



# **Northern Rockies Coordinating Group**

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

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

**Tuesday, July 16, 2019**

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

### **Participants:**

**Board Members:** Aaron Thompson, Vern Burdick, Dan Warthin

**Deputies and Others:** Diane Mann-Klager, Josh Harvey, John Monzie, Tom Kuntz, Adriane Beck, Michael Odell, Julie Shea, Craig Goodell, Tim Murphy, Kathy Pipkin, Aitor Bidaburu, Mike Richmond, Julie Polutnik, Warren Appelhans, Ryan Patrick, 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)**

- Nationally firmly at PL 2. Southwest moved from PL 3 to PL 2 yesterday. Alaska remains at PL 5.
- NMAC met yesterday; currently meeting twice a week right now.
- Currently, there is a slight pinch if it comes to needing IR services. NWCG – Operations Training Committee is looking at possibly changing its name to “Decision Standards Committee. There will be more to come on that.
- Dingle Act update – There is a draft charter that the FMB group will be reviewing referencing establishment of an interagency group to keep track of and provide updates on progress being made towards the Dingle Act that was just passed.

### **Predictive Services Update:**

#### **Meteorological: (Michael Richmond)**

Interesting week ahead; a low pressure trough is moving through today. Wind event will be coming in on Wednesday and will affect the west side. Thursday, winds 30-40 mph for the northern half of the Front Range. Higher temperatures are expected as well. Stronger gusts will occur in aligned terrain. Friday, winds will be coming down. Saturday will be a transition day. Sunday, the four quarters high will rebuild with increasing temperatures and low relative humidity beginning Monday. Potential for dry thunderstorms afterwards.

#### **Fire Behavior: (Warren Appelhans)**

Heavy fuels went into the winter dry and have not recovered completely. Heavy potential for holdovers with the amount of lightning that has been received over the last few weeks. Another potential on the short range with this wind event are fallen trees across powerlines. Information is being posted and distributed regularly. Available to help with fire behavior request.

#### **GACC Situation: (Julie Polutnik)**

- Since last call there have been 228 fires for 312 acres.
  - 280 acres of that was the “Last Chance” incident from yesterday. This was a grass fire, north of Lewistown.
- Year to date there have been 934 fires for 13,333 acres.



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- 10 year average is 977 fires for 72,916 acres.

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

#### **NRCG Operations (Craig Goodell)**

- Northern Rockies has been supporting other GACCs.
- Keeping one load of smokejumpers at each base to cover any IA.
- Have been receiving some resources back.
- Fry's IMT T2 is on an incident near Fairbanks. As this is the 2<sup>nd</sup> assignment for that team, when it comes back, it will be taken out of the rotation to allow opportunities for the other teams. This is per the 2019 Northern Rockies IMT Standard Operating Guide.

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

- Have been heavily supporting Alaska with jet loads. Will be recovering another jet load soon.
- Alaska did cancel the resources that were going to mobilize on the 19 or 20<sup>th</sup>.
- NRCC is in seven day coverage. Also, running a bit lean in the office supporting Alaska as well.
- Do have multiple Resources / Types available within the GACC.

#### **Contracting Updates: (Tim Murphy)**

- Met with MT Logging Association and was presented with the final video. Will be working towards distributing this to all the agencies.
- Grayback T2IA national contract crews located in Missoula experienced a structure fire that did significant damage. They are attempting to come back on line from that.

#### **Follow up on Old Business:**

##### **Modified HEQB Proposal for CGAC (Craig Goodell)**

- Proposal was sent to CGAC; there has been new discussion from CGAC now and they desire more specificity.
- Have added verbiage of "up to 3" pieces of equipment
- Approved – majority vote; USFS – only supports with the caveat that Ralph has some questions regarding the edits.
- Action Item / Craig Goodell will finalize edits and forward on to CGAC to then be taken on to the NWCG.

##### **Critical Mission Response Group (Craig Goodell)**

- Last bullet – edits were made to this verbiage
- Other issue that needs revisiting is discussion around utilization of local government resources
  - Business committee has concerns on the ability of these resources to be self-sufficient. In addition, concerns over checking in / out and pay issues.
  - Potential next step is to check in with the Business Committee
  - Craig – suggested edit to the document stating that assigned resources would need to be self



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sufficient

- Motion to approve and move forward was proposed and seconded.
- Approved – majority vote; USFS requests that this be ferreted out with incident business committee; and it be identified how that aspect would be managed. Would like an Incident Business Specialist consultation prior to finalization.
- Action Item / Craig Goodell will contact Sara Lee with these concerns and then re-contact Ralph Rau with the findings.

### **New Business:**

#### **Filling of Aircraft Coordinator Position at NRCC (Kathy Pipkin)**

- The aircraft coordinator at NRCC, Kim Thomas, is retiring at the end of August. That position is part of the cost share and USFS funds the position.
- Need final approval from the board for the USFS before moving forward to advertise the position.
- Approved – unanimous consent.
- There is an assistant that is interested in a temporary promotion while the position is being advertised.

#### **Lessons Learned / Planning for NR IMT Meeting (Julie Polutnik)**

- Distributed to the next team in the rotation.
- Reviewed briefing paper bullet statements.
  - Recommend adding IMT Planning Rotation to the IMT Standard Operating Guide.
  - Recommend adding the payment schedule to the IMT Standard Operating Guide.
- 2020 meeting has been reserved and scheduled. JT Thompson has a copy of that agreement.
- Recommend working on the 2021 logistics early.
- Total bill for 2019 was approximately \$3,800

#### **Review of Action Items: (Craig Goodell)**

##### **Updated the following:**

- Completed - Remote Sit Unit tasking
  - Presented white paper to CGAC in June; was well received. System in place to implement.
- Completed - Critical Resource Task Group Implantation
  - See above topic from this call
- Completed - Review of Incident Organizer
  - Will remove these from both the NRCC and NRCG websites
- Moved to Fall Meeting Agenda – WFMT Whitepaper
  - Dan secured the whitepaper from Joe Sampson. It will distribute to the BOD for review. Will change the assigned individual from Hutton to Sampson and it will be discussed at fall meeting.
- Completed – Shortage of HEQB
  - See above topic from this call



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#### **Round Robin – Updates from Agency Participants:**

**BIA NW** – *(Not on call)*

**BIA GP** – Had an active spring; most fires have been human caused. Also were dealing with flooding further south. Will have a lot of curing later on.

**BIA RM** – *(Not on call)*

**BLM** – Relatively quiet; supporting other GACCs. Light IA. Corey is back from his assignment. Have had a few injuries that occurred in other GACCs since the last call. Over the weekend, and end product helicopter had a hard landing with two injured.

**FWS** – *(Not on call)*

**IDL** – Northern Idaho has been relatively wet this spring. Have been supporting Alaska. Did have a presence in Canada for a while. Currently, rotating resources back.

**MT DES** – *(Not on call)*

**MT DNRC** – Light IA; all hiring is complete. Agreements are in place. Supporting other GACCs;

**Montana State Fire Chiefs** – Supporting other GACCs; light activity on the western side.

**Montana Fire Wardens** – Nothing additional at this time.

**MT Peace Officers** – *(Had to drop off call)*

**ND FS** – Limited activity across the state; some areas are a bit dryer than others. In the process of hiring a new education and prevention fire coordinator. Do have some trainees that are close to having their task books signed off.

**NPS** – Fairly quiet; supporting park areas in Alaska. Working on filing two communication and education positions at the regional office and a vacant GIS specialist.

**USFS** – Large number of resources in Alaska; providing some support in R03. Has been fairly quiet in the region.

**The next scheduled NRCG Monthly Conference Call is August 20, 2019 at 10:00 Hours Mountain Time**