



# **Northern Rockies Coordinating Group**

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

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

**Tuesday, January 17, 2023**

### **PARTICIPANTS:**

**Board Members:** Darron Williams, Bryce Rogers, Aaron Thompson, Dennis Strange, Tate Fischer, Josh Harvey, Jake Ganieany, Matt Hall, Rich Cowger – Chair, Patrick Lonergan, Paul Cerda,

**Deputies and Others:** Jason Jarrett, Chad Pickering, Pam Jolly, Kathy Pipkin, Aitor Bidaburu, Jordan McKnight, Melissa Wegner, Tara Dana, Jon Dentinger, Beau Richardson, Bradly Bergman

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

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

- Busy upcoming week; CGAC/NMAC meeting this week and a robust meeting is expected. NWCG and FMB are also expected to attend.

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

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

- *Not available for this meeting; traveling to CGAC meeting.*

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

- Currently testing ICAP program; there are opportunities for improvement that will be reported back to developers.
- Staffing – are expecting cert for GS-08/9 for assistant to crew desk.
- Finalizing 2022 Activity Report expect to disseminate soon.

### **Old Business**

#### **IMT Support (Fiscal) – Informational Topic – Rich Cowger and Kathy Pipkin**

- Rich Cowger – Reached out to Sampson who was surprised by this item. ICs are meeting tomorrow and will discuss. Both Kathy Pipkin and Rich Cowger plan on participating in that meeting. Intent is to have that information distributed in time for the February 07, 2023, NRCG Special Session.
- Aaron Thompson – emphasized the need for a formal budget proposal, to justify increasing the support amount. Procurement rules also are a contributing factor. Proposed budget needs to be by line item to ensure are efficiently utilizing each agencies procurement regulations.
- Rich Cowger – **Action Item: Information is needed by the end of the month. Intent is to vote on this item first, during the February 07, 2023, NRCG Special Session. Rich Cowger and Kathy Pipkin will advise the ICs of the date this information is required. Format needs to be that of a line-item budget.**
- **Action Item: Pam Jolly will re-send February 07, 2023, NRCG Special Session meeting invites.**

#### **Re-assign IMT Liaisons – Decisional Topic – Rich Cowger**

- Kathy Pipkin – need liaisons for the T3 IMTs as well. Until IMT selections are made and are able to assess status of T3s, are unable to determine the number of liaisons needed.
- **Action Item: Rich Cowger – tabled until March agenda; after teams are confirmed.**

### **New Business**



# **Northern Rockies Coordinating Group**

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

**Tuesday, September 18, 2023**

### **Dispatch Tasking Update**

- Aaron Thompson – received tasking memo from Craig Glazier for review and edit. Will then be finalized for the Chair's signature.
- Tate Fischer – requested clarification on status of this item?
- Kathy Pipkin - the tasking was never signed; that is this memo. Should be addressed to the Task Group.

### **CIM Rostering and Acceptance in the Northern Rockies**

- Aaron Thompson - are all agencies in the Northern Rockies willing to accept CIMTs this year? Or will the GACC also be ordering T1 & T2 IMTs?
- Josh Harvey – Vast majority of states at recent council meeting were in support of CIM. Note that California is not in support.
- Kathy Pipkin – regarding maintaining rotations, only feasible to host CIMT. Need to address if all five become participants to National Rotation? Intend to add this as a topic to the February agenda.
- Josh Harvey – personal understanding is that Regions have the discretion to hold out a team or two. Understand that National needs 49 participating teams to meet the goals.
- Aaron Thompson – endorse all five CIMTs, if are qualified. That is the national direction. Need to address if all are willing to accept CIMs? Agency Administrators need to understand this aspect. All will benefit from the national rotation. Should not be viewed as a perceived loss, as it is in interest of taking care of the workforce.
- Kathy Pipkin – Corey Buhl did respond to the CGAC data call memo direct to Aitor.
- Dennis Strange – Great Basin decided to accept CIMTs; however, will not have any participating CIMT in 2023.
- Darron Williams – Northwest is also going T1 and T2 IMT route; with intent to move to CIMT implementation in 2024. Will accept CIMTs this year.
- Josh Harvey – IDL will either order CIMTs or T3.
- Kathy Pipkin - can still show both qualifications in IROC and fill orders either way; but primary will be CIMT.

### **CGAC**

- Aaron Thompson – suggest monthly report out on CGAC activities from NRCG CGAC liaisons.
- Action Item: Rich Cowger – instructions to add as a standing agenda item for all future agendas. Will serve as a reminder trigger to relay important information.
- Kathy Pipkin – can distribute notes from CGAC meeting as well.
- Action Item: Rich Cowger - request CGAC liaisons send the CGAC meeting notes to Pam Jolly for distribution to entire NRCG BOD.

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

- Action Item listing reviewed and updated.

**The next scheduled NRCG Monthly Conference Call is February 21, 2023, 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, February 21, 2023**

### **PARTICIPANTS:**

**Board Members:** Darron Williams, Craig Howells, Dennis Strange, Tate Fischer, Josh Harvey, Jake Ganieany, Rich Cowger – Chair, Steve Holton, Paul Cerda

**Deputies and Others:** Cory Calnan, Adriane Beck, Pam Jolly, Brian Webber, Aitor Bidaburu, 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)**

- NMAC will be releasing the national IMT rotation memo shortly. Will include both CIM and T1 IMTs; total of 21 IMTs.
- FEMA R10 is holding a wildfire summit. Will occur March 2nd.
- NWCG had its All Chairs meeting.

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

#### **CGAC Report Out (Craig Glazier and Corey Buhl)**

- Unable to participate due to scheduling conflicts.
- Tabled until the March meeting.

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

- Unable to participate due to scheduling conflicts.

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

- Unable to participate due to scheduling conflicts.

### **Old Business**

#### **NR CIMT Participation in National Rotation – Decisional Topic – Kathy Pipkin**

- Need to address if all five NR CIMTs become participants to National Rotation.
- Tabled until the March meeting.

### **New Business**

- Rich Cowger – the IC's are currently meeting on IMT selection.
- Brian Webber – Viper solicitations opening soon.
- Tate Fischer – Memo regarding status of the North Dakota Interagency Dispatch Center will be coming out soon.
- Craig Howells – Aaron Thompson begins his detail next Monday.
- Rich Cowger – reminder to all that April is rapidly approaching. Team 2 will be in charge of the IMT meeting. Reminder also for the Spring NRCG meeting and joint WFAA session.



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

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

**Tuesday, February 21, 2023**

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

- Updated Action Item listing line by line.

**The next scheduled NRCG Monthly Conference Call is March 21, 2023 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, March 21, 2023**

### **PARTICIPANTS:**

**Board Members:** Darron Williams, Heath Estey, Bryce Rogers, Craig Howells, Tate Fischer, Matt Hall, Rich Cowger, Patrick Lonergan, Steve Holton, Paul Cerda, Craig Glazier

**Deputies and Others:** Cory Calnan, Jordan McKnight, Karly DeMars, Corey Buhl, Brian Webber, Kathy Pipkin, Beau Richardson, Aitor Bidaburu, Jeni Jeresek, 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)**

- Transition to CIM still a significant topic. NMAC is working to reiterate the process of right-sizing teams and to help establish a process to mitigate shortages.
- FMB group is overseeing the line officer subgroup in relation to CIM.

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

#### **CGAC Report Out (Craig Glazier and Corey Buhl)**

- The Predictive Services Oversight Group (PSOG) is working on addressing staffing and improvements to RAWs program. They have requested a town hall with CGAC Group.
- Discussion coming up regarding tasking from NMAC on preparedness levels and staffing.
  - Question from the group: Who is this tasked to? Response: Southern Area is looking to take on the first portion of the task and then other GAs would be asked to carry the tasking forward.
- Looks like we are not the only GA that downsized the number of available IMTs. There has not been a final tally of the total number of national teams available.
- There is a data call request due in May. NRCC has not responded but will complete the request once team selections are approved by the board. Kathy will work with Beau to get the ask completed.

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

- The Operations (Ops) Committee met the first week in March and had great participation. The Ops group is working with the Business committee on policy updates, as well as establishing the committee's rotation of Chair and Vice Chair positions.
- Had a meeting with new type 3 IMTs. Reiterated that NR will still be using CAT team and SW All Hazard Team.
- In May, Corey will be traveling to New York City to meet with the NYC firefighters to establish relationships and update them on the new national processes.

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

- Working on incorporating suggested MOB guide changes with a publish timeframe of April.
- Consolidated Dispatch Training in Reno, NV next week. Over 400 dispatchers will be in attendance and will receive training on new WildCad-E, IROC reporting and much more. Every NR Dispatch Center and NRCC will be sending staff to the training.
- NRCC will transition to WildCad-E in June.
- The waiver for Aircraft Dispatchers is expiring soon.



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**Tuesday, March 21, 2023**

- NRCC Staffing Update: Dani Johnson accepted the last Assistant Coordinator position. She comes from Missoula Dispatch and will be assisting with Crews and Equipment. Beau Richardson is the Overhead and IMT Coordinator. USFWS made an offer on the second Meteorologist position. Erin Noonan-Wright was hired as the Fire Analyst. The RIST Program Manager position announcement is open until 3/29. Hoping to make a selection in April, with on-boarding in June.
- There is a national effort to include dispatchers into the 0456 series. Dispatch SMEs met with classifiers to explain workload and position. More information to come.
- Task group for recommendation for dispatch framework meeting is on 3/28; will be putting forward recommendations. All NR Dispatch Offices have been interviewed. Task group is developing recommendations. Kelly Cane will present to NRCG BOD in April. Will be looking for a longer-term position for implementation stage.
- Miles City Dispatch is taking in North Dakota Dispatch. The ND BOD voted to make this permanent. BLM is still working through the process, so the transition is not yet a permanent solution.
- PSOG – going forward with recommendations for staffing where Predictive Services would be moved out of the coordination centers and put under Coordinating Groups. Kathy has some concern over reduced communication and coordination; would include the intelligence dispatchers (Informational only).

### **Old Business**

#### **Re-assign IMT Liaisons – Decisional Topic – Rich Cowger**

The Liaisons for each team will be as follows and will be updated in the NRCG Financial Plan:

- T10 IMT3 (McManus) - ND
- T9 IMT3 (Martin) - BIA
- T8 IMT3 (Bergman) – BLM MT/Dakotas
- T6 CIMT (Roose) – DNRC
- T5 CIMT (Sampson) – NPS
- T3 CIMT (Behrens) – IDL
- T2 CIMT (Schuster) – FWS
- T1 CIMT (Olson) - USFS

All voting members approved the agency liaison assignments. Jeni Jeresek will update the financial plan to reflect this update.

#### **NR CIMT Participation in National Rotation – Decisional Topic – Kathy Pipkin**

- Kathy shared that all CIMT's met qualification requirements. All voting members approved all five CIMTs to participate in the national rotation.
- Beau Richardson explained the application process for all NR IMT participation. Teams have qualified section chief and unit leader positions filled.
- Discussion: The NRCG BOD will need to continue to be diligent in ensuring rosters are built in the approved geographic area process. Will likely need to have a future agenda/discussion topic for the BOD regarding who should monitor IMT rosters to ensure IMTs are truly ready for mobilization according to established NREGA protocols. The NR Operations position could be a good position to



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monitor and provide suggestions and recommendations to the NRCG BOD Chair. The NRCC Center Manager delegation says qualified individuals are being dispatched. Question – is there a protocol for this issue in the IMT plan? Answer – the only direction in the plan is that IMTs must have Section Chiefs. **ACTION ITEM:** include topic on April's face-to-face meeting agenda)

- Discussion occurred regarding proposed national rotation and participating teams that will be in the roster. For 2023 – 21 teams available for national rotation (combination of Type 1 IMTs and CIMTs) – NR will have five CIMTs in the rotation.
- NWCG memo to put together a single steering committee to organize the process for two new IMT training products.

### **New Business**

#### **Confirm In Person Spring Meeting Attendance – Decisional Topic – Rich Cowger**

- **ACTION ITEM:** Please notify Pam if you plan to be at the meeting in person.
- The following individuals stated during the meeting they would attend the April meeting in person: Matt Hall, Tate Fischer, Craig Howells, Rich Cowger, Bryce Rogers

#### **MAC Exercise – Informational Topic – Corey Buhl**

- The BOD supported Corey Buhl with his request for additional time to develop the MAC exercise and have asked for the delivery in May/June. The exercise will likely have in-person and virtual options. Please let Corey know of some topics you would like to see during the exercise. Decision support and values at risk discussions were two topics requested during the call.

#### **Team Selections – Vote – Decisional Topic – Kathy Pipkin**

- All voting board members in attendance voted to finalize the team selection rosters. The vote took place via roll call with all agencies voting to accept the final team selection rosters.
- **ACTION ITEM/**SPRING MEETING AGENDA TOPIC: Discussion/execution of a memo from the NRCG BOD to AAs on what a CIMT order will look like this year.
  - Kathy recommends when ordering a CIMT, the dispatch office should add information in special needs regarding the WFDSS organization assessment information. The BOD needs to help AA's understand and move forward in ordering a team. Discussion with ICs needs to take place to ensure they are taking assignments they can handle. Line officer engagement is required in developing expectations regarding team capacity depending on complexity.

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

- Action items were reviewed – no updates or changes.

**The next scheduled NRCG meeting is the 2023 Spring Meeting April 19-20, 2023.**

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**Tuesday April 19, 2023 – General Session****National Update / Report – Jeff Arnberger****NMAC**

- PL 1; some activity in Southern Area. Some aircraft coming online. Beginning to meet every two weeks.
  - Putting a tasking together to identify transition plans for T2 to CIMTs.
  - Appreciate all the work that has gone into the transition.
  - Paul Cerda – Appreciate Kathy Pipkin taking the lead on the CGAC response.
- CIMT
- Regarding National Rotation – memo update will be forthcoming in the fall.

**Northern Rockies Operations – Corey Buhl**

- Preparedness – jumpers are completing first refresher, anticipate available next week. Rookie training beginning soon.
- Pilot situation is better this year, specifically for the jump aircraft.
- IMTs are staffed and rotation has begun. Some out of area IMT members were denied being on our teams; however, should not affect a significant amount.
- IHCs – Lolo going through preparedness and refresher this week. Overall, did have some change over in Superintendents this year. As of right now, all should be able to status as T1.
- Billings veteran crew is staffing up, expect currently to be a T2IA. Great Northern is also looking to fill some positions.
- Critical Mission Group concept revisited with operations section yesterday.

**Northern Rockies Coordination Center (NRCC) – Kathy Pipkin**

- Reviewed [PowerPoint Presentation](#).
- New FWS meteorologist coming on board.
- Assistant Intelligence position will be retiring in the fall; Intelligence Coordinator taking a 120-day detail. Outreaches will be coming out.
  - Craig Glazier - Remote Incident Support Position (RIST) – tentative agreement nationally is being revisited. Request that BLM look into detail possibilities to cover the second position that Region 5 is working on but will most likely not be able to fill until the end of the fire season.
- Would like to look at interagency options to fill intelligence positions coverage.
- CDAT training this year had over 400 individuals attend.
- Are addressing challenges with USFS Aircraft Dispatch requirements by providing training at Northern Rockies (NR) Dispatch Workshop.
- Exploring the concept of Remote Expanded Support Team (REST) that would be under RIST.
- Emphasized the importance of participation in the coming survey regarding 0456 Dispatch PD Series.
- Will be re-doing regional dispatch complexity analysis.

**Northern Rockies Training Center (NRTC) Update & Trainee Priorities – Melissa Wegner**

- Currently fully staffed.
- Priority Trainee Program – CGAC has a tasking regarding standardization with several components involved. Northern Rockies is the only GACC to consider all positions as priority

trainees. Have received pushback regarding this protocol. No change for this season. Concerned over future changes for next year.

- CIMT – Field review – encouraging all to go through the field evaluation process. Will be in effect this and next fire season; however, will be going away after that timeframe.
- Northern Rockies will be putting on two S-420s, or contractor equivalents, this year.
- NRTC (and NRCC) internet capacity is subpar and no longer meets the need. Three years ago, provided an estimate of \$16,000 to alleviate this issue. Number would be higher now. Tara Dana is working on a current cost estimate. Ask is for NRCG BOD to consider providing for this need. Will put together a formal proposal once current cost estimate is acquired.
  - Bryce Rogers – BIA will cover these costs between \$25,000 - \$30,000 amount.
  - Topic will be placed as informational update for May 16<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Northern Rockies Cache (NRK) – Anthony Krause**

- Looking good for most equipment.
- Shelters are scarce, in addition to counterfeits that are circulating online.
- Have had good success filling permanent positions through alternate methods.
- Critically low (21%) on seasonal staffing.
- National trucking contract poses challenges for short runs. Trailer rentals are also hard to come by.

**Northern Rockies Contracting Update – Brian Webber**

- VIPER Contracting Update – approximately 1000 items to technically evaluate and put on Dispatch Priority Lists (DPL). Ambulances and EMTs are being solicited nationally now. Fuel Tenders/Fuel Trucks are back under VIPER this year.
- Will utilize detailers until second permanent position can be filled.
- Identified lack of inspector support; are putting on training soon. Need does exist.
- Market research survey was put together; looking for input on 2024 solicitations. Will distribute this survey to NRCG group soon. Survey does not include the Heavy Equipment Task Force. (*This is only a NR and Great Basin item.*)

**NRCG Operating Plan / Handbook Update – Kathy Pipkin**

- Updated draft was posted in pre-reading materials.
- No opposition; plan will be finalized and distributed.

**NRCG Charter Update – Craig Glazier, Tate Fischer, Rich Cowger**

- Draft revision has been completed; will be distributed to entire NRCG BOD for review.
- Discussion and vote will be scheduled for the May 16<sup>th</sup> regular meeting.

**Delegations of Authority (DoA) – Kathy Pipkin**

- NR Operations Officer DoA was signed for last year; however, Center Manager one did not get signed.
- Action Item: Both will be distributed for full BOD review and placed on the agenda for approval at the May 16<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Spring MAC Exercise – Corey Buhl**

- Looking for feedback regarding preparation.
- Tentatively looking at June for this exercise.

- Group discussion around desire to dive into a “day in the life” of NR MAC, including prioritization.
- Paul Cerda – Thoughts include: Incident Priority, how do we work through Competing Priorities? IC Report Out and how to best streamline process. In 2015 we sent out Safety Review Teams that focused on Type 3 and Local Unit support. How best do we build our Bench for MAC Coordinator?

### **NRCG Representation Calendar – Kathy Pipkin**

- Will get that set up for this year, for when are not at the higher PL levels, and distribute to BOD for sign up.
- Duties are listed in the MAC plan; can review these at the spring MAC exercise.

### **Dispatch Review Update – Kelly Kane**

- Reviewed [PowerPoint presentation](#).
- Emphasized importance of support that is needed amongst the dispatch community.
- Discussed importance of lead time needed around any type of funding ask.
- Reiterated need to identify decision spaces regarding each step of this process.
- Next step would be identifying the “why” and what that should look like.
- Recommended all read the [final report](#).

### **Lessons Learned – R02 Review / Consolidation – Danny Bryant**

- Reviewed [PowerPoint presentation](#).
- Funding wasn’t requested through Phase 1; encountering these challenges now and will delay completion.
- Emphasized the importance of communication at all levels throughout entire process.
- Encouraged defined transitions and pursuing funding options early in the process.
- Also identified the importance of project leads and coordinators throughout.
- Additional reference material:
  - [RMCG Dispatch Efficiency Decision Framework](#)
  - [FEC Dispatch Decision](#)
  - [RMACC Fire Dispatch Zones Proposed](#)
  - [RMA Dispatch Efficiency Project Phase 2 Update](#)

### **CGAC Report Out – Corey Buhl, Craig Glazier**

- NMAC Tasking – Standardization of Geographic Area Procedures
  - Southern Area will take lead on “Evaluate current procedures for determining GA Preparedness Level (PL) levels and provide recommendations to improve consistency nationally and establish standards accordingly.”
  - Northern Rockies will take lead on “Evaluate current procedures for determining GA draw-down levels and provide recommendations to improve consistency nationally and standardize criteria and methodology.” POCs:
  - Eastern Area & GATR Rep will take lead on “Evaluate current practices for managing and assigning trainees to incidents and provide recommendations to improve consistency nationally and standardize the procedures, to include:...”

- Alaska will take lead on “Recommend standard processes for GA Coordinating Groups to participate in CIMT mobilization roster negotiations between Agency Administrators (AAs) and Incident Commanders (ICs).
- Status update due next CGAC Meeting.
- Kathy Pipkin – Responded to CGAC tasking regarding preparedness level inputs for each GACC. Intent is for Standardization.
- NR took the lead on Drawdown Level criteria to put forth recommendations later. Have reached out to all GACCs and will consolidate the response.
- Corey Buhl – cautioned that a “one size fits all” approach will not be a good fit due to the differences in the nation. The final end state of these asks is not yet known.
- Taskings originated from NMAC to CGAC.

### **Monitoring of IMT Rosters – Ensure Mobilization Ready – Rich Cowger, Corey Buhl**

- Important to ensure IMTs are mobilizing with appropriate staffing.
- Need to identify decision space around notifications and decisions, if holes are observed prior to mobilization.
- Guidance already exists in the [National Mobilization Guide, Chapter 20](#).
- Emphasized the importance of having an NRCG Representative available to relay go or no-go mobilization decisions to ICs.
  - Propose this individual be the NRCG Representative, as that is on a pre-set, calendared schedule.
- Team liaisons should be having these conversations with their teams now.
  - Need also exists to identify clear roles of team liaisons.
- Important ICs understand the minimum criteria information found in the [National Mobilization Guide](#).
  - Additionally important to note pulling resources to fill out one team should occur mindfully, without impacting another team’s core.
- Action Item: Corey Buhl, Rich Cowger, Craig Glazier, and Craig Howells will craft guidance verbiage for full BOD review and vote at May 16<sup>th</sup> meeting. Draft will be submitted by May 9<sup>th</sup>.

### **CIMT Ordering for Agency Administrators (AAs) – Kathy Pipkin**

- Was approached by line officers that it would be helpful if NRCG BOD would put out guidance regarding ordering this resource, specifically by referencing the complexity analysis in special needs.
- Would serve to both inform and educate agency administrators.
  - Recommendation for NRCG BOD to put out this memo of intent. Kathy Pipkin and Corey Buhl can provide the relevant bullets for this memo.
- Action Item: Rich Cowger, Matt Hall, Kathy Pipkin, and Corey Buhl will work on this memo for full BOD review and vote on May 16<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### **Starlink for IMTs – Craig Glazier**

- USFS CIO branch will start controlling Starlink subscriptions. Are awaiting further information as to what that will look like moving forward.
- Tara Dana – currently working on three different options. Did brief the plans section at the IMT meeting. Are continuing to explore other future options.

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**Wednesday April 20, 2023 – General Session**

**Tours - NRCC, Smokejumper Base, and NRK**

**Bin Items**

**NRCG AFD Agreement – Kathy Pipkin**

- Expires in June.
- USFS has created a template for all interagency fire agreements. Current agreement does not conform to this template. All agreements now must go through the Washington Office (WO).
- Suggestion from Grants and Agreements to make our agreement into an Annual Operating Plan, along with the NRCG Financial Plan and then it would become an appendix to the states master agreements.
- Affects all aspects at AFD.
- Red Book does specify an MOU must be in place for operations to occur.
- Still many questions to be answered, including how that affects the cost share and those units outside states with current master agreements.
- Exploring options, including that listed above and / or pursuing an extension.

**Wednesday April 20, 2023 – Executive Session – NRCG BOD / WFAAs**

**2023 Fire Season Outlook – Dan Borsum**

- Shared [PowerPoint presentation](#).

**Complex IMT Status for 2023**

- IMT Team meeting occurred virtually earlier this week.
- Have five (5) CIM Teams and three (3) T3 IMTs in the GACC. Additionally have Montana state CAT and SW MT IMT.
- Have approved team rosters. Will be working through this transition and monitoring IMT mobilization readiness throughout the season.
- NRCG is planning to issue a memo to provide both guidance and education to the AA community regarding ordering CIMTs.

**NRCG BOD – WFAA Meetings (Need & Frequency)**

- Historically have met twice a year, in conjunction with the spring and fall NRCG meetings.
- Both groups emphasized the intent to maintain good lines of communication and information distribution.
- Support expressed to meet at least once a year (spring), or maintain the two-meeting schedule, with the ability to increase meeting frequency for specific issues or circumstances that arise.

**Dispatch Improvement Tasking**

- [Final Report](#) has been compiled and will be emailed to the WFAAs.
- NRCG BOD members will be discussing the report more in depth with their specific Agency Administrators.

### **WFAA Meetings (Need & Frequency)**

- Historically there have been more frequent separate meetings. However, during the last few years, have mostly just had the joint meetings twice a year.
- Support expressed for WFAA breakout sessions to be held on the same day as the joint NRCG BOD/WFAA joint meeting.
- Agreement that it is beneficial to meet twice a year; with the potential for WFAA breakout sessions to occur on the same day as the joint.
- Discussed value of in person meetings in the spring and virtual in the fall.
- Will plan on virtual 2023 Fall WFAA meeting. (Week of November 6, 2023)

### **WFAA Charter – Review & Approve Final Draft**

- Draft distributed with meeting invitation.
- Two items left for discussion:
  - Membership – BIA will have all three regions listed, with Rocky Mountain being designated as the primary voice.
  - Meetings – agreed to remove the voting provision but leave the quorum definition.
  - Leadership (Chair/Vice Chair) Rotation – discussed streamlining the verbiage, while maintaining the alignment with the NRCG BOD language.
- Thomas Claeys – Motion to approve.
  - Motion seconded and passed favorably.

## **Attendees**

### **NRCG**

Darron Williams, Heath Estey, Bryce Rogers – Vice Chair, Craig Howells, Dennis Strange, Tate Fischer, Josh Harvey, Matt Hall, Rich Cowger – Chair, Adriane Beck, Steve Holton, Hunter Noor, Aaron Bucholz, Paul Cerda, Craig Glazier, Pam Jolly, Corey Buhl, Brian Webber, Kathy Pipkin, Jordan McKnight, Jeni Jeresek, Tara Dana

### **WFAAs**

Craig Foss, Jodie Camrud, Diane Mann-Klager, Melany Glossa, Mike Archer, Paul Santavy, Thomas Claeys, Sonya Germann, Shawn Thomas, Wyatt Frampton



# **Northern Rockies Coordinating Group**

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

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

**Tuesday, May 16, 2023**

### **PARTICIPANTS:**

**Board Members:** Bryce Rogers – Vice Chair, Dennis Strange, Tate Fischer, Matt Hall, Rich Cowger – Chair, Patrick Lonergan, Steve Holton, Paul Cerda, Craig Glazier,

**Deputies and Others:** Craig Howells, Corey Buhl, Kathy Pipkin, Melissa Wegner

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

### **NWCG/NMAC UPDATE: KATHY PIPKIN**

- NMAC taskings:
- From NMAC Correspondence L2023-01
  - Tasking #1 – Evaluate GA Preparedness levels – Southern Area (SA) has the lead.
  - Tasking #2 - Drawdown survey out and replies have been received back, need to compile the data. Northern Rockies (NR) has the lead.
  - Tasking # 3 Priority Trainee Program - NRCG approved all trainees are priority. IWDG has asked how the GAs are prioritizing those to go through CIM field evaluation. Melissa Wegner responded that is happening within our CIMTs/IMTs/NRCG, not through standalone priority trainee program. – Status Complete.
  - Tasking #4 - standard processes for GA Coordinating Groups to participate in CIMT mobilization roster negotiations between Agency Administrators (AAs) and Incident Commanders (ICs) – Status?
- NMAC Correspondence L2023-02 tasking to IWDG, – Increasing Incident Support Capabilities
  - Billy Phillips, PSCC NR CIM Team 2 is volunteering to be on a task group for this, with Remote Incident Support.
- NMAC tasking L2023-03 Geographic Area complex Incident Management Team Transition Plans – **Reply due June 15<sup>th</sup>**. Kathy will start the reply and share draft for edits.

### **CGAC REPORT OUT (CRAIG GLAZIER AND COREY BUHL)**

- IMT composition reply to CGAC – Submitted – Status complete.

### **NRCG Operations (COREY BUHL)**

- Canada: 1 CIMT, 4 IHCS (Lolo, IDF, BRF, Helena), Flathead IHC to MI. Could not do a second CIMT to Canada. It was a challenge getting LSCCs that are available.
- Chief Mountain – still working on status. Internal review to occur at the end of June.
- Jumpers – all going well, completing training. Can put together a load to staff weekends if needed.

### **NRCC Update (KATHY PIPKIN)**

- Intelligence functional area is vacant. Kate Holsapple on 120-day detail, and Teresa Sage retired. Very little response to the detail outreach.
- Staff are cadre for D311 Initial Attack Dispatch and D312 Aircraft Dispatcher training this week at NRTC.
- Employees on assignment helping some of our understaffed centers.
- Mobilization Guide is being formatted and should be published and posted to the website in the next couple of weeks.





# **Northern Rockies Coordinating Group**

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

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

**Tuesday, May 16, 2023**

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **Internet Capacity (NRTC & NRCC) – Update – Informational Topic – Bryce Rogers**

- BIA to cover costs between \$25,000 and \$30,000. BIA willing, NRTC FS CIO involved. Looking at having an update within the next couple of weeks.

#### **NRCG Charter Update – Informational Topic – Rich Cowger**

- Tate Fischer shared screen and went through the comments received.
- Membership from all the Montana agencies discussion: Rich Cowger discussed the Montana State statutes and gave historic view but the Montana members should be reaching out to the other states.
  - Intent is to discuss revised charter and schedule future vote.
  - Decision: Montana Dakotas State Representative is the voting member for BLM, and Rocky Mountain Region is the voting member for BIA.
- Tate Fischer captured specific edits in the document.
- Discussion around need to define NRCG versus BOD.
- MT statewide agreement brings a strong tie to local government. NRCG discussion around need to reestablish the values for the NRCG partnerships.
  - Matt Hall to provide an overview of the statewide agreement and discuss the overall membership. Discussion topic for the fall face to face meeting.

#### **Delegations of Authority (DoA) – NR Operations and NRCC Center Manager Positions – Rich Cowger**

- Vote to approve (both) - **Approved - Pam Jolly to prepare for Chair's signature.**

#### **Monitoring IMT Mobilization Readiness – Decisional Topic – Rich Cowger**

- **Corey Buhl to type up the memo and combine it with the CIMT Ordering for AA/s and get it out for review for next June meeting.**

#### **CIMT Ordering for AAs – Memo – Decisional Topic – Rich Cowger**

- **See bullet statement above.**

#### **Private Firefighter Resources Guidelines – Informational Topic – Rich Cowger**

- (See DRAFT updated memo in pre-reading materials)
- Private insurance and how interface with land management agencies and private forest landowners.
- **Get comments back to Rich Cowger - decisional topic for June meeting.**
- FS Chief signed an agreement with the national alliance of forest owners in Idaho/Montana.

#### **Startlink Update – Informational Topic – Craig Glazier**

- FS changes to acquiring star link. Canvassed the IMTs and some have it and all want it.
- All agency liaisons able to provide star link to the IMT they represent.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **Dispatch Improvement Tasking – Next Steps – Informational Topic – Craig Glazier**

- Introduced Dan O'Brien – retired NWC Center Manager. He will continue the process after Kelly Kane.





# **Northern Rockies Coordinating Group**

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

**Tuesday, May 16, 2023**

- June will start the next steps. Dan will meet with Kelly Kane and develop a plan.
- Next Steps will be more operational. Not a big group.
  - NRCG members get Line Officers names to Craig by June 1.
- This will be a standing topic on the monthly call agenda.

### **Spring MAC Exercise Update – Informational Topic – Corey Buhl**

- In Person / Hybrid option to be held with the monthly meeting of June 20, 2023. Missouri Room NRCC. Pam Jolly to revise the June invite with additional time allotted for the exercise. (Need additional 3 hours)
- Erin Noonan-Wright has reached out to help.
- GMAC exercise will be:
  - A day in the life – A few fires.
    - Risk Information Dashboard
    - Priorities
    - Expectations and needs of NRCG

### **NRTC updates - Informational Topic – Melissa Wegner**

- S520 candidate packages are with Operations Committee for prioritization; 25 total.

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

- Deferred to next meeting.

**The next scheduled NRCG Monthly Conference Call is June 20, 2023 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 Notes**

**Tuesday, June 20, 2023**

### **PARTICIPANTS:**

**Board Members:** Rich Cowger – *Chair*, Bryce Rogers – *Vice Chair*, Craig Howells, Dennis Strange, Tate Fischer, Matt Hall, Patrick Lonergan, Jason Jarrett, Ryan Melin, Paul Cerda, Chad Pickering, Darron Williams  
**Deputies and Others:** Cory Calnan, Karly DeMars, Corey Buhl, Kathy Pipkin, Erin Noonan, Dan Borsum, Rebecca McCormick, Melissa Wegner

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

### **NWCG/NMAC Update: (Aitor Bidaburu) - EMAIL UPDATE**

- Aitor is representing NWCG on the Wildfire Commission meeting this week. He reports: *“Since NR has completed the transition to CIM I believe there are no pending taskings from NMAC. NMAC, FMB and NWCG continue to oversee the Incident Workforce Development Group (IWDG) efforts. The next big event will be to conduct the AAR and to incorporate input. Still on track to implement in January 2024. Information on AAR schedule will be shared as soon as its available.”*
  - NWCG continues with the Incident Performance and Training Modernization (IPTM) as its top priority. An [overview](#) has been provided, which includes a brief YouTube video.

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

- **CGAC Report Out (Craig Glazier and Corey Buhl):** Nothing new to report from the last CGAC meeting
- **NRCG Operations (Corey Buhl):** Pretty slow fire activity in the GACC – supporting Canada. Team 2 (Schuster) short team has been ordered/filled for support to Canada. Received a second request for a Type 3 organization to support Canada. Smokejumpers are driving to Canada – waiting for aircraft to be approved.
- **NRCC Update (Kathy Pipkin):** Mobilization workload to Canada. Kathy, Roy and Billy Phillips visited four dispatch centers last week (Great Falls, Kalispell, Libby and Coeur d’Alene). Billy Phillips started with NRCC as the RIST Coordinator today. NPS Intelligence Specialist position is still open. DJ Johnson is filling in on the Intel Desk.

### **Old Business**

#### **NRCG Charter Update – Informational Topic – Tate Fischer**

- Topic will be discussed further at the fall face-to-face meeting. Tasking has been updated on the Action Items spreadsheet.

#### **Monitoring IMT Mobilization Readiness – Decisional Topic – Corey Buhl**

- The updates are still being worked on in the small working group (Rich, Craig G., Craig H.). Corey will finalize feedback and make available for discussion/vote at the July meeting.

#### **Private Firefighter Resources Guidelines – Decisional Topic – Rich Cowger**



# **Northern Rockies Coordinating Group**

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

## **Board of Directors Conference Call Notes**

**Tuesday, June 20, 2023**

- After discussion, the group unanimously voted to approve the memo. Ryan Melin did mention that item #10 in the document may cause some confusion in North Dakota due to wording, but he was supportive of the document as presented and approved.

### **Dispatch Improvement Tasking – Next Steps – Standing Item – Craig Glazier/Chad Pickering**

- Dan O'Brien is in place and re-engaging after some time off. FWS requested some documentation/direction on what the Agency Administrator commitment for this tasking would look like. Chad will send information to the group.

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

- Action item document was reviewed and updated by the group.

### **New Business**

#### **Spring MAC Exercise– Corey Buhl - [LINK TO NR MAC OPERATING GUIDE \(2022\)](#)**

- Exercise Objectives:
  - ✓ Introduce and refresh MAC members to the Northern Rockies MAC daily process and procedures.
  - ✓ Participate in an incident prioritization process.
  - ✓ Build a better understanding of the MAC process, MAC expectations, and create an learning environment that contributes to better preparedness when the Northern Rockies MAC convenes.
- The GMAC exercise will simulate a 'day in the life' with a few fires. The intent is to work through the following:
  - Risk Information Dashboard
  - Priorities
  - Expectations and needs of NRCG

**The next scheduled NRCG Monthly Conference Call is July 18, 2023 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, July 18, 2023**

### **PARTICIPANTS:**

**Board Members:** Darron Williams, Bryce Rogers – Vice Chair, Dennis Strange, Tate Fischer, Josh Harvey, Brett Lloyd, Rich Cowger – Chair, Paul Cerda,

**Deputies and Others:** Craig Howells, Jason Jarrett, Chad Pickering, Pam Jolly, Corey Buhl, Kathy Pipkin, Jordan McKnight, Melissa Wegner, Anthony Krause, Dan O'Brien

**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 due to scheduling conflicts.*

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

#### **CGAC Report Out (Craig Glazier and Corey Buhl)**

- No Report out

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

- Fair amount of crew requests for Idaho; do have a couple of type 2 IA crews coming into the GACC and appreciate hosting units.
- Able to support Canada with jumpers. Received one boost yesterday that went to Grangeville.

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

- Please reference summary activity update that was distributed on Monday.
- Working on a short IMT for Alberta and there are some DNRC individuals on it. This requires a bit more coordination through different agreements.
- Bozeman rappel left yesterday for British Columbia, along with smokejumpers.
- Most all contract equipment in GACC, four type 2 IA crews available, and some agency resources. One large Air Tanker in the GACC. Crews nationally in the system are contract crews. Do have three Northern Rockies IHCs coming available in next five days. Positioned well at PL 2.
- Reminder to BOD to schedule GMAC representative week.
- From the NICC Call:
  - SWC
    - 6,000 acres growth on Red Point Tank
    - working on a team roster for Canada
  - NWC
    - 1,500 acres large fire growth on Flat
  - NICC
    - NMAC - fresh request for Alberta, British Columbia, and Northwest Territory
    - Capping crews at 15 (T1, T2IA) - expecting that number to trickle down
    - Will continue to support Canada with IMT and overhead as GACCs see fit
    - Airtankers: intent is for pro-active suppression support.



# **Northern Rockies Coordinating Group**

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

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

**Tuesday, July 18, 2023**

### **Old Business**

#### **Dispatch Improvement Tasking – Next Steps – Standing Item – Dan O’Brien**

- Please reference short briefing paper distributed previously.
- Have assembled the core team. See these individuals as the central node of a larger GACC effort. At some point, see group reaching out to other work groups to obtain information.
- Intent is for a collaborative and transparent effort.
- First meeting tomorrow; with an ambitious agenda.
- Communications briefings will be distributed frequently.

#### **2023 NR IMT Mobilization Procedures – Informational Topic – Pam Jolly**

- Distributed and posted.

#### **NRCG Operating Guide Update – Informational Topic – Pam Jolly**

- All signatures obtained as of this morning. Will be distributed and posted soon.

### **New Business**

#### **Idaho Office of Emergency Services – Request to join NRCG – Informational Topic – Josh Harvey**

- Per Josh Harvey email summary: Idaho’s Office of Emergency Management reached out to me with a request to join the monthly NRCG meetings. Understanding is that one of their representatives was looking at the membership on the NRCG website and noticed that non-fire agencies were being represented. Do not think they are looking to be a voting member.
- Clarification that they only want to participate, not be a member.
- Action Item: Will move ahead to invite to meetings. Josh Harvey will email contact information to Rich Cowger and Pam Jolly for invitation to follow.

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

- Differed due to recent review.

**The next scheduled NRCG Monthly Conference Call is August 15, 2023 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 15, 2023**

### **PARTICIPANTS:**

**Board Members:** Darron Williams, Tate Fischer, Josh Harvey, Brett Lloyd, Matt Hall, Patrick Lonergan, Steve Holton, Ryan Melin, Craig Glazier

**Deputies and Others:** Carlos Nosie, Bob Flesch, Marty Adel, Cory Calnan, Jason Jarrett, Rob Feeley, 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 participate due to scheduling conflicts.*

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

- *Unable to participate due to scheduling conflicts.*

### **CGAC Report Out (Corey Buhl)**

- *Unable to participate due to scheduling conflicts.*

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

- *Unable to participate due to scheduling conflicts.*

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

- *Unable to participate due to scheduling conflicts.*

### **Old Business**

#### **Dispatch Improvement Tasking – Next Steps – Standing Item – Dan O'Brien**

- *Unable to participate due to scheduling conflicts.*

#### **Aviation Update – Informational Topic – Phil Ketel**

- *Unable to participate due to scheduling conflicts.*

#### **Update: Niarada / Mill Pocket / Big Knife – Darron Williams**

- Behrens IMT close out tomorrow.
- In brief tonight for CSKT - Niarada and Mill Pocket; In brief also for T3 IMT taking Big Knife. Tomorrow these incidents will be split.
- Appreciate Behrens IMT and positive experience with ISAP process.
- Attending Behrens close out as NRCG representative tomorrow.

#### **Update: Colt – Matt Hall**

- Attended T1 close out; went well. IMT reported a high degree of alignment with strategy and positive experience with the ISAP process. Continuing to make progress on this incident and appreciate the efforts of Kathy Pipkin, Corey Buhl and Steve Holten.

### **New Business**



# **Northern Rockies Coordinating Group**

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

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

**Tuesday, August 15, 2023**

- None

### **Review of Action Items: (Pam Jolly)**

- Dispensed with in the interest of efficiency, limited change since last item review.

**The next scheduled NRCG Monthly Conference Call is September 19, 2023 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 19, 2023**

### **PARTICIPANTS:**

**Board Members:** Darron Williams, Bryce Rogers – Vice Chair, Craig Howells, Dennis Strange, Tate Fischer, Josh Harvey, Brett Lloyd, Rich Cowger – Chair, Patrick Lonergan, Ryan Melin, Craig Glazier

**Deputies and Others:** Cory Calnan, Jason Jarrett, Pam Jolly, Kathy Pipkin, Jordan McKnight, Jeni Jeresek, Melissa Wegner, Dan O'Brien

**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 due to scheduling conflict.*
- ICAP will not be ready for use this Fall for IMT the application process. This was shared by Forest Service partners at NIFC on Monday, September 18th.

### **NRCG Operations (Kathy Pipkin for Corey Buhl)**

- Have a couple of loads of jumpers; T1 Crews are still a national need. Northern Rockies is balancing what can be offered up for national assistance.
- NMAC has set resource allocation priorities – wildfire needs within the U.S., FEMA ESF4 needs, Prescribed Fire (RX) and international assistance.
  - Do still have resources in Canada.

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

- New Center manager selected, Kate Holsapple. *(For those that were not aware, Kathy Pipkin will be retiring at the end of the year.)*
- NPS Intelligence Coordinator position filled with Alex Brooks.
- Morganne Lehr accepted the RIST position of Deputy Coordinator, out of Region 05.

### **Old Business**

#### **NRCG Fall Meeting / Program Support – Informational Topic – Pam Jolly and Craig Glazier**

- NRCG Program Support – capacity support
  - Pam Jolly will be taking a 120 day temporary promotion. USFS is not detailing anyone in behind here due to need for realizing fiscal savings.
  - Ask if for another agency to provide this NRCG Program Support coverage during the interim.
- NRCG Fall Meeting planning:
  - Both Pintler Room at NRTC in Missoula, MT and the USFS R01 FAM meeting Owl have been reserved for NRCG Fall meeting, November 6 – 9, 2023.
  - Logistics for the hybrid format meeting will need to be addressed.
    - Room table arrangement.
    - Meeting Owl set up, testing and utilization.
- Craig Howells – can try to find someone to fill in for Program Support capacity; however, no guarantees.
- Dennis Strange – clarified that **names of interested individuals need to be provided to the NRCG BOD**





# **Northern Rockies Coordinating Group**

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

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

**Tuesday, September 18, 2023**

**by October 10, 2023.** The next meeting regular NRCG Monthly meeting is on October 17, 2023.

- Rich Cowger – clarified that **agenda item topics for the fall meeting should be submitted to Pam Jolly as soon as possible, and at the latest by COB end of next week.**
  - Intent is for the Chair to review these with Pam Jolly the following Monday.

### **Dispatch Improvement Tasking – Next Steps – Standing Item – Dan O'Brien**

- *Review two items in pre-reading materials.*
- Core group came together well; Program of Work (POW) developed and is intended to be a show of transparency.
- Desire is to use the POW as a public, living document. Intent also is to publish.
  - Do not intend to publish the individual meeting notes.
- Anything requiring a decision, NRCG will be the first informed before moving forward.
- Do want to ensure group has NRCG concurrence to go direct regarding communications with the dispatch community.
- Assigning tasks:
  - Desire formal taskings out of NRCG; signed by the Chair. These will be drafted and submitted to the Chair by the group.
  - Having the ability to create groups Subject Matter Expert (SME) Groups would also be helpful, moving forward.
- Reviewed the scope of the POW and discussed specific, BOD, line-item feedback.
- Asks:
  - Dispatch Workforce Coordinator – need to further develop this proposal, in terms of what is being committed to; desire to having as an immediate task and pushed forward.
    - Tate Fischer – agreed.
    - Bryce Rogers – agreed.
  - Dispatch Admin Assistance – do wish to pursue as an immediate task; however, not sure at this time of decision ask of BOD.
  - Desire the ability to task Predictive Services and/or agency research units to identify what Northern Rockies expects regarding activity and workload level planning over the next five to ten years.
- Discussion only around BOD endorsement of above planning. Will create formal proposals for official BOD vote during the October NRCG Monthly meeting.
  - **General BOD consent and support expressed for continuing to pursue above outlined POW.**

### **NR Operations Committee Meeting – Ask – Informational Topic – Tate Fischer**

- On Oct. 17, have two other overlapping commitments. As BOD liaison, am seeking an alternate NRCG BOD member to participate. Meeting is hybrid at Central Land Office, in Helena, MT.
  - Patrick Lonergan volunteered to attend.

### **ICAP Update – Informational Topic – Kathy Pipkin**

- ICAP not available for use this year. See previously distributed email for historical context.
- Exploring multiple options for use this year; will work with IC committee to identify the best solution.



# **Northern Rockies Coordinating Group**

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

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

**Tuesday, September 18, 2023**

### **New Business**

- No new business.

### **Review of Action Items: (Bryce Rogers)**

- Deferred in the interest of time.

**The next scheduled NRCG Monthly Conference Call is October 17, 2023 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 17, 2023**

### **PARTICIPANTS:**

**Board Members:** Darron Williams, Bryce Rogers – Vice Chair, Aaron Thompson, Dennis Strange, Brett Lloyd, Matt Hall, Rich Cowger – Chair, Paul Cerda

**Deputies and Others:** Dave Martin, Bob Jones, Charlie Gorman, Phil Ketel, Pam Jolly, Kate Holsapple, Jeni Jeresek, Tara Dana, CJ Johnson, (Nate Linder, Shane Colman, and Charles Tuss – Northwestern Energy)

**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 due to scheduling conflicts.*

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

- *Unable to participate due to scheduling conflicts.*

### **CGAC Report Out (Craig Glazier and Corey Buhl)**

- *Unable to participate due to scheduling conflicts.*

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

- *Unable to participate due to scheduling conflicts.*

### **NRCC Update (Kate Holsapple)**

- Continuing to process some resource orders daily.
- Moved to five day work schedule and will be closed for the Veteran's Day Holiday.
- Have scheduled a NRCC AAR for November 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- Continuing to work through Center Manager transition.
- Intelligence Coordinator is in place.
- Functional Areas are continuing to gather statistical information for yearend reporting.

### **Old Business**

#### **Dispatch Improvement Tasking – Next Steps – Standing Item – Craig Glazier**

- *Unable to participate due to scheduling conflicts.*

#### **Response to NMAC Correspondence L2023-03 – Decisional Topic – Kate Holsapple**

- *(See pre-reading materials.)*
- Reviewed line by line the suggested edits.
- No objections expressed; group approval consensus.



# **Northern Rockies Coordinating Group**

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

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

**Tuesday, September 18, 2023**

### **New Business**

#### **Northwestern Energy (NWE) – Enhanced Wildfire Plan Presentation – Informational Topic – Charles Tuss, Shane Colman, Nate Linder (20 minutes)**

- Intent is to introduce the NWE Wildfire Team and discuss where are heading with this Enhanced Wildfire Plan and how can better partner and coordinate with NRCG in the future.
- Completed a five-year strategic road map; incorporating grid hardening measures.
  - Intent is to re-evaluate each year.
- Additional increased focus on how activities affect wildfire risk.
- Plan really focuses on situational awareness and reducing communication gaps.
- Do utilize SFDI as one input towards decision making.
- Intent is to inform all that NWE has an official wildfire program. Emphasis on keeping power on; reducing risk to the community; and ensure public safety.
- Overall intent is for collaboration, coordination, and increased communications.
- Are exploring some artificial intelligence (AI) camera options also; interested in collaboration opportunities on other tools as well.
- Board provided both feedback and informational resource suggestions.
- Rich Cowger – Board is interested in pursuing a collaborative relationship.
  - Would envision having this group tie in with operations and intelligence individuals directly. However, Board will need to have further conversation around the interaction specifics.

#### **Co-Op Fire: Montana and Idaho Master Agreements Update – Informational Topic – CJ Johnson (20 minutes)**

- *(See pre-reading materials.)*
- Reviewed one-page briefing document.
- Sub-geographic Area Operating Plans are not a requirement. Are currently working towards a standardized approach for the entirety of the Northern Rockies.
- Are drafted to the level at which they are scoped.
- Montana:
  - Tomorrow the working group that negotiated master agreement will meet. Intent is to gain initial concerns from partners and cooperators from this last season that would impact the drafting of the sub-geographic operating plans. Encouraging all to participate.
  - If there is a proposed realignment of offset exchange, designed for those discussions to be had at the local level, with regional and state bureau approval prior to implementation.
    - Matt Hall noted that supplemental financial support agreements may be tied to these, including some that are dispatch support related. Important not to delay conversations.
- Idaho:
  - Will be discussing concerns and successes from 2023 season and suggesting updates. For USFS, some of this will be occurring at fall USFS FMO Meeting.
  - Idaho working group will convene late January to discuss validating plans.
  - Prior to January meeting, likely that local individuals will be engaged and beginning to draft those plans.



# **Northern Rockies Coordinating Group**

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

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

**Tuesday, September 18, 2023**

- NWCG Sub-Geographic template is currently circulating. This was written towards a specific agreement with Fire Department New York. Intent of this specific document is not the same as intent of these plans in the Northern Rockies.
- Zone Board Chairs will most likely be the entity for ensuring these plans are written. Will be up to each agency to ensure that they participate in these conversations. Initial movement could potentially be communicated through NRCG BOD channels; however, it most likely falls to purview of the working groups to ensure all are invited, encourage all to participate, and ensure timely completion.

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

- Dispensed with review in the interest of time.

**The next scheduled NRCG Meeting is the Fall NRCG Meeting, which will be held in Missoula, MT (hybrid format) November 6 -9, 2023.**

# 2023 NRCG Fall Meeting *Notes*

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November 7-8, 2023 | *Hybrid Meeting*  
*Pintler Room – Northern Rockies Training Center, Missoula, MT*

## **Tuesday, November 7, 2023 - General Session**

### **Welcome and Introductions – Bryce Rogers**

- Board Attendance: Rich Cowger (MT State Fire Chiefs' Association, Chair - Virtual), Bryce Rogers (BIA-RM, Vice-Chair), Darron Williams (BIA-NW), Aaron Thompson (BLM), Dennis Strange (BLM); Neal Beetch (FWS), Josh Harvey (IDL), Brett Lloyd (MT DES), Matt Hall (DNRC), Adriane Beck (MT County Fire Wardens Association), Steve Holton (MT Sheriffs & Peace Officers Association – Virtual), Hunter Noor (ND Forest Service – Virtual), Craig Glazier (USFS)
- Others: Karly DeMars (BLM, Facilitator), Aitor Bidaburu (NRCD Liaison), Chad Pickering (USFS), Corey Buhl (NR Ops), Jeni Jeresek (USFS – Virtual), Jason Jarrett (virtual), Kathy Pipkin (NRCC), Kate Holsapple (NRCC), Matt Heisler (USFS – Fire Training Committee), Jordan McKnight (USFS), Don Pyrah (DNRC – virtual), Paul Roose (USFS – virtual), Nate Stephens (USFS – virtual)

### **National Update and Report – Aitor Bidaburu**

- NMAC AAR on CIM was completed the Week of October 30, 2023. The group received valuable feedback from many groups. Three themes that kept coming up included:
  - Roster Configuration: confusion within geographic areas on core vs. master mobilization rosters. IWDG settled on a master roster and a mobilization roster (will be reflected in email forthcoming from Jeff Arnberger, NMAC Chair. For 2024, rosters will have 34 core positions plus 6 trainees. The remaining discretionary positions will not have a number. Expect some cleanup on verbiage and rosters to accommodate local government. The Mob guide will include updated rotation and roster configuration.
  - National Rotation: Recommendations included a 3 and 1 out model. One federal agency could not accept this rotation recommendation and did not support. The rotation will change to four geographic areas up at one time. During peak fire season (May through September) four CIMTs will be up on national rotation.
    - National rotation begins January 1; only two teams available each week in shoulder teams. Each geographic area is expected to maintain internal GA rotation.
    - Aaron Thompson shared the successes of the NR GA and national rotation. IWDG proposed 3&1 model; that model was to balance the entire national playing field to fully exercise all teams and to level the playing field.
    - Group received positive feedback on the seven days unavailability period implemented in 2023.
  - Pathways and training to competency: NWCG is developing basic and advanced IMT courses. Basic is expected to be done in late 2024 and advanced in late 2025. The field evaluation process is still a bridge to get responders to CIM being and will remain in place until these training are developed.

### **NR Operations Fall Report - Corey Buhl**

- Northern Rockies provided Canadian support this season. Many crews and responders were very thankful they could drive.
- The Type 3 IMTs were a huge success in Northern Rockies. We just need more of them. NR hosted several out of GACC IMT3's. Martin's team might need some help to build out team – they were able to respond effectively but could use more depth.
- NMAC discussion revolving around CIM and rotation – Corey expressed concern over resource availability and asked Aitor to not lose sight of overall resource availability (particularly crews). The

relatively low amount of fire activity nationally drained the crew resources. NR will continue to implement surge resource capabilities, when possible. It is a very effective tactic for crew availability in NR that works well.

- Another great success, it helped to have NRCG BOD on call during the core season to enhance the coordination. At PL3, it is critical to have the BOD on call person. The coordination really helped to ensure we assigned the right team to the right incident, and we need to continue to allow autonomy to fill CIM orders.
- Smokejumper resource was used appropriately. NR boosted Northern California a lot this year due to many inaccessible fires during IA.
- There was a unique challenge operationally, with the prescribed fire push from federal agencies. There were issues with a unit requesting Type 1 crews for RX during fire season. USFS Director put RX fire on the same plane as suppression – how are we going to work in interagency fashion with interagency. NMAC did a great job at prioritizing (ex: suppression, international, RX) – NRCC was looking for expectations from NRCG BOD
  - **ACTION ITEM:** Develop direction on prioritizing resources to balance suppression and prescribed fire during core fire season in the Northern Rockies. (*Action Item #10*)
- Lastly, we need to push functional complexity assessment back to the AAs and ensure they are using the tool appropriately and ordering what they need.

### NRCC Fall Report (Kathy Pipkin)

- Staffing: We had two employees take details for the season but were able to do some quick shuffling to fill roles. Had great detailers for intel and aviation.
- While we stayed at PL 3, July 21-Sept 5, there were a few times when running numbers that we were at a high 3. Instituted daily updates to BOD to keep everyone in the loop. Had we gone any higher in PL, we would have needed to bring in a PIO. Kathy was able to keep up on the report outs.
- Volume of Business: Below normal average, NRCC was only seeing orders when resources were available. Averages for each agency ran steady no matter the volume. Fire numbers – below average for acres and number of occurrences. Statistics will be rolled into financial plan and data has been shared with Jeni.
- Kathy thanked the BOD for having a GMAC rep in PL 3 and encouraged every BOD member to sign up for a week in 2024. Duties of BOD member are listed in the MAC plan but in reality is more of a duty officer for Coordinating Group
- Zone calls were helpful and a huge benefit as Kathy was able to see if their planning was working. Helped to know what they had available locally for IA. Kudos for NW MT and SW MT zones for including NRCC.
- Fall Center Manager Meeting was last week.
  - Kathy mentioned the USFS IADP waiver is going to end January 1, 2024. One dispatch center had to shut down aircraft for four days due to only having one qualified individual and that person needed to be gone. Dispatch Centers are looking to formalize an Aircraft Operations SOP when neighbor centers are involved. Currently, not all dispatch centers can take on aircraft capabilities. Bitterroot and Grangeville need to move over to digital radio systems. In NR there are only 15 qualified Aircraft Dispatchers. Only one center was fully staffed for the season. No new dispatchers, only bringing new individuals. 38% vacant in all dispatches.
  - **ACTION ITEM:** Determine if an official tasking to the NRCG Dispatch Committee is needed to develop short-term and long-term SOPs between centers to organize aircraft dispatching operations. Assigned to Craig Glazier. (*Action Item #7*)
- 0456 series – dispatch has been accepted into the series. DOI removed the 90-day required selective factor for recruitment. USFS is likely to follow DOI. Emails to opt-in/out for 0456 series are going out the week.
- The National Coordination Committee under NWCG is working to put together a national interagency dispatch academy (basic, intermediate, and advanced).
- Frequencies will be integrated into database in IRWIN and will populate appropriate systems.
- All but two centers have transitioned to WildCAD-E, which is a cloud-based dispatching/tracking system. Miles City and Billings are the two that need to transition and are transitioning this week.

- Public internet for NRCC and NRTC – all equipment is here, but not yet set up.
- Hosted the NRCC AAR last week. Mobilization Guide edits will be due April 1, 2024. Chapter 90 directory updates are Due April 15, 2024.
- AFD Facilities: NRCC asked for more outdoor lighting around the center. There will be an active shooter training on February 15, 2024.

### **NRCG Financial Plan (Jeni Jeresek)**

- For FY24, would appreciate getting agency signatures much quicker. A draft financial plan is in place based on what we have used in the past – which includes volume of business report, NRTC report, and agency contributions (salaries). Statistics are on a 10-year average and percentages have only changed less than a percentage over the 10-year period analyzed. ND would like to contribute 0.8% in 2024.
- Question – are all agencies contributing and paying their amount? On behalf of BLM, DNRC is paying their share. The BOD needs to ensure that each agency is upholding the established agreement and paying their annual amount.
- **DECISION/ACTION ITEM:** The financially contributing agencies voted to continue with the current NRCG Financial Plan methodologies and would like Jeni Jeresek to move forward with the current process. Agencies will need to submit their updated contribution information by January 15, 2024. (*Action Item #13*)

### **NRK Cache (Anthony Krause)**

- Although they are fully staffed, they are experiencing significant wage grade issues. GS-5 are hard to fill in Missoula. There is a proposal to standardize position descriptions for cache positions.
- While one cache building at a remote location will be dismantled and moved to the main cache location, they will have all the same types of items, just less available to supply. With the warehouse move, the main cache will also gain a paved parking lot for their semis.
- Prescribed fire support: The cache does not have a huge amount of staffing, but they are trying to accommodate prescribed fire efforts. Unfortunately, NRK will likely not have capacity to support prescribed fire chainsaw repairs due to staffing and suppression workload.
- It was well received that every MARK 3 pump coming from NRK had the fish strainer included.
- Success and challenges of fleet. Fleet is a challenge due to usage reports. Renting fleet is not an easy fix. Challenge for to get new drivers, even with recruitment efforts. The increasing training and administrative requirements for ADs is getting tougher to maintain that pool of qualified drivers.

### **Northern Rockies Training Center (Melissa Wegner)**

- Melissa reported that NRTC added two new classes to their course schedule for 2023-2024. (D-310, L-381 will be hosted on the east side)
- With the NRCG cost share – NRTC would gladly host an additional training specialist position!
- Priority Trainee Program:
  - Background: In the spring of 2022, BOD acknowledged that all trainees as priority trainees, which continued into 2023. Melissa works with Beau Richardson when other GAs and IMTs are looking for trainees.
  - Melissa is meeting with IWDG members Jesse Bender and Chuck Russell to discuss priority trainees. CIMTs may be able to assign a set number of priority trainees on their rosters. There is a need in Northern Rockies to standardize availability of Priority Trainees. Melissa is looking for ways to use the priority trainee program for FEMA incidents and prescribed fire report. The BOD discussed what successional planning means within Priority Training Program? Moving forward, the standardization of the Priority Trainee Program will likely be implemented next year.

### **NR Dispatch Improvement Tasking Update (Craig Glazier)**

- Craig Glazier updated the group on the status of the Northern Rockies dispatch improvement effort. He explained that there is no longer a coordinator position as the funding is no longer available.



- The current committee members are Kirsten Kaiser (BLM), Chris Poleski (DNRC), Nate Rogers/Jeremiah Miller (IDL), Molly Ryan (USFS), Corey Buhl (NR Operations), and Craig Glazier (USFS).
- The NRCG BOD discussed the need for agency buy-off from members to agree that we have too many centers and voted to support the Dispatch Review committee in their continued efforts (original taskings) and provide recommendations.
- **DECISION:** The NRCG Board of Directors acknowledged that the ultimate outcome would be to close some centers. This recommendation would be forwarded to the WFAA group. All agencies present at the meeting were in support of the recommendation, except for Idaho Department of Lands, who abstained from the vote due to not enough information. Table 1 lists the decision and agency vote.

**Decision:** *Support to allow Dispatch Review committee to continue their work (original taskings) and provide recommendations. Acknowledging ultimate outcome would be to close some centers. This recommendation would be forwarded to WFAAs.*

	\$	Agency	Agency Support / Vote
1	\$	BIA	Supports
2	\$	BLM	Supports
3	\$	FWS	Supports
4	\$	IDL	Abstained, not enough information
5	\$	MT DNRC	Supports
6	\$	ND	Supports
7	\$	NPS	Not present
8	\$	USFS	Supports
9		MT DES	Supports
10		State Fire Chief's Association	Not present
11		Montana County Fire Wardens	Supports
12		Montana Sheriff's & Peace Officers	Not present

Table 1: Decision to support dispatch improvement efforts.

## Review of Committee & Zone Report Outs

- Committee reports were received prior to the meeting and were distributed to the BOD. Reports were received from the Dispatch Committee, Operations Committee, Fire Business, Fire Training, and Incident Commanders. The Mitigation/Education Committee was meeting at the same time as the BOD and will provide a report for the December monthly BOD meeting.
  - **DECISION:** The NRCG BOD approved the updated Fire Business Committee charter unanimously.

## Board Liaison Representation & Expectations

- The Board of Directors reviewed the current Board Liaisons to Committees and Zones document. All liaisons to committees and zones will remain the same except for the Liaison to the Training Committee.
  - **DECISION:** Dennis Strange will replace Josh Harvey as the Training Committee Liaison.
- NRCG BOD discussed their expectations of the Liaisons as well as the committees. The BOD would like to start rotating committee report outs at monthly meetings and to use the committees in the functions they were designed. The BOD plans to empower committees to do the work of the coordinating group. The BOD will look at tasking each group with appropriate tasks. Currently, there are expectations outlined in the GMAC handbook.
  - **DECISION:** The monthly meeting agendas will include a standing agenda item where two (2) committee liaisons (or committee chairs) will give a committee update. This was an agreed upon expectation made by the BOD. For example, a report out rotation could look like:
    - December/March/July: Mitigation/Education Committee; IC Committee
    - January/May/August: Dispatch Committee; Operations Committee
    - February/June/September: Training Committee; Business Committee
    - All committees - April and November (face-to-face meetings)
  - **ACTION ITEM:** The BOD will develop and communicate the monthly report out rotation. (which committee will report and when – see example above) (*Action Item #1*)
  - **ACTION ITEM:** The BOD will review current expectations. Once reviewed/updated, they will communicate with each committee via memo. Report back by February 2024. (*Action Item #6*)

- Discussion: Are the committees made up of the right people? Liaisons need to review the committee membership and ensure there is adequate subject matter expert and agency representation.

### **Utilizing Firenet for NRCG Committee's and Zones (Kathy Pipkin)**

Kathy requested that the BOD allow her to set up Zone and Committee Channels within the NRCG\_Coordinating Group Microsoft Team to facilitate increased communication and a longer standing document library/document tracking system. The BOD supported this effort but asked that Kathy reach out to each zone and committee to see if they would be on board. Kathy will report back to the BOD via email with her findings before this action is implemented.

### **NRCC Manager Transition Plan & Expectations**

With the transition between Kathy and Kate, the BOD would like to ensure there is adequate support and direction from the BOD. Kathy and Kate mentioned they have already been working on updating the current delegation. The BOD plans to schedule a meeting with Kate and Corey in January to walk through expectations for each agency and to review of delegation of authority.

- **ACTION ITEM:** Delegations need to be finished prior to meeting in January. Also, supervision of employee delegations are separate and need to be updated. Consider updating prioritization for RX. Edits to the delegation by the end of December 31. Finalize in January 2024, meet in February 2024. (*Action Item #4*)

### **Backup for NR Operations Position**

This topic was brought forward to review how the 2023 memo for NR Operations backups and to discuss its implementation. Overall, consensus was that the memo was not followed. Partly because the individuals listed within the memo as backups were unavailable at the time of need. Corey Buhl reported that the individuals listed are usually busy with local fire support due to their skillsets. During discussions, some ideas to provide consistent and reliable backups for this position include:

- Developing a set schedule where individuals would commit to an 'assignment' or have an 'on call' backup schedule with agency expectation to be available.
- Develop a guide or SOP for the position that lists needed skillsets, tasks, etc. Some skillsets that are very valuable included Duty Officer experience, understanding of interagency environment.
- Define agency duty officers/single POCs that Corey could coordinate with (i.e. have 7-8 primary POCs)
- Could have a second person to come in and shadow during PL3 (Operations Specialist)
- **ACTION ITEM:** Review delegation memo and update as appropriate. Develop and/or decide if an SOP document for the position is needed. (*Action Item #11*)

### **CIMT Transition & IMT3 Review/Update (Kathy Pipkin)**

- Review of 2023
  - Received over 700 applications for IMTs. During the application process, applicants were asked to only apply for one team. From the applications, NR was able to provide a pool for type 3 and CIMT. Selections were completed by the end of February 2023. The iCAP application portal had significant flaws. For 2024, NR will be using an MS form for IMT applications.
  - NRCC successfully transitioned all Type 1 and Type 2 IMTs to CIMT. CIMT began availability on April 4, with the first assignment in May. The Type 3 rotation started in June with the first assignment July 4. All teams had a minimum of two assignments.
  - NR was frequently in national rotation, which was confusing to many.
  - NRCC opened the application process for ICs, Deputies and trainees in October.
  - 2023 IMT Assignment Evaluations have been posted in Firenet. There were no negative evaluations received.
  - IMT Successes/Challenges
    - Successes: Beau did a great job at communicating with team ICs throughout the season. Going down to five teams was a huge success.
    - Challenges: iCAP application program was flawed/hard to use

- Issues with Ad hoc team protocols. Due to mobilization to Canada, the entire IMT was taken out of the rotation.
  - **ACTION ITEM:** NRCG BOD will develop ad hoc team protocols when a short IMT is ordered to define what the rest of the IMT will do if only a small number of team members are ordered. Assigned to IC Committee/Paul Cerda, Liaison and Beau Richardson. (*Action Item #9*)
- 2024 IMT Application Process & Timeline: New applicants will be able to apply in December/January. Current IMT members will not need to apply. Selections will take place in February.
  - DECISION: NR will open up application process for Deputy ICs and IC trainees during the December 2023/January 2024 recruitment period (this will be the same application period for general IMT recruitment)
  - **ACTION ITEM:** Because all NR teams applied in 2023, the BOD needs to determine the next steps for IMT Recruitment and Application Process. This could be completed by developing a rotation of each team that must apply (tied to IC tenure/commitment timeframes) or all teams could reapply annually. Assigned to C Committee/Paul Cerda, Liaison and Beau Richardson. (*Action Item #8*)
- Process for IC, Deputy IC and IC Trainee approval: In 2023, there were issues of IC trainees that aren't vetted through the BOD and took trainee assignments. The BOD plans to remind IC group that IC trainees on IMTs need to be approved by NRCG BOD. Additionally, when the NRCC IMT Coordinator sees issues, they need to update the BOD Chair to help resolve issues. The NRCG BOD would also like a list of approved ICs, Deputy ICs and IC trainees. There were no applications for ICs, Deputy ICs or IC trainees received during the October 2023 recruitment period.
  - **ACTION ITEM:** Provide expectations to IC group that all ICs, deputies and trainees need to be vetted by NRCG. Assigned to IC Committee Liaison. (*Action Item #2*)
- Financial Support for NR CIMTs:
  - Discussed Starlink and the need for each team to have access to one or two units.
  - Need to ensure agencies are completing purchase for assigned IMTs.
- IMT Incentives: The BOD is looking for ideas to recognize and incentivizes IMT members for their service.

### **NRCG BOD Program Support Specialist (Craig Glazier)**

While Pam Jolly is on a detail, the NRCG BOD will need a meeting facilitator for a four-month period to fill behind Pam. If the position is vacated in the future, it will likely not be filled due to the changing workload priorities of the USFS Program Support Specialist position.

- In the short-term, Montana DES may have an individual with interest in filling in for four-months. BLM has also offered to help support the interim facilitator while Pam is out.
- In the long-term, the BOD could solicit applications for a two-year volunteer/collateral duty Meeting Facilitator/Executive Assistant. This could be a developmental position for individuals looking to learn/hone facilitation skills. It was suggested to have a primary facilitator as well as a co-assistant that would fill the role on a two-year term.
- Primary tasks included agenda coordination and development; scheduling meetings; taking notes and posting to website; keeping track of action items and progress; preparation of memos and board documents. One potential challenge is access to post external documents on the website.

### **NRCC Intel Product Discussion (Aaron Thompson)**

Discussion regarding current intelligence products. For example, it was requested that 'News and Notes' be produced in Northern Rockies. Kate responded that 'News and Notes' is very labor intensive and is difficult to keep up in PL 4 and 5. A suggestion to work with DNRC regarding their fire situation dashboard. Using a PIO during increased activity would also help to get information out quicker.

## **Wednesday, November 8, 2023 - General Session**

### **Opening/Bin Items Discussion**

- IMT Aaron Thompson brought up the need to further recognize IMTs with non-monetary awards. He suggested procuring a coffee mug or travel cup with all NR IMT logos to give to team members – but the BOD would need to develop parameters of who would receive the award/recognition.
  - **ACTION ITEM:** The BOD requested to add an action item to a) develop a entire team non-monetary award and b) revitalize the existing awards program – as outlined on the NRCG website. Task will be led by Aaron Thompson. (*Action Item #5*)

### **Montana Ties to Local Government Overview (Matt Hall/Cory Calnan)**

Cory Calnan presented a PowerPoint presentation. The presentation is available in NR\_Coordinating Group Team under the 2023-Fall-NRCG-Meeting folder. Some questions arose from the presentation including if all Montana counties have dedicated fire wardens – yes they do. Cory also explained how affidavit lands work in Montana.

### **NRCG Board Charter Update (Rich Cowger/Bryce Rogers)**

Prior to the meeting, BOD members were asked to review the current draft charter. During discussion, it was asked about representation of other ID and ND state government entities. Do we need to have a written agreement that MT would represent ID and ND state government entities? Additionally, the majority felt the BOD would address any additional requests for representation at the time of request.

After additional discussion, the BOD members proposed the following updates to the Charter Update Task group.

- Define who the board of directors are vs the NR Coordinating Group members? It is not clear in the current version, but many felt the BOD would be the financially responsible agencies (USFS, BIA, BLM, FWS, IDL, MT-DNRC, ND Forest Service, NPS) while the coordinating group would be the agencies that provide jurisdictional responsibility. Some felt the BOD and Coordinating Group are the same membership.
- List the financial entities in the charter document.
- Determine the voting membership of coordinating group.
- Add financial responsibilities each BOD members bring for NRCC/NRTC financial plan. Ensure during MAC that the financial decision required by that agency is involved. Review NRCG Operating Guide to make sure the direction is coordinated.
- Outline the responsibilities of the Program Support Specialist/Meeting Coordinator-Facilitator.

**ACTION ITEM:** Discussion to occur at Executive BOD session in January. Draft for BOD review by January 16, 2024, monthly meeting; final for approval by February 20, 2024 monthly meeting. (*Action Item #3*)

### **CGAC Representation Expectations (Bryce Rogers)**

In 2022, Craig Glazier was appointed as the NRCG BOD representative to CGAC. He has been attending. The NRCC Manager also attends these meetings as they are chart under CGAC. The group discussed defining the expectations of the NRCG representative.

**DECISION/ACTION ITEM:** The NRCG BOD representative to CGAC will fill a two-year term. If not available, Craig will find a BOD replacement. NRCC Manager will attend as a participant of the Center Manager Group. Expectation is that meeting notes and taskings are emailed to BOD members. Standing NRCG agenda topic continues. All BOD members agreed. Will add this designation to the 'NRCG Board Liaisons to Committees and Zones' document. (*Action Item #12*)

**Northwestern Energy Intel Sharing Proposal (Bryce Rogers)**

This is a follow-up item from the October monthly BOD meeting. NRCC already has a process to notify/share information from cameras and incoming reported information. The BOD would like to encourage NWE to tie in with local dispatch centers and NRCC. Kate Holsapple will reach out to NWE to pursue options.

**Remote Incident Support Team Update – Morganne Lehr**

Morganne Lehr joined virtually to share 2023 RIST statistics. Billy Phillips is the National RIST Coordinator supported by Northern Rockies/R1 USFS and Morganne Lehr is the Deputy National RIST Coordinator supported by R5 USFS.

**NRCC Spring / Fall 2024 Meeting Dates**

- The Spring 2024 meeting date will be held April 8-12, 2024 in Missoula. These dates coincide with the Northern Rockies IMT Meetings and allows the BOD to be present and available for the IMT meeting and to address the attendees during a general session.
- The Fall 2024 meeting will be held the week of November 4-8, 2024, with location to be determined. The meeting will likely be three days to allow the committee to use the time to finalize decisions and work on tasks.

An official memo will be completed, and calendar invitations will be sent to BOD members.

**Bin Items**

- Montana DES reported that Kyrsten Brinkly is interested in filling the Executive Assistant role while Pam Jolly is on detail. A follow-up meeting will be set up with Kyrsten and the BOD Chair.



# **Northern Rockies Coordinating Group**

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

## **Board of Directors Conference Call – Notes**

**Tuesday, December 19, 2023**

### **Participants**

**Board Members:** Rich Cowger (MT Fire Chiefs' Assoc., Chair), Bryce Rogers (BIA, Vice Chair), Aaron Thompson (BLM), Dennis Strange (BLM), Tate Fischer (FWS), Brett Lloyd (MT DES), Matt Hall (MT DNRC), Steve Holton (MT Sheriff's & Peace Officers Assoc.), Paul Cerda (NPS), Craig Glazier (USFS), Adriane Beck (Montana Co. Fire Wardens Assoc.)

**Deputies and Others:** Karly DeMars (BLM, Facilitator), Kyrsten Birkley (MT DES, Facilitator), Kate Holsapple (NRCC), Aitor Bidaburu (NWCG), Jeni Jeresek (USFS), Amanda Boatright (BIA), Melissa Swaim (USFS), Cory Calnan (MT DNRC), Jason Jarrett (MT Sheriff's & Peace Officers Assoc.)

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

### **Standing Reports**

- **NWCG/NMAC Update (Aitor Bidaburu)**

- NMAC Memo (M2023-06) regarding CIMT Standard Configuration and National rotation went out November 28, 2023.
- Selections for rotation were made at the National Coordinators Meeting
- NWCG is moving forward on the development of the Basic IMT course, anticipated to be available by end of 2024, and Advanced will be out by the end of 2025.
- Making plans for NWCG All Chairs meeting coming up in Boise. All chairs will meet with the NWCG Executive Board.

- **CGAC Report Out (Craig Glazier)**

- National Mobilization Guide edits can still be submitted until January 1, 2024.
- In person meeting will be the same week as ICAC. The agenda is robust and will be covering PSOT update; 2023 Lessons Learned from Canadian mobilization, ISAP update, CIMT updates, quals/training updates.
- National Coordinators Meeting was also discussed.

- **NRCG Operations (Corey Buhl) – no updates**

- **NRCC Update (Kathy Pipkin / Kate Holsapple)**

- Kate attended the National Coordinator's Meeting. Geographic Area Coordinators are asking NICC to go to NMAC to suggest teams start with a 90-person roster then remove positions as needed instead of buildup the rosters in IROC.
- Over past month – NR has had 87 fires under 1700 acres; resource orders have decreased.
- Intel personnel are working on building the preparedness level tool in excel as a backup plan to the current software available. The excel version would allow for more accessibility.
- NRCC is going to start tracking PL levels daily to monitor trends.
- Overhead – IMT recruitment out for NR – due COB January 19, 2024.
- Kate's transition with Kathy is going well. She is working on building timeline and task list.
- Kate met with Northwestern Energy (NWE) to establish a line of communication. In talking with NWE, there will be some larger asks of NRCG/interagency partners as NWE establishes a detection camera network. NWE would like to collaborate with interagency partners on camera placement where feasible.



# **Northern Rockies Coordinating Group**

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

- Staff are working on year end stats and NRCC will be minimally staffed for the rest of the year.
- Questions –
  - Is there a plan for NRCC to establish a CIMT Roster Coordinator? NR will be working on establishing this position but has not yet finalized their plan. The BOD should be aware of the implementation of the new NMAC guidance.
  - Roster size – many teams are modernizing how they mobilize; Need to also be careful of how we look at the subordinate resource order numbers (the dot numbers) as some positions may be filled with virtual, part-time and/or trainees.
  - PL Criteria consistency efforts– Kate isn't part of this tasking but will follow up.
  - Master IMT Roster approval for NR – Is there any desire to investigate team make up? It was suggested to task the Operations Committee to be involved in team selection and roster review. Would be in conjunction with existing IC committee tasking.
- **Dispatch Improvement Tasking Update (Craig Glazier)**
  - Dan (contractor) will be coming back after holiday season in January. The committee will have their first round of recommendations will be out in January 2024.
- **NRCCG Committee Updates:**
  - Fire Prevention & Education Committee (Matt Hall): Has a standing charter, membership consists of zone representatives. The committee has plans to re-establish representation – NRCCG will need to validate their membership list. Additionally, the committee will have updates to make on the NRCCG website. There is currently no tasking to this committee from the BOD. Other items discussed at fall committee meeting: Community of Practice in Prevention & Education Realm (similar to fire adapted learning network); Wildfire prevention (WPSAP) – spatial tool to direct prevention efforts; coordination and planning for Smokey Bears birthday in August 2024. Coordinating messages across agencies. AAR for Restrictions/Closures.
    - Chair - Kevin Sweeney (NPS); Jennifer Russell (IDL)
  - IC Committee (Paul Cerda): No updates from group. Applications for NR is out. Lots of good engagement from ICs on committee.
    - Chair has changed to Brent Olson; Paul Roose is vice chair.

## **Old Business**

- **Decisional | NRCCG Committee Report Out Procedures – Reporting Rotation**
  - The 2024 Board Liaison Report Out Schedule was approved by consensus. Each Committee Liaison is expected to report out at the regular monthly meeting as outlined below:
    - January/May/August: Dispatch Committee; Operations Committee
    - February/June/September: Training Committee; Business Committee
    - March/July/December: Fire Prevention & Education Committee; IC Committee
    - All committees will report out at in-person spring and fall meetings (April/November)
- **Informational | NRCC Center Manager & NR Operations Delegation of Authority and Expectations – Status Update**
  - Rich and Bryce will schedule a meeting with Kate & Corey to go over their new delegations and expectations. Kate will send version with edits to Rich and Bryce.





# Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

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

- **Informational | IMT Recognition Tasking Update (Aaron Thompson)**
  - There were 684 participants in 2023 on IMTs; Aaron is working with Beau to figure out what and how to recognize these individuals.
  - There is a current IMT awards recognition program – need to reinvigorate this program with ICs and committee chairs to those teams.
- **Informational | Agency Inputs to NRCG Financial Plan (Jeni Jeresek)**
  - Would be sending out emails for inputs to agencies today (December 19, 2023).

## New Business

- **Decisional | Incident Business Committee – National Buying Team Sponsorship for 2024 (Amanda Boatright, Melissa Swain)**
  - The NR Incident Business Committee is requesting to recruit and fill two Buying Teams (BUYT) in the Northern Rockies. One would fulfill the national rotation and the other would be a geographic area specific BUYT.
    - Melissa: The Geographic Area BUYT could be a little smaller in size and could meet the need in Northern Rockies. There has been some pushback to using the ad hoc team with agency administrators because they aren't recognized as a qualified BUYT.
    - Can we fill two teams? National team would take priority to fill. If we can fill two teams, it would give us more flexibility. Geographic area team would not take national team out of national rotation, but could go out of GACC, if available.
    - Geographic area BUYT would follow all rules/documentation that the national team would use.
    - Who has oversight of BUYTs? Incident Business Committee has coordination oversight. When ordered, the individual fire would have supervision. Melissa Swain is the BUYT Coordinator for NR.

**Decision Record:** Does the NRCG BOD support the Incident Business Committee in an effort to recruit and fill two BUYTs – one national level (first priority to fill) and the second would be a Northern Rockies geographic area specific team?

	\$	Agency	Agency Support / Vote
1	\$	BIA	Supports
2	\$	BLM	Supports
3	\$	FWS	Supports
4	\$	IDL	Unavailable
5	\$	MT DNRC	Supports
6	\$	ND	Unavailable
7	\$	NPS	Supports
8	\$	USFS	Supports
9		MT DES	Supports
10		State Fire Chief's Association	Supports
11		Montana County Fire Wardens	Supports
12		Montana Sheriff's & Peace Officers	Supports

**Final Decision:** NRCG BOD supports the Incident Business Committee with their effort to recruit and fill two BUYTs – one national, one geographic-level.

## Review of Action Items (Rich Cowger)

- The group reviewed the current 'Action Items' list during the meeting and adjusted as necessary.

*The next scheduled NRCG Monthly Conference Call is **January 16, 2024** at 1000 hours Mountain Time*