



Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

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

Board of Directors Conference Call Agenda

Tuesday, April 17, 2018

Conference Call Line:

1-888-844-9904

Access Code: 3599209

Participants:

Board Members: Ken Schmid, Mike Granger, JT Wensman, Jake Ganieany, Mike DeGrosky, Patrick Lonergan, Dan Warthin, Ralph Rau

Deputies and Others: Aitor Bidaburu, Coleen Haskell, Melissa Wegner, Patrick Murphy, Tony Petrilli

Purpose: This is a public meeting for the purpose of conducting government business.

NWCG/NMAC Update:

Went to National PL 2 on Friday of last week; the Southwest and Southern areas are getting busy. Primary support is aviation; not a lot of crew requests at this time. Of note, there was a fatality with a road grader operator on suppression activities. Reports of extreme fire behavior. Paul Summerfelt is the new Area Commander, along with Tim Sexton and Joe Stutler. In regards to IMT succession – there is a new charter being formed by a long range incident workforce development committee. It is being compiled by a diverse group and is currently in draft form. It is expected to be approved.

It is important to note that this group was formed at the request of those at CGAC; this request is coming from the ground up. There is a lot of support at the ground level to look at doing business in a different way. (**Mike Granger**)

NWCG is meeting tomorrow and NMAC is meeting on Thursday.

Predictive Services Update:

Low pressure system moving through the Northern Rockies; snow advisors out with a storm moving across Montana and moving into North Dakota today. The big impact after the precipitation will be high winds; looks like last significant winter type storm. Dry and warming pattern afterwards. Currently, in between two systems – ridging coming in; less dispersion and warmer temps will start to melt record snow pack. Potential for flooding. May – warmer and dryer pattern will continue. Memorial Day week may be wet and cold. June – tail end of La Nina winter; going into Enso-neutral; warmer and dryer.

Northern Rockies GACC and Operational Updates:

Sending resources to New Mexico; also for severity. IHCs are in the middle of critical training; will be coming on line at the end of the month. Last ones come on in mid-May.

NRCC Update

Went to PL 2 nationally, which means the National SIT Report is posted daily. NR activity is slowly starting to increase, prior to green up. Asking units to status resources accurately.



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Contracting Updates: (Tim Murphy)

Yesterday began Forest Service Solicitation evaluations; we are seeing a lot more responses to the solicitations. An increase from previous years. BLM is slowly moving through the process of their solicitations. This effort is affected by the loss of their contracting officer.

Safety Updates: (Tony Petrilli)

No significant updates; please email if any questions or issues arise.

Follow up on Old Business:

Cost Share for IT Interagency capacity at AFD (Patrick Murphy)

Proposal to Approve - There is a need to move on this quickly, in order to implement prior to fire season. Otherwise, will have to put off till next year; need to identify how to pay for this. (Ralph Rau) Patrick or Jake – Ryan sent what you were looking for – any new info from FEMA on putting in the lines? (Kathy Pipkin) Have not heard any comment back from FEMA. (Patrick Lonergan) Grant out there that is potentially available; however, FEMA does not put money into federal operations. Need to clearly show that there are state dollars involved. (Mike DeGrosky) That is why we used our percentage breakdown. (Kathy Pipkin) State IT people said we cannot put state equipment on a federal pipe. Patrick's idea of saving money and increasing capacity for DNRC will not work out. (Mike DeGrosky) If we were to do this, it would have to be funded only by Federal agencies. (Mike Granger) Still need to be open to the FEMA ruling, once issued, possibly to cover installation. USFS change in budget structure will not allow for previous flexibility; will need to wait on FEMA response before proceeding. (Ralph Rau) Will table until hear back from FEMA; if there is an opportunity for outside source funding, then will re-visit this issue. (Mike Granger) If FEMA does approve, it would go to Rich's unit and it will be them putting the line in and not us. (Kathy Pipkin) Q: Will agencies run into the same IT challenges as DNRC? No; it would be a business transaction, not an ownership issue. (Jake Ganieany)

Northern Rockies Data Standards White Paper – Update & Policy Issuance (Patrick Lonergan)

Have not seen anything further; at team meetings they talked about how the Board had endorsed their standards. There is a need to produce those. Granger will follow up

UTV Guidance Update (Corey Buhl)

They have not met since fire business group returned it to them. Granger will follow up.

MAC Plan Draft – Final Review (Kathy Pipkin/Mike Granger)

Draft has been circulated. Kathy received nothing further since last discussion. Have not had a chance to review. (Mike DeGrosky) One comment that I will send out today. (Ken Schmid) Comments from the Prevention Committee were incorporated. (Kathy Pipkin) Have all comments in to Kathy prior to the MAC Exercise; if no additional comments, will go ahead and approve. Will have ready for distribution at May meeting. (Mike Granger)

2018 Out of Area IMT NRCG Northern Rockies Geographic Area Briefing (Mike Granger)

Proposal to Approve - Craig did some updates to reflect timing change of IC call. (Mike Granger) Timing change does affect the schedule of the MAC; have re-worked and updated the letter and working on the plan. (Craig Goodell) Pam will distribute Craig's edits to the board. If no additional changes received by May 8th meeting, will sign and approved. (Mike Granger)



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New Business:

Northern Rockies Incident Organizer Update (Mike Granger)

https://gacc.nifc.gov/nrcc/administrative/policy_reports/NR_incident_organizer.pdf

Potential Tasking for Operations Committee - topic brought forth by Brandon Cichowski. Multiple incidents of NR Incident Organizers out across the Northern Rockies. Question was brought forth of do we want to have a Northern Rockies standard one? **(Mike Granger)** Would be good for the Operations Committee to look at. **(Ken Schmid)** Will task the Ops committee with this issue. **(Mike Granger)**

Additionally, at the Operations Committee breakout, there was an issue on the lack of Heavy Equipment Bosses. Question was posed of will there be an option in the Northern Rockies to manage more than one piece of equipment, as long as one is on order? **Asked the Ops Committee to look into this and report back to us on this option by the June conference call. (Mike Granger)**

Business Committee Charter – Draft Review (Mike Granger)

Proposal to Approve - have not received any additional comments. **(Mike Granger)** Comments – voting members be NRCG members and not the zone representatives. The issue is that zone representatives could possibly be all from one agency. Would like to push back to the agency representatives. Additionally, zone representatives are there for 3 years; that is a long time. Perhaps should be up to the zones. **(Ken Schmid)** Support for both of Ken's comments. Would like to take a consistent approach to committee membership. **(Mike DeGrosky)** Most committees are trending towards two year commitments. **(Mike Granger)** They do not necessarily need a term length. **(Ken Schmid)** Will get back with business committee and request those changes be made; then re-submitted to the board. **(Mike Granger)**

Distribution of Medicine Update (Craig Goodell)

Issue found out about IMT meetings; contractor for USFS has taken a position that it is too risky to provide OTCs at the incidents. Perception is that they are prescribing this OTC at the incidents; but outside their scope. State of Montana is ok with this distribution. There has historically been a training associated with this distribution; however, these trainings have not been held the last two years as the contractor advises this is outside their scope. Discussed with Mitch Dana at the USFS the needs of the service that the contractor should provide. The contractor will be providing the training this year; however, they will also be coming up with a position paper on this issue. The current contract ends soon. May want to ask the Montana board of medical examiners and counterparts in other states to also provide a similar position paper. **(Mike DeGrosky)** Also, there are other people, in the same camp, that can provide these; which increases complexity of the issue. **(Kathy Pipkin)** Craig will keep Board updated.

Team 6 (Mike DeGrosky)

IC for Team 6 (Bob Fry) has an unbreakable family commitment during the time that team comes on the board. Looking at options - currently, the way that team functions is the deputy will be running the team with oversight from Bob. Proposing fully qualified individual to run the team. If in June, what about NRCG Operations specialist? **(Kathy Pipkin)** Would like to support a team's internal solution. **(Mike DeGrosky)** Word getting back from agency administrator's group on support of out of area IC is that there is no issue with that; so agree with Mike DeGrosky to endorse team's primary solution; however, is a good opportunity to have Craig to provide additional support. **(Mike Granger)**



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Team's alternate plan is they could ask Mike Gagen if he is willing to do it. **(Mike DeGrosky)** Q: if Craig were to go as the T2 IC – do we have someone to fill in for Craig? **(Dan Warthin)** Tim Murphy is a deputy; Steve Fry is also an option. **Mike DeGrosky will provide Board approval feedback to Team 6.**

FireNet (Patrick Murphy)

This is a Google platform that allows interagency collaboration while providing compliance with federal standards. Northern Rockies and Rocky Mountain are pilots for this fire season. Looking at Command and General staff, and down to some unit leaders for initial accounts. Due to associated costs, they are limiting these accounts. Accounts will include dispatch as well. There will be two types of accounts; named and role based. Role based accounts will stay with that incident through the incident duration. Email Patrick with any questions.

Stand up NRCG Technical Working Team (Mike Granger)

Review of 2017 Proposal from Anne Rys-Sikora. Q: Why is it a working team instead of a committee? **(Mike DeGrosky)** Foundation to that proposal is good. Would like for Patrick to provide the Board with feedback on proposal points as far as to pursue or not pursue. Needs to be discussed and looked at more in depth. Patrick's request brought at spring meeting was more geared towards help in the geospatial area support. There is somewhat of committee that has come forth to address some of these geospatial issues (Matt Gibson, remote Sit – data standards). **(Mike Granger)** Reluctant when this was first proposed, thought it went too far and was too specific and agenda oriented. Feel this does not meet our needs; would favor the idea of a technology committee or geospatial committee on behalf of all the agencies. **(Mike DeGrosky)** In Alaska, we did have a geospatial committee and I can provide that charter to the group as an example. **(Dan Warthin)** No personal expertise in this area; some personnel in NRTC do possess supporting skills however not those specific skills. **(Melissa Wegner)** Patrick, who would you recommended? **(Mike Granger)** Mark Slaten DNRC, Greg Dillion USFS, Lester Maas, BLM in Missoula Field office. **(Patrick Murphy)** Mark is highly skilled and would definitely be DNRC's individual to contribute to the effort. **(Mike DeGrosky)** Patrick, would you be willing to head up this committee and head up the charter? **(Mike Granger)** Are we looking at a committee instead of a working group that could develop the standards and then be concluded? **(Kathy Pipkin)** One that would be under NRCG. **(Mike Granger)** Echo working group as meeting the need; would not be the appropriate person to run a committee such as this. **(Patrick Murphy)** **Will reach out to Mark Slaten and see if he is willing to head up a working group for Northern Rockies Geospatial issues as they arise.** **(Mike Granger)**

Direction for Public Affairs/Communications – NRCG/NRCC (Ken Schmid/Chris Barth)

Agency administrators discussed this issue also; was previously brought up by Kathy. All executives agree it is important. Chris has been working with a group of individuals. **(Ken Schmid)** On the agenda for May; want to put out there for all to be thinking about. Currently serving as a PIO representative to a higher group bringing forth Northern Rockies issues. There has been discussion on a number of things outside skills are currently doing. Much came out of the team meeting breakouts; however, the desire is not to operate outside of skill sets. Would ask that the Board think about a bit more directions on filling that role, and those people or person to operate, when the need arises. **(Chris Barth)** When we say "this role", the agency administrators discussed that this role is a function of both the NRCG and the NRCC. **When we get to the MAC Exercise, would like the board to be clear on whether this is a role of the NRCG/NRCC or a role of the MAC.** **(Ken Schmid)**



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Rotation of BOD Chair (*Mike DeGrosky*)

After the last agency administrator's call; there was confusion on which agency is assuming the chair next. Discussion was held in 2016 that was not captured in official documentation. The understanding was that since DNRC had skipped it's turn, then DNRC is the next in line for the chair. (*Mike DeGrosky*) That is correct. Will get the latest list to Larry with the agency administrators. (*Mike Granger*)

Review of Action Items (*Mike Granger*)

These will be covered at the May 8th meeting.

Round Robin – Updates from Agency Participants:

BIA NW – (Not on this call)

BIA GP – (Not on this call)

BIA RM – (Not on this call)

BLM – (Ken had to disconnect in order to participate on another conference call.)

FWS – Continuing winter conditions are affecting prescribed burning efforts; resources are supporting other GACCs; Oklahoma is extremely active. Will be back in the office next week.

IDL – Underwent a re-organization and have two new Deputy positions – Deputy Chief - Operations Josh Harvey and Deputy Chief - Planning and Prevention Scott Hayes. They officially start in May and hope is that they can attend the MAC Exercise. Both will also have delegation to act on behalf of IDL. Working on NW compact; hiring for this year continues; IDL also closely monitoring Idaho's political situation.

MT DES – Major Sean Hardy will be working with Mike DeGrosky; MOA review and approval occurring; meeting weekly due to flooding concurs; attended MT National Guard workshop – productive meeting.

MT DNRC – Lots of training going on; FEMA FMAG call occurring (coinciding with this call); important news will be coming out later today on Forestry Division Administrator. John Monzie is at Northwest Compact meeting in Portland; later in the week CAT team meetings occurring.

Montana State Fire Chiefs - (Rich Cowger at National Fallen firefighter meeting.)

Montana Fire Wardens – (Not on this call)

MT Peace Officers – (Not on this call)

ND FS – (Not on this call)

NPS – Attended out of town for IMT meetings; Regional FMO position is still vacant, interviews took place last week. Hope to have a decision in 3-4 weeks. Northern Rockies is in the process of hiring seasonals and training; also providing support in the Southern Portion of the Intermountain Region. Alpine ICH (Rocky Mountain GACC) is going through certification process next week.

USFS – (Ralph had to disconnect earlier to return to Regional Leadership Team meeting.)

The next scheduled NRCG Meeting is May 8-9, 2017 in Missoula, MT