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Monday April 18, 2022 – General Session

Welcome and Introductions – Josh Harvey

- Appreciate all the work that has been accomplished this winter.
- Acknowledged the change that has occurred over the last few years, including the business changes that came about from Covid.

National Update and Report – Aitor Bidaburu

- Nationally PL2; receiving resource orders supporting Southern Area and the Southwest.
- Conditions are beginning to creep into the southern Great Basin.
- NMAC – approximately 40 T2IA crews on the National contract this year; will be dispatched at the GACC level. T2 Crews are still in the contracting process. Expecting approximately 200 crews; will be dispatched out of NICC.
- Complex Incident Management (CIM) – IMRR calls have been occurring; facilitated by NIMO. Putting some structure in to provided for governance protocols and vetting ideas through NWCG standards. NMAC will be the focal point to task out items to committees. CIM effort continues to move forward. NWCG standards committee is actively involved and has been tasked with identifying pathways. Short turnaround for a draft that will then be reviewed. 2023 will be a transition year with full implementation in 2024. Rocky Mountain Geographic Area will pilot this year. Looking for feedback on areas that would accept a CIM team.
- NMAC will continue prioritizing teams per the protocols listed in the National Mobilization Guide. This assists with managing team welfare and fatigue.
- Corey Buhl – Need to identify if any teams want to be part of the pilot and need to decide if this GACC will accept CIM teams by June 1st.

Northern Rockies Operations Spring Report – Corey Buhl

- **Action Item: Need to identify if any teams want to be part of the CIM pilot and need to decide if this GACC will accept CIM by June 1st.**
- Crews – all IHC intend to stand up as T1.
- Smokejumper refreshers and rookie training occurring. Minimal turnover this year.
- 20 Airtankers on contract this year; with CWNs, up to 30.
- Do expect some shortages if multiple areas become busy concurrently. Will experience supply chain shortages. Cache experiencing some staffing shortages as well. Shipping will also be challenging due to truck availability.
- Dispatch centers are also experiencing staffing struggles.
- Aviation Updates:
 - Region 1 pilot staffing will be at 30%.
 - Will struggle to provide 7-day staffing for two Sherpas.
 - One lead plane trainee within Region 1, expect him to be fully qualified early in fire season.
 - Down two Rappel crews nationally due to contracting.
 - At least two helicopter vendors are not fully staffing available helicopters due to contracting.

- Light Fixed Wing contract still in process with the Washington Office (WO). Hope modified CWN will be temporary fix.
- Fortress 200 will be tested out of Ronan in the seats.
- Should have Fixed Wing Program Manager position filled prior to fire season.
- UAS – Standard ordering for NRM projects is on the NRCC webpage; fire will be updated with flow chart guidance soon. It is currently being looked at to facilitate as much standardization with the National Office as possible.

NRCC Spring Report – Kathy Pipkin

- Crew coordinator position is now vacant. DNRC is working on filling behind.
- Meteorologist position also now vacant. Short term plan to utilize retired meteorologist; BLM and FWS are working on filling positions.
- Outreached for two 120 details for Overhead desk; were only able to fill one. Individual is slated to come on in May.
- Working on hiring front desk position.
- Calving Miller's detail ends at the end of June and working on a second detailer.
- Staffing will be challenging; will be relying on AD workforce for support during the season.
- Working on transitioning the mobilization guide to be a supplement to the National Mobilization Guide. Hope to publish at the end of May.
- Website modernization project in the works.
- NRDRSv4 transition in WIMS is still on track for archiving by the end of May. Energy Release Component (ERC) graphs on web page do have broken links due to this process. Seven-day significant fire potential analysis is complete and are waiting for implementation approval.
- RIST detailer, Billy Philips, is slated to begin Monday.

Incident Prioritization – Fires Comparison Spreadsheet – Kate Holsapple and Rick Stratton

- Need exists to leverage new science and technology into prioritization process.
- ([Fires Comparison Matrix PowerPoint](#) – please note, must have FireNet NR_Coordinating Group Team access.)
- Proposal – Looking to replace Incident Prioritization Worksheet (IPW) and Criterium Decision Plus with this Fire Comparison Matrix. Criterium Decision Plus is no longer supported on the USFS network. Other drivers towards this proposal are that it significantly streamlines and increases efficiency.
- Intelligence function would bring the matrix, along with the radar charts, in addition to information gathered on calls, and would compile a recommendation. Would also be prepared to discuss the limiting factors that are not represented by the matrix. Intelligence function would then document any adjustments and the corresponding rationale.
- Corey Buhl – For prioritization this year at NRCC, this could be appropriate at the zone level.
- Vote: Proposal to replace IPW and Criterium Decision Plus with this Fire Comparison Matrix.
 - BIA RM – Support
 - BLM – Support
 - FWS – Support
 - IDL – Support
 - MT DES – Supports

- MT DNRC – Support
- MT State Fire Chiefs’ Association – Support
- MT County Fire Wardens Association – Support
- MT Sheriffs and Peace Officer Association – Support
- NPS – Support
- USFS – Support
- **Approved – Unanimous consent.**

NRTC Update and Trainee Priorities – Melissa Wegner

- Staff update – filled vacant BIA position; appreciate all efforts from everyone that went into that process. Billy Philips will be detailed into a temporary promotion into the RIST coordinator position. Billy is also a key part of IMRR. Matt Gibson continues to be instrumental in distributing the El Dorado case study out to the field. He is also a key link in innovative learning and training. Lydia Faller continues to perform essential duties and responsibilities, including providing MAC documentation support last year.
- 1,078 nominations processed; with two courses yet to go. 569 selected students.
- Cadre participation was increased to meet student to lead ratio. 206 unique individuals participating.
- Looking towards the future, anticipate that will have more in person training. Will also be remaining flexible.
- Priority Trainee Program – as approved in February, all trainees in the Northern Rockies will be considered priority trainees, as long as they are in the qualifications within the priority trainee program.
- Only item that changed is that there is now no application period. All else remains the same. Encouraged all to reach out with individuals with known limited availability periods.

Northern Rockies Contracting Update – Ryan Patrick

- Working through technical evaluations for heavy equipment with water and water handling.
- Weed Washing under VIPER this year, conducting technical evaluations as well.
- Process has evolved much from the past. Information is also gathered from pictures obtained during the winter. This comes with certain challenges. Coordinating with multiple Contracting Officers (CO) is more challenging from coordination with the historical, two COs.
- Looking for assistance with coordination of inspector workshop. Need exists and capacity is low.
- Brian Weber will be detailed into this position. (Ryan Patrick taking a detail.)
- Regarding workload, if nothing changes pertaining to assistance, then will need to prioritize the contract workforce that do have currently. Workload has increased significantly from historical perspective. Prioritization will be needed.

Northern Rockies Cache Update – Jordan McKnight

- Personnel
 - NRK currently at 40% staffing, 1 person in front office.
 - 100% vacancy in front office projected. Will not have anyone in an administrative capacity at the cache any time soon.
 - Potential of new, untrained hires late spring
 - Not currently staffed to allow for 7 day a week coverage

- No depth to cover staff absences.
- Loss of experience will lead to less production.
- Equipment Issue
 - Probable shortages: shelters, pump parts, oil, chaps, gloves, hose, fittings, medical kits, hot food. Additionally, containers, flight helmets, hose rollers, pyro, batteries, and other items we have not considered.
- Potential Operational Issues
 - Cache to Incident trucking in question.
 - Trucking contracts and medical have been moved to the national contracting level.
 - National Medical Contract unknown status.
 - Lack of temp laborers (pay, fuel costs).
 - Temporary labor – are finding that the pay is not competitive; AD drivers are citing pay and fuel cost.
 - Detailers are also in critical shortage.
 - Trucking will be a large issue. Now is going through a brokerage in Florida; where used to utilize ones that were familiar with the area.
- Be prepared
- Some incidents may need to pick up supplies; will prioritize deliveries to smaller incidents.
- Discussed communication and what it will look like this year regarding prioritization.

SW MT Zone Prevention Team – Chris Johnson

- ([SW MT Prevention Team PowerPoint](#) – please note, must have FireNet NR_Coordinating Group Team access.)

2021 Summary

- Seated for the equivalent amount of time for “six rolls” for this team.
- Anticipate meeting virtually for another 92 days for 2022.
- Benefit to having a team working remotely is increased team member availability.
- Will most likely continue the “Treasure Our State” campaign and promote the [Montana Wildland Fire Information website](#). Website will be utilized as both a fire information and restrictions platform.
- Are recruiting individuals to build bench strength and expand the capacity of the support area.
- Team assists with ensuring consistent messaging.
- No ask of this board for funding; however, efforts are underway to obtain funding through individual agencies.

2022 Campaigns and Recruitment

- Team will be seated again for the upcoming season.
- Spreadsheet and survey went out to gather interest and recruit interested individuals.

NRCG Restrictions and Closures Guide - 2022 Update

- [Montana Wildland Fire Information website](#) – intended to be a “one stop shop” for public and users.
- Last year only had one single POC for all orders and updates throughout the summer. Workload necessitates changes for 2022. Are now moving that to the area restrictions coordinators.
- Idaho and the other states have their own platforms.

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- [NRCG Restrictions and Closures Guidelines](#) document is updated, 508 compliant, and on the NRCG webpage. Provided some template language with the goal of avoiding conflicting language.

Heavy Equipment Task Force Updates – Jordan McKnight

- ([Heavy Equipment Task Force Updates PowerPoint](#) – please note, must have FireNet NR_Coordinating Group Team access.)
- Emphasized that all recognized the importance and value of this resource in the Northern Rockies.
- Are somewhat restrained in how can utilize regarding supervision.
- Important for the Board to consider supervision dynamics and involved risk, including liability.
- Concerns from incident business and finance side regarding incorrect and incomplete shift tickets and how this affects the payment processing.
- Agreements expire at the end of next year.

Action Items Review – Josh Harvey

- Reviewed Action Item listing line by line and made and updates.

Fall Meeting

- Consensus to plan for hybrid Fall NRCG meeting in Missoula, MT.
 - Jake Ganieany has additional “owl” cameras, should they be needed.
- Meeting dates are November 7 – 10, 2022.

Thursday April 21, 2022 – Morning – General Session

IT Update – Tara Dana

- Received funding and were able to purchase equipment for multiple IMTs.
- Currently are distributing that equipment; form has been distributed to the IMTs and closes closes on April 28th. Will be open to dispatch centers afterwards.
- BPA for rental IT equipment in place. Are able to change licensing and there will be return labels provided. Will now use an online ordering portal. Do still have the ability to utilize local vendors.

Dispatch Complexity Update – Craig Glazier, Gaylen Yeates and Kat Sorenson

- Reviewed the previously released complexity analysis.
- ([Dispatch Complexity Update PowerPoint](#) – please note, must have FireNet NR_Coordinating Group Team access.)
- Identified items with which agency leaders and managers can assist:
 - 90 fire requirement is a hinderance.
 - Lack of cross-walk from operations to dispatch.
 - Support of work environment.
- Sarah Lee – important to message potential next steps regarding consolidation appropriately, emphasizing the benefits of increased coverage and improved work/life balance.
- Important to note that consolidation is a tool and will not fix recruitment or retention.

- Rich Cowger – issues seem similar to other emergency response dispatch centers. Wonder if there are opportunities to co-locate or co-join with local 911 dispatch centers.
- Gaylen Yeates – next Monday will have the Northern Rockies Dispatcher’s workshop and will be recruiting for individuals to replace departing member of the dispatch steering committee. Will continue work on the next steps of this tasking.

Rapid Extraction Module Support (REMS) – Cost, Rate and Intent Discussion – Sarah Lee

- The Business Committee added REMS configuration information to the NR Chapter 20 (Acquisition) supplement for incident-only contracting in 2019 after a NRCG task group developed the basic configuration. Rapid Extraction Module Support (REMS) is an extraction team that provides technical expertise in the use of Low Angle Rescue Operations, High Angle Rope Rescue Operations, and advanced terrain extraction techniques. The Business Committee has not added a rate suggestion to the NR Supplement, as the NRCG BOD previously agreed that local/county resources have legal authority and should be the first source to provide rapid extraction support - refer to [NRCG 2018 Memo on REMS](#).
- In 2021, we saw an increased reliance on REMS as a long-term (14 day or longer assignments) solution to a lack of EMS resources in the system, such as EMTs and ambulances. The use occurred more frequently with out of area IMTs. This deviation from the NRCG original intent in the 2018 memo (estimated that only 5% of NR fire operations occur in environments requiring REMS and that IMTs are expected to release REMS units when no longer needed) raised concerns within the incident business community regarding appropriateness and cost. We currently don’t have established rates in Chapter 20 for REMS; however, contract vendor pricing last year averaged \$7000/day. Additionally, there are multi-state licensing concerns.
- The Business Committee is asking the current Board to review the [2018 NRCG BOD guidance](#) for REMS and provide the Business Committee additional direction:
 - If NRCG BOD wishes to retain the specifications in Chapter 20, do rates need to be established? (If so, establishment of a rate will need to be tasked to Ryan Patrick’s staff, as the Business Committee does not establish contract rates or specifications.)
 - The Business Committee suggests removing the detailed information on REMS from Chapter 20 (Acquisition), and instead directing readers to Chapter 50 (Cooperative Relations) which outlines local government capabilities and rates for local government resources.
 - The Business Committee asks BOD members to refresh their Agency Administrators on the 2018 NRCG Memo, especially to reiterate, “Agency Administrators and IMTs also should look seriously at tactical plans that put resources at high risk in high-angle situations where there are limited values at risk, or where operational risk management would lead to another tactic.”
- Rich Cowger – have experienced multiple times when REMS have sat idle for fourteen-day assignments. Agree with Corey Buhl that the 2018 guidance is still valid.
- Patrick Lonergan – support recommendation to remove from chapter 20 and support the 2018 memo.
- Sarah Lee – suggestion to add verbiage to the out of GACC letter that would highlight this topic.
- Bryce Rogers – support the removal from Chapter 20 and agree that the 2018 memo is valid.

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- Paul Cerda – may need look at requiring justifications for REMS ordering. Support editing the verbiage to “technical rescue”.
 - Vote on Proposal to remove language from chapter 20, revise the 2018 REMS Guidance and add appropriate verbiage to the Out of GACC letter.
 - BIA RM – Support
 - BLM – Support
 - FWS – Support
 - IDL – Support
 - MT DES – Support
 - MT DNRC – Support
 - MT State Fire Chiefs’ Association – Support
 - MT County Fire Wardens’ Association – Support
 - NPS – Support
 - Approved – Unanimous consent.
 - Action Item: Josh Harvey, Rich Cowger, Paul Cerda and Aaron Thompson will review and revise both the Out of GACC letter and the 2018 REMS Guidance with the intent of voting on the revised drafts at June meeting.

Other Business Items

- Rich Cowger – need exists to set up a meeting to talk directly with ICs.
- Sarah Lee – misperception exists that the “yurt” method of building camps is cost effective. This is derived from a historical time when yurts were furnished by the national cache system. Currently, obtaining conference spaces and locally available venues with needed connectivity is more cost effective.