



Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

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

Board of Directors Conference Call Agenda

Tuesday, May 19, 2020

Participants:

Board Members: Darron Williams, Ray Hart, Bob Jones, Aaron Thompson, Mike Granger, Mike DeGrosky – Chair, Rich Cowger, Patrick Lonergan, Ryan Melin, Dan Warthin, Ralph Rau

Deputies and Others: Kevin Benton, Greg Morris, Craig Goodell, Tim Murphy, Kathy Pipkin, Julie Polutnik, Diane Mann-Klager, Andy Schell, Jordan McKnight, Melissa Wegner, 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)

- Unable to participate on this call.

Northern Rockies GACC and Operational Updates:

NRCG Operations (Craig Goodell)

- NR Covid Response Task Group is currently working on developing the pocket card product per the latest tasking.
 - Draft may be out for review by next week.
- NR MAC Exercise planning is going well; will be utilizing the Zoom platform.
 - No substantive changes are needed for the 2020 MAC Plan, only minor updates.
- Currently do have four of the NR IHCs that are available national.
- National Simulation for the NR IMTs – scheduled for the week of June 8th.
 - Melissa Wegner – SIM is being delivered by NAFRI. It is interagency and designed for Type 1 and 2 teams. Objectives are based around Covid. Just learned that only one of the Great Basin IMTs will be participating in this optional SIM. Important to note that this SIM is optional. There is quite a bit of pre-work.
 - Do have a June 1 deadline for names of participants to be returned to NAFRI.
 - Team is not limited; it can look however the region desires it to look with a variety of individuals.
 - Craig Goodell will work with the IC committee to identify the participants.

NRCC Update (Kathy Pipkin)

- Have had 598 fires for 11,722 acres in the GACC.
- East side is looking at three days of drying; possibly followed by thunderstorms.
- Intelligence Coordinator position closed yesterday; working on a panel.
- No announcement for the Aircraft Coordinator position as of yet.
- NPS does not yet have a PD classification for the assistant intelligence position.
- Have developed the module concept for both five and seven day staffing.

2020 IC Trainee Applications – Identify Review / Discussion Next Steps – Decisional Topic (Kathy Pipkin)

- Topic is a follow up from the March call.
- Both Trainees are now assigned to NR IMTs
- Motion to Approve both IC Trainee Applications; Seconded.



Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

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

Board of Directors Conference Call Agenda

Tuesday, May 19, 2020

- **Approved – unanimous consent.**

Delegation of Authority – NR Operations Officer – Language Modification for 2020 – Decisional Topic (Aaron Thompson)

- Historically, since ordering in outside resources on the cost share agreement involves a fiscal decision from all participating agencies, either the BOD or the MAC has voted on bringing in specific outside resources prior to ordering. This proposed new language delegates that authority from each agencies BOD representative to Craig Goodell.
- Topic was discussed on February conference call and agreed that language required further modification.
- **Below is a side-by-side comparison of the language:**
 - Previous Verbiage:
 - In conjunction with the NRCC Manager move resources and extend resources which support the region geographically for all agencies use; these will be assigned appropriate support codes agreed to through cost shares. For agency specific needs, agency support codes will need to be utilized.
 - Proposed Verbiage Options:
 - Option 1 - In conjunction with the NRCC Manager, proactively order critical resources to maintain the NR Step up plan, move resources and extend resources which support the geographic area for all agencies use. These will be assigned appropriate support codes agreed to through cost share agreements. For agency specific needs, agency support codes should be used.
 - Option 2 - In conjunction with the NRCC Manager, proactively order critical resources, move resources and extend resources which support the geographic area following established geographic area policies, plans and approval protocols. *Critical resources for the purpose of this delegation are defined as high demand initial attack resources of a national significance. Examples include: Type 1 Handcrews, Rappellers, Smokejumpers, Helicopters and Fixed-Wing Aircraft.*
 - Option 3 - In conjunction with the NRCC Manager, proactively order critical resources to maintain fire suppression capabilities commensurate with wildfire risk and PL. Coordinate the movement of resources with local dispatch centers and FMOs and extend resources which support the geographic area for all agencies use. These will be assigned appropriate support codes agreed to through cost share agreements. For agency specific needs, agency support codes should be used.
- Recommend adding some of our Deputy's to this delegation so in the event they are supporting or acting for Craig, they are covered under the same delegation.
 - It may read something like: *During the NR Operations Officer absence, the following may serve as the acting Northern Rockies Operations Officer representing the NRCG Board: Corey Buhl, Jordan McKnight.*
 - DNRC – for the last part, could address by saying “or designated individual approved by the NRCG Board” rather than naming specific individuals.
- BLM – recommend Option 1, which is tied to the Step Up plan.
- USFS – concerns over approval for this item prior to approval for the Step Up plan. Desire to ensure



Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

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

Board of Directors Conference Call Agenda

Tuesday, May 19, 2020

all delegations are well understood. Also, DoA in the pre-reading materials referenced the R1/R3 USFS agency specific agreement; concern over that language being present in this document.

- Decision to table this item until after the discussion on approval for the Step Up plan later in this call. (See next topic and the vote that pertains to both topics.)

