



Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

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

Board of Directors Conference Call Agenda

Tuesday, June 18, 2019

Conference Call Line: 888-844-9904 | Access Code 3599209#

Participants:

Board Members: Ray Hart, Mike Granger, Rich Cowger, Patrick Lonergan, Dan Warthin, Ralph Rau, and Darron Williams (note: Darron Williams joined the call after voting occurred.)

Deputies and Others: Greg Morris, Sarah Lee, Aitor Bidaburu, Craig Goodell, Tim Murphy, Kathy Pipkin, Mike Richmond, Patrick Murphy, Amanda Boatright, 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)

Went to PL 2 last week; nationally activity is moderated. Only three IMTs out nationally. NMAC will be meeting later today to discuss additional resource requests to Canada. Currently, at a low PL2. NWCG will be meeting this week; will be discussing some subcommittee reorganization.

Briefly discussed Canada footwear policy for sawyers and the involved procurement. Discussions are ongoing at a national level.

Predictive Services Update:

Meteorological: (Michael Richmond / Coleen Haskell)

Have been pretty dry over western PSAs; 1000 hour fuels in some areas are ahead of where they should be. Dry cold front is coming in; will be seeing RHs around 20% beginning tomorrow. Mostly green fine fuels now. Have had a lot of lightning over the past few days as well. Cool, low pressure system with precipitation moving in on Thursday. This should help measurably in the Northwest area of the GACC. Snow levels will be coming down to 5000 foot in some areas. Next week, expected to warm up to average with the possibility of another following low pressure system.

GACC Situation: (Kathy Pipkin)

- In the last 24 hours, three fires for zero acres
- Since the last call - 172 fires for 5,653 acre
- Year to Date – 705 fires for 13,021 acres
- Three loads of smokejumpers at each base
- Helicopters currently - two rappel capable and one short haul capable
- Two T1 crews available nationally
- 12 T2 IA crews available – one is a T1 that is currently running as a T2, and one is a contract crew
- Do have a call from NICC to return, possibly inquiring what Northern Rockies could provide as support to Canada



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Northern Rockies GACC and Operational Updates:

NRCG Operations (Craig Goodell)

- Still have 4 IHC in Canada; return 6/21 on Friday
- MT DNRC crew and IDL crew in Alberta under Northwest Compact
- Working on Remote Situational Unit support; Morganne Lehr is continuing to work on a briefing paper for CGAC
 - Did have one order for support that was successful, albeit, a few wrinkles to smooth out

NRCC Update (Kathy Pipkin)

- Kim Thomas will be retiring Aug. 31st – mandatory date
- Would like to get on the agenda for next month's call – decision on filling from the board

Contracting Updates: (Tim Murphy)

- Last week posted new engines and support water tenders Dispatch Priority Lists; down nine companies; however, up 37 pieces of equipment
- DNRC completed hand washing stations
- Extending EMTs, paramedics and ambulances for a year
- Prior to the weekend, will be posting Dispatch Priority Lists for skidgine and pumper cats; will be up on both companies and equipment
- Last week finalized reshooting of video; currently is with the production company and expect final product by end of the month

Follow up on Old Business:

Heavy Equipment Boss (HEQB) Utilization – Draft Letter for CGAC Submission (Mike Granger)

- Minor edits to what was created last year
- Recommendation to quantifying “multiple pieces of equipment”
 - Can add limit caveat of “as determined by NWCG”
- **Approved – unanimous consent, with caveat of above listed edit**
- Letter will then be sent to Chair for signature; and on to CGAC

Turman's Team Re-Application (Mike Granger)

- Discussion involving granting a one-time, case specific exception based on the following rational:
 - “We are currently in our 3rd year of the rotation. Knowing that Scott Schuster is not ready to take the team, I am asking that myself and the current C&G extend until Scott is ready and not have the team reapply next fall/2019. Scott will be working to get his Type II IC task book completed and then move to Type I task book, (this season and into next year). I am willing to stay the IC until Scott is ready and then step down where the team/board needs are. I am just trying to reduce the burden on the system. If you look at how many times the team would fill out an application, which would include next fall and when Scott is ready, it would be 4 times out of the last 5 year. If denied, I am ok with that, I am just trying to be efficient with my team



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members time.” - **Douglas Turman**

- **Approved – majority vote, with the caveat that the notes document the provided rationale. Two voting members abstained, as they are members of this team.**

IMT Transition Protocols Update / Revision (Dan Warthin)

- Checked in with Joe; still a work in progress.
- Recommend a deadline of presenting at the fall board meeting

WFMT White Paper Update / Revision (Dan Warthin)

- Update also on WFMT white paper – it is done, in the process of attaching recommendation to it.
- Recommend a deadline of presenting at the fall meeting as well.
- Draft has been requested; Dan will provide once received from Joe.

Critical Mission Resource Group SOPs (Corey Buhl / Craig Goodell)

- Concern – only uses federal and state resources, no local government resources
 - Resources need to be self-sufficient and able to track own time and travel; must be fluid
 - Puts Northern Rockies in line with what three other GACCs are doing
 - Will not limit opportunities for local government on incidents in the Northern Rockies
 - New task group that DNRC is putting together that will be entirely local government
- Concern expressed that the Northern Rockies Operations officer and GMAC seemed to be interchanged throughout the document – need to be consistent about who they are assigned to and who is setting the priorities
- Concern also expressed over configuration – may possibly be limiting through this piece; requesting clarification
 - There is a caveat state “whenever possible” reference T1 hand crew from the NR
 - Does still provide the latitude to be flexible with configuration
- **Action Item: Craig Goodell will edit and provide additional draft to the BOD for review**
- **Vote conducted - not approved at this time; unable to reach a majority vote**
 - Rich Cowger and Patrick Lonergan will reach out to Mike DeGrosky directly for clarification on the local government aspect
 - Will defer to the chair on the need for an interim call prior to next month’s scheduled call

NRCG Handbook Update (Kathy Pipkin)

- Did not receive a great deal of input prior to the deadline
- Concern was expressed over mission statement
- Kathy will go through the strategic document to see if there are items that can be pulled in to this document
- Recommend this be continued as an ongoing project at this time
- Deadline recommendation to present at fall meeting



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New Business:

Medevac Authorization Form (Amanda Boatright)

- Intent of the form would allow for the employee to document why medivac was necessary for workman's comp
 - Form may be looked at to be adopted nationally down the road
- **Approved – unanimous consent**

GIS Rental Computers Cost Share (Patrick Murphy)

- Change with rental agreement; discussion on the rental potential with the board to avert lack of availability to get GIS machines throughout the season
- NWCG has 500 single use software licenses; concerns that due to the later season for the Northern Rockies that these may not be available by the time these machines are needed
- Recommending to rent 10 computers for July, Aug, Sept and have them pre-loaded and ready to ship out to the field
 - \$500 each per month total; \$15,000 for the season
 - Request to accomplish this on the cost share per the current agreement
- This is the first year this process has worked this way
- **Not approved – unable to reach a majority vote**
 - Will defer to the chair for later discussion
- Patrick would need to know prior to July; as it is a whole month's rent, no matter what day the order is placed on

Review of Action Items: (Mike DeGrosky)

Postponed to next call

Round Robin – Updates from Agency Participants:

BIA NW – Fuels Operations Specialist job open on USAJobs; T3 helicopter arrived and will be heading out soon

BIA GP – North Dakota greened up; fire activity has slowed down. Still getting small fires; no concerns. Coordinator position closing Friday. Working to advertise a budget analyst and zone fuels specialists. Superintendent meeting this week.

BIA RM – *(Not on call)*

BLM – National Preparedness review finishing up tomorrow. Had several small fires; largest was 56 acres.

FWS – Completed all of refresher, seasonal hiring, and training. Mechanical reductions on west side of state; escape review Lee Metcalf will be conducted soon. New position on Charles M. Russell opening Wednesday. No fire activity.

IDL – *(Not on call)*

MT DES – *(Not on call)*

MT DNRC – *(Not on call)*

Montana State Fire Chiefs – Finishing up refresher and pack test seasons. Activity slow.



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Montana Fire Wardens – Nothing additional to report.

MT Peace Officers – *(Not on call)*

ND FS – *(Not on call)*

NPS – No fire activity currently. Crews are on; refreshers completed. Yellowstone helicopter is available nationally. Working on filling communication education position that may be stationed in the Northern Rockies. Announcement for regional GIS specialist should be coming out soon.

USFS – Most folks are on; still waiting for a few to onboard here and there. Leadership change, Chad Benson is the new Forest Supervisor on the Kootenai National Forest. Suggestion to add FBAN report out for future calls under predictive services.

The next scheduled NRCG Monthly Conference Call is July 16, 2019 at 10:00 Hours Mountain Time