



Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

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

Monthly Conference Call – Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Participants

Coordinating Group Members:

X	BIA – Great Plains	Heath Estey		Idaho Department of Lands	Josh Harvey
X	BIA – Rocky Mountain	Bryce Rogers		North Dakota Forest Service	Ryan Melin
	BIA – Northwest Region	Brad Donahue	X	Montana DNRC	Matt Hall
	BLM – Montana/Dakotas	Aaron Thompson		Montana County Fire Wardens	Patrick Lonergan
	BLM – Idaho	Dennis Strange		Montana DES	Brett Lloyd
X	NPS – Intermountain Region	Paul Cerda	X	Montana Sheriff's & Peace Officers	Steve Holton
X	USFS – Region 1	Craig Glazier	X	Montana Fire Chiefs Association	Rich Cowger
X	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	Tate Fischer	X	Facilitator	Karly DeMars

Deputies and Others: Kate Holsapple (NRCC), Brian Nickolay (Fire Chief), Craig Howells (BLM), Beau Richardson (NRCC)

Standing Reports

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

Upcoming Meetings:

- ICAC: October 28–29 (half day, Boise)
- CIMT AAR: October 29 (half day) and October 30 – with NMAC, CGAC, CGs, and CMs (Boise)

Information Updates:

- Expect to remain at Preparedness Level 3 with significant resource commitments still in place but trending downward. Preparedness levels will be reassessed later in the week.
- NMAC meetings are scheduled for Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.
- The DOI Secretarial Order has been released, accompanied by a joint USDA/DOI press briefing outlining efforts related to the Executive Order.

- **CGAC Report Out** (Dennis Strange) - Dennis noted that the CGAC meeting notes have been shared, and follow-up items and assignments are in progress. The group discussed identifying representatives to participate in the upcoming AAR. Key discussion points included outlining the top three factors contributing to team success and the top three issues that need to be addressed, particularly related to NMAC direction and overall oversight of teams.

- **NRCC Operations** (Corey Buhl) – No updates.

- **NRCC Update** (Kate Holsapple) – Kate reported a decrease in activity across the area this week, with widespread high humidity recovery contributing to the moderation. Some warming is expected later in the week, but current initial attack activity remains low with no emerging incidents of concern. She also provided a staffing update, noting that the same three vacancies remain: the USFS aircraft position (closing September 23), the DNRC assistance coordination position, and the FWS meteorologist position, which is moving forward in the hiring process. Work continues to identify a replacement for Jay

- **NRCG Committee Updates:**

- Training Committee (Dennis Strange) – Working on revising charter.
- Business Committee (Aaron Thompson) – no updates.

Old Business - None

New Business

- **NRCG Attendance at IMT AAR Meeting** (Rogers, Lonergan) – October 29-30
 - NRCG Representation: Dennis Strange, Rich Cowger
 - The IMT AAR meeting will be held October 29–30. NRCG and ICAC will ensure thoughtful and purposeful representation at the session. Rogers and Lonergan emphasized the importance of being well-prepared, with members asked to identify the top three successes and top three issues for discussion. Items should be submitted to Dennis and Rich for review during the October NRCG meeting. Suggestions for discussion include the concept of a national team rotation.
- **2026 IMT Meeting Logistics Update** - Team 6 will be organizing the meeting using the event coordinator. Will be looking for input from all NR IMTs for agenda content.
- **IC/IMT Recruitment** (Beau Richardson, Kate Holsapple) - Beau and Kate provided an update on the upcoming IC/IMT recruitment process. Recruitment notices for Incident Commanders will be released in early October, with selections finalized by the fall NRCG meeting. The existing application form worked well, though the group discussed adding questions to capture applicant motivation and how candidates will represent the Northern Rockies. Additional consideration will be given to defining core competencies, leadership qualities, and soft skills aligned with NRCG expectations.
 - No official notifications have been received from current ICs regarding non-return, though Joe Sampson and Scott Schuster have indicated they will not reapply. A peer review process and clear expectations will be incorporated to ensure fairness and transparency.
 - **Action Item:** Beau will work with NRCG/Karly to quantify and establish key core competencies for selection. Timeline: Application period opens no later than October 10, with submissions due by October 31.
- **Fall NRCG Meeting** - The Fall NRCG Meeting is scheduled for November 5–7, with a half day on Wednesday and Friday and a full day on Thursday.
 - The group plans to spend time with NRCC during the session and identify a suitable venue or activity to support collaboration. Cerda will also be attending the L580 course during this timeframe.
- **REPORT OUTs | Incident Close Outs** - No issues or concerns were raised from any of the IMT evaluations.
 - Turner Gulch/Derby (CO-GRD) – NR Team 3
 - Sunset (ID-POS) – NR Team 5
 - Lee (CO-WRD) – NR Team 1
 - Bivens Creek (MT-BDF) / Cloudrest – NR Team 6
 - Island Creek (ID-NCF) – NR Team 2
 - Windy Rock (MT-SWS) – NR Team 1
- **Agency Updates**
 - BIA – made a selection for Lewistown Dispatch position and two helitack positions.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, October 21, 2025