NR DRAFT Resource Draw Down/Step Up Plan – Decisional Topic (Craig Goodell)

- Utilized Rocky Mountain’s plan as a framework.
- Important to note that this is a base line and acknowledged that resources, at any given time, are dynamic.
- This plan provides a framework for all to be on the same page as to what needs are at each PL level.
- USFS – concern expressed over staging teams and the associated costs. Would this be accomplished after board approval?
 - Craig Goodell – that language is at PL 4; therefore, that would be a MAC level decision.
- BLM – would ask Kathy Pipkin if this would be a useful tool?
 - Kathy Pipkin – yes; would put in writing the authorities to order resources once they are offered by NICC. Important to note that it would not be limited to these; that it is just a baseline.
 - Could also add an asterisk to note that MAC approval is needed.
 - Would also need to modify DoA for Center Manager, as it contains the same language.
- DNRC – share the same concerns as USFS regarding cost decisions; addition of a few words in this language regarding MAC approval would assist with alleviating these concerns.
- NPS – suggest changing “staged” to “MAC determined”.
- BLM – Asterisk placed at this point in the table would note “MAC determined”.
- BIA NW – document provides structure to the process.
- BLM – need to identify what items would require asterisks.
 - DNRC – Teams.
 - Craig Goodell – Scoopers and helicopters also have higher costs.
 - BLM – would be reluctant to turn these over as MAC.
 - USFS – some of this may have a need to be subjective, with respect to IA.
 - Craig Goodell – subjective also in regards to conditions and potential.
 - DNRC – emphasized that communications will be occurring during this process as well. Large costs decisions will require engagement.
 - Montana State Fire Chief’s Association – asterisk for teams and other larger cost items should cover cost share agency concerns.
- Vote to approve draft with above discussed modification and edits, in addition to approving Option 1 with the discussed edits above (previous agenda topic) in DoA.
- Moved and seconded
- Approved – unanimous consent.
- BLM – Aaron Thompson will make the discussed edits, (Option 1: generic individual approved as alternate and remove R1/R3 language) and send to Mike DeGrosky and Pam Jolly.
- Craig Goodell will edit the Draw Down / Step up plan with the asterisks discussed above and send to Mike DeGrosky and Pam Jolly.



Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

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

Board of Directors Conference Call Agenda

Tuesday, May 19, 2020

Proposal to Form a NRCG Medical Committee – Decisional Topic (Rich Cowger / Anna Stull)

- No update from NWCG at this time.
- (See Proposal Paper)
- This topic was pre-Covid and most likely there has not been any movement due to the national circumstances.
- Recommend not to take action during this evolving environment.
- DNRC – Suggest that this item be tabled until fall.
- **Decision to table this item until the fall.**

Tasking Proposal for WFAAs – Cost / Time Commitment Analysis Dispatch Improvement Project - Decisional Topic (Aaron Thompson)

- Decision on whether to prepare a tasking proposal for the Agency Administrators.
- Cost / Time Analysis:
 - Suggest a team of five interagency employees. The Analysis would be completed over the course of 4-6 months. Individuals would not be working on it each day. Took the cost to Government of a GS-11 step 5 (\$8,500) for two months. Then I added \$2,000 for each employee (for travel and per diem). This provides an estimate for a Dispatch Improvement recommendation.
 - The team could be:
 - Dispatcher
 - Dispatcher
 - FMO
 - LEO
 - Radio
 - Total Cost- \$95,000*
 - *Note: Most of the \$95,000 is base labor funding already programmed for the employees; however, it is difficult to assign a cost to their normal workload that might not get accomplished or the stress of an employee trying to accomplish multiple tasks in the same work time-frame.
- Postponed from earlier in the year due to quorum for votes; then was cut from Spring Meeting.
- DNRC – For clarification, this would be an in kind type of service agency contribution.
 - BLM – correct; individuals would need to be identified and it acknowledged that their workload would be impacted.
- DNRC – Would support this model; acknowledged a need to accomplish.
- USFS – for clarification, this would be GACC wide. Would this incorporate the previous work that was done regarding this topic? Also, would like to identify involved individuals. Do support this in kind services model. Would need to understand the specific ask of the agency so that can assess capacity.
- BLM – looking to approve the concept prior to identifying the specific individuals.
- USFS – support the effort; however, need to understand the specific ask for the agency and address if there is sufficient capacity.
- DNRC – important to note that team may need to include more individuals than are listed above and be a bit larger of a group to make it representative of all that need to be included.



Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

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

Board of Directors Conference Call Agenda

Tuesday, May 19, 2020

- BLM – next step is to propose to the Agency Administrator’s group that they task the board with this item.
 - Diane Mann-Klagger – would request that Aaron Thompson, Craig Goodell and Kathy Pipkin draft this tasking for the Agency Administrator’s group and submit to Mike DeGrosky for review prior to submission to Agency Administrator’s group.
- Motion to approve.
- **Approved – unanimous consent.**

Process for Units Changing Dispatch Boundaries – Decisional Topic (Kathy Pipkin)

- (See White Paper)
- Comes from the National Fall Coordinators meeting and getting dispatcher centers/agencies on the same time line of changing dispatch boundaries and effects to changing frequency boundaries. Frequency boundaries have to be submitted at the end of October to meet FAA guidelines; but when centers change their protection boundaries other times of the years there could be frequency bleed over or places not covered which either can be big safety issues.
- Tabled from the January, February and March calls.
- Propose establishing due dates each year that these change proposals would be submitