Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

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

Date March 19, 2024 NRCG Memo# 2024-003

To: Northern Rockies Interagency Wildland Fire Community

From: Chair, Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

Subject: Dispatch Improvement Sustainability Project: Project Status and Next Steps Forward

The Northern Rockies Coordinating Group (NRCG) initiated the Dispatch Improvement and Sustainability Task to ensure an effective and sustainable interagency dispatch system continues to thrive in the geographic area. For a common understanding on the task's purpose and direction, NRCG provides the following updates and guidance:

Phase 1 of this task identified specific issues affecting dispatch effectiveness and recommended short and long-term solutions for improving the dispatch system in the Northern Rockies. Phase 1 conclusions formed around four key emphasis areas: capability and staffing; infrastructure needs; technology requirements and support; and partnerships and collaboration.

Presently, Phase 2 of this task will frame up actions delivering the organizational solutions and business strategies in support of Phase 1 recommendations identified. Interagency teams of subject-matter experts will develop best possible organizational and business strategies base on Phase 1 outcomes and their recommendations will be provided to NRCG.

Many local units are actively consolidating interagency dispatch centers. NRCG supports these efforts. Based on these efforts, NRCG urges agency managers in each of the Northern Rockies Operations Zones to consolidate local dispatch services into a single interagency dispatch center for each zone. We recommend that interagency partners form a team of subject-matter experts in discerning the best consolidation outcome. If consolidation to a single dispatch center in a zone isn't practicable, NRCG urges zone partners to develop a suitable alternative that aligns with the purpose of the NRCG Dispatch Improvement Task.

NRCG is committed to providing timely communication and guidance that will support informed decision-making and uniform improvement of dispatch services across the Northern Rockies Geographic Area. Full implementation of dispatch consolidation and organizational improvement is expected to become fully operational in time for the 2025 field season.

The attachment to this memo describes Phase 2 of this project and helps to outline its goals and objectives as the project moves forward.

Questions should be directed to your agency NRCG representative, or the NRCG Chair.

Richard Cowger

Rich Cowger
Chair, Northern Rockies Coordinating Group (NRCG)