs.
- Had 6 individuals that participated in the RSU last year that were unwilling to commit to an IMT; however, were willing and available to provide support in this capacity.
- Had staff from 24 states; over 158 individuals from multiple agencies came through the RIST this year; including some from non-traditional agencies.
- Reviewed incidents that were supported in the Northern Rockies (*see table*).
- Incidents supported ranged from Type 3 to Type 1 IMTs and support duration often extended past two weeks (sometimes months).
- Morganne Lehr – Have built a program without a staff to accomplish what is required to stand up this highly utilized service each year (*see options table*).
- Reviewed options individually.
- Tasking has been issued at a national level to explore if this is something that needs to be pursued on a national level. However, there is no guarantee or commitment currently towards this effort.
- Continuing to function in an ad hoc capacity has the challenge of struggling with recruitment. Both Billy Philips and Morganne Lehr continue to be involved and are unable to perform this as collateral duties anymore.



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- Strongly feel this is a full-time position that performs the off season work needed to get the program operational for the season.
  - Option number three provides for identifying small RIST rotating teams to accomplish this work.
  - Jordan Mcknight – Would like to discuss a short-term option and then discuss moving forward into the long term. Heard that this is not sustainable as a collateral duty moving forward for FY22. Question becomes is RIST something that there is a desire to support for FY22?
    - Craig Glazier – Program is clearly utilized and successful and would like to continue.
    - Josh Harvey – Would like to continue this program for the future. Can be critical for success for IMTs.
    - Aaron Thompson – Support some form of RIST moving forward into the future. Need to identify how to support it better.
    - Tate Fischer – Echo above support sentiments.
  - Jordan Mcknight – Hearing this support, have identified a modest short-term approach for one of the federal agencies to put a position on an organization chart that could be filled by a detailer and position would be funded off the NRCG Support Code. This would provide approximately 12 months for the Board to identify a long-term solution.
    - Dan Warthin – Costs associated with these position options would be helpful to have for those internal agency conversations.
    - Jordan Mcknight – Are looking into that; feeling is that it may fall into the GS-12 or above area.
    - Aaron Thompson – support the short-term concept; wonder if it should be 120 day detailers instead. Going through the NRCG support code would be preferable over utilizing the cost share.
    - Craig Glazier – Were the two detailers selected as an option over the 120 NTE for any specific reason?
      - Jordan Mcknight – Two detailers was an initial suggestion. If an agency is willing to pick up a 120 NTE, that would suffice as well.
    - Tate Fischer – Support and would entertain facilitating these conversations.
    - Bryce Rogers – Do have a position at the NRTC that could possibly be shared and provide this capacity.
    - Aaron Thompson – Will look at if could add a box to an organizational chart and if that is possible. Curious about national efforts and staffing possibilities there?
      - Billy Philips – National group efforts are just beginning and are trying to determine if this is beneficial nationally.
    - Aaron Thompson – BLM will be thinking of adding this position in the future as a GS-12 at the NRCC, should future additional funding manifest.
  - Jordan Mcknight – Could agencies report back on the status of checking with their agencies regarding adding a box to an organizational chart at the December meeting. (BIA, BLM, USFS) Information update only - Being funded by suppression cost share.
    - Sara Lee – Would need to dial into expectations and keep the lines clear on that suppression cost share requirements and away from the preparedness realm.
  - Craig Glazier – USFS will commit to looking at optional for adding a box on an organizational chart as well.

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**NRGA IMT Organization Proposal – Aaron Thompson**

- Shrinking work force and fatigue are factors that necessitate a conversation around how many IMTs the Northern Rockies can sustainably host.
- Currently 2 T1, 4T2 and 1 WFMT
- Many IMTs are having a challenging time filling rosters. Many also have succession challenges as well.
- This is also being worked on by way of a variety of aspects at a national level.
- Additionally, observed need for more T3 IMTs and rapid deployment resources.
- Would like a discussion around retooling or reconfiguring the IMTs that Northern Rockies supports.
- Would like to re-tool the teams to 2 T1, 3T2, 3T3 standing IMT teams – would like to bring the WFMT into the T2 rotation. Could repurpose a few that propose to stand down into T3; would better support the ICs with rostering and the unit leaders could possibly consider job sharing. This would also support supervisors, regarding IMT members regular workloads.
- Would also provide successional pathways.
- Potential to move to Complex Incident Management in the future and this would align with that also.
- Additionally, would assist with future work force fatigue, both mental and physical.
- Craig Glazier – No guarantee that Team 1 will have an IC this coming season. Regarding T3 proposal, have several rostered T3 in R04 and has been successful; however, experience has shown that it may not be as beneficial for successional planning for T2 and T1 teams.
- Patrick Lonergan – Proposal has merit; agree with successional concerns. Would need to be clear on intent for scoping of T2 organizations. Discussion with WFAAs group is needed for expectations of IMTs and validation around capacities.
- Rich Cowger – Support thought process; however, regardless of the configuration of Northern Rockies teams, if cannot figure out how to systematically support those teams, then regardless of the numbers, that needed aspect of support remains. Potential to lose individuals simply due to change if that change is not managed appropriately. Communication with the field around this change would be critical as well.
- Aaron Thompson – Reality is that there are not enough resources. Some are no longer participating because they are burned out.
- Rick Connell – Echo expectations, concerns, and support that a discussion with the WFAAs is warranted. Particularly, discussion needs to include the conversation around the need to import out of area IMTs and fatigue management.
- Tate Fischer – Echo sentiment from Rick Connell. Support an Agency Administrator summit idea. Support this proposal.
- Aaron Thompson – Need exists to educate our Agency Administrators that Northern Rockies will never have enough teams to manage all of the area's fires. Things will be different in the future regarding IMT management and the level at which that occurs.
- Bryce Rogers – Support this thought process. Did identify a concern with the Delegation of Authority when had CAT Team supporting an incident. Specifically, the IC being an AD was a concern.
- Matt Hall – Support looking at this in a collective decision-making manor. Support continuing the conversation. Supportive of T3 IMTs as well, and identifying those expectations.

- Joe Sampson – Support this change; as change must occur, as this is not sustainable. Support WFMT moving into the T2 rotation. Important not to confuse WFAA expectations with Line Officer expectations regarding IMTs. Do have some standing T3 zone teams that could be folded into the mold. Limited number of resources available for all IMTs may still be a limiting factor with this proposal. Time is of the essence; next season is rapidly approaching.
- There is a need for every individual and every position. Individuals need not fear they are being restricted from accepting assignments. Attempting to provide for fatigue management and eliminate burn out.
- Decision needed on how to move forward.
- Tate Fischer – Prepared to make this decision during this meeting tomorrow.
- Craig Glazier – Agree that tomorrow would be supportive for a decision.
- Josh Harvey – Also support a decision tomorrow.
- Patrick Lonergan – Suggest tasking the IC Committee with option to provide input for discussion tomorrow afternoon.
  - Rick Connell – Unsure if obtaining this information is possible given the short time frame.
- Aaron Thompson – Board can decide on just the framework tomorrow.
- Kathy Pipkin – Would suggest re-do all teams if are looking at dropping teams.
- Joe Sampson – Board making a decision would be helpful and then the IC Committee will move forward and adjust accordingly.
- Scott Schuster – Agree if the framework is known, then ICs can compose a glidepath to arrive at that end goal.
- Aaron Thompson – Proposal for NR IMT Change Summary - 2T1, 3T2 (including the WFMT into the T2 rotation), and 3T3 IMTs
  - Action Item – Board will vote on this proposal (2T1, 3T2 (including the WFMT into the T2 rotation), and 3T3 IMTs) during tomorrow's IC Selection discussion.
- Kathy Pipkin – Would the T3 IC's then need to apply?
  - Aaron Thompson – Correct.
- Kathy Pipkin – Majority of Northern Rockies requests are for the Northern Rockies T2 IMTs. T1 IMTs take just as many out of area assignments as in area. Need exists to balance GACC needs with National needs.
- Corey Buhl – Have relied heavily on out of area T3 IMTs. Support this conversation. Do need to start communicating differently with the Line Officers and the WFAAs.
- Corey Buhl – Offer thought of potential for individuals to participate in the RIST group if are in danger of losing those individuals due to proposed IMT changes.

**NR Surge Groups / Critical Mission Resource Taskforces – Corey Buhl**

- Will be reviewing and improving the operations guide.
- Reviewed the history and utilization of this resource.
- Season feedback provided areas that could be improved upon.
- Once obtain feedback from all involved groups, will be convening a task force to review opportunities for future improvements.
- Suggestion to also apply this concept to other resources.
- Nomenclature is important, as NMAC also launched surge capacity resources alongside the time the Northern Rockies implemented the Critical Mission Resource Taskforce.

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- Josh Harvey – IDL did have several incidents that received positive feedback regarding utilization of this resource. Was some concern over three to four day commitment and then long travel times impacting capacity.
  - Rick Connell – At IC Committee meeting did request feedback and will send if received. Did already submit notes and comments from the middle of the season. Resource is useful; however, after they depart there is still a need for high level resources to be maintained on the ground. Need to address the long duration need and tradeoffs as well.
  - Joe Sampson – Support the surge groups and they are useful if the incident receives them. It is an attempt to be the most efficient with a lack of resources. Operations group expressed frustrations with loss of windows by the time resource was obtained.
  - Paul Roose – Need exists to establish more organized crew capacity within the GACC.
  - Moving forward will be contacting Board members directly regarding accomplishing this work.

### Bin Items

#### IT Update – Tara Dana

- Patrick Murphy has been able to acquire funding for enough IT equipment for 55 IMT teams nationally.
- This includes multiple pieces of basic equipment.
- Funding was acquired through DOI CARES Act.
- Also working on trying to develop a fire IT program nationally that is similar to the one Northern Rockies used to utilize.
- No plan as of yet on how to manage the equipment due to fourth quarter procurement deadlines.
- Did receive one Compact Rapid Deployment (CRD) communications resources and will be testing this year.

#### Fire Prevention and Education Committee – Follow Up - Potential Tasking – Matt Hall

- Follow up from yesterday – they are comfortable with a verbal tasking.
- Action Item – Recommendation and consensus from board to move forward; Matt Hall will relay verbal tasking to FPEC.



# **Northern Rockies Coordinating Group**

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

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

**Tuesday, December 21, 2021**

### **Participants:**

**Board Members:** Brad Bergman (BLM), Tate Fischer, Josh Harvey, Jake Ganieany, Matt Hall, Rich Cowger, Craig Glazier

**Deputies and Others:** Joe Sampson, Kathy Pipkin, Jordan McKnight, Jeni Jeresek, Tara Dana, Tracey Nimlos

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

### **NWCG/NMAC Update: (Aitor Bidaburu)**

- Not present

### **Northern Rockies GACC and Operational Updates:**

#### **NRCG Operations (Corey Buhl)**

- Not present

### **NRCC Update: (Kathy Pipkin)**

- Still have a few fires and still have resources committed outside the GACC. NRCC staffing for the holidays – closed December 24-26 and December 31 – January 2<sup>nd</sup>; minimum staffing the week between Christmas and New Year's.

### **New Business**

#### **Discussion Regarding Proposed 2023 NR IMT Configuration Changes – Informational Topic – Joe Sampson**

- Chair had extensive conversations with the AA group last week and direction in the memo that will come out was a joint effort with the AAs. NRCG had been looking at putting out direction about what the IMTs should look like, but the AAs wanted the IC group to be more involved with the configuration of the IMTs after 2022. 2022 will remain status quo. Push will not be to get IMT3s stood up for 2022, but rather begin work to do so in the following year. All are committed to understanding the need to reorganize and restructure the IMTs and the Board and AAs wish to work with the ICs to determine what that looks like. Hope to get to a spot where IMTs are healthy and sustainable. Also, need to figure out how to support the infrastructure behind the IMTs. NR Team 5 will remain the Wildland Fire Management Team for 2022.
- Request that the IC committee Chair provide the NRCG board with a reply to the question of: "With the proposed changes for 2023, what direction do they need from the board to fold into the resource pool (1) type 2 IMT and (1) type 1 IMT and build/recruit (3) type 3 IMTs?"
- Joe Sampson representing the IC Committee feels there will be a good plan moving forward although, will be a challenge. NWCG Workforce Management group is moving forward quickly and will affect how IMTs look in the future. It appears IMTs will be labeled Complex and Non-Complex by 2023. Should the ICs be looking at this during their work? Will better position the region for the future.
- ICs will begin work with their tasking in January. Will be a workload, but they have a bias for action.
- IMT application timeline will be more compressed for 2022 IMT applications. IC selection letter



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should be distributed soon.

### **Leaders' Intent for Proposed T3 IMTs – Decisional Topic – Josh Harvey**

- This will be folded into the analysis of IMTs moving toward complex and non-complex.

### **2022 NRCG Spring Meeting and IMT Meeting Dates – Decisional Topic – Josh Harvey**

- NRCG and IMT meetings will be virtual April 18-22, 2022
- IC committee will determine which IMT will organize IMT meetings

### **Old Business**

#### **NR Remote Incident Support (RIS) – Informational Topic – Jordan McKnight**

- Agencies to report back regarding adding a box to an organizational chart that would be funded by the suppression cost share.
- USFS may have the possibility of adding that position. Meeting early in January to discuss and will report back to the BOD.

#### **Financial Plan Update – Informational Topic – Jeni Jeresek**

- All agency leads should have gotten an email with past contributions to the AFD financial plan. Due date was the 17<sup>th</sup> but have only gotten a couple of responses. Looking for those responses back in order to get the final out in early January. Please let Jeni Jeresek know by first week of January regarding changes.

#### **Proposed Tasking – Establishment of Baseline Complexity Criteria for Dispatch Centers within the Northern Rockies Geographic Area – Decisional Topic – Craig Glazier / Aaron Thompson**

- (See pre-reading materials) Proposal sent.
- Ask is for Dispatch Centers to do complexity analysis based on model used in the PNW to look at complexities, staffing, and gaining efficiencies.
- Official data call will be put out in January and will involve a survey that addresses the items that go into a complexity analysis. That will establish the parameters that go into each complexity. The list of the data is in the proposal. Survey will be sent to the Center Managers.
- Draft complexity analysis to be presented to BOD in February or March of 2023.
- Not a quorum on the call to decide whether to move forward. Will poll the board via email for approval to move forward on the project.

#### **Review of Action Items: (Josh Harvey)**

- Deferred in the interest of time.

**The next scheduled NRCG Monthly Conference Call is January 18, 2022 at 10:00 Hours Mountain Time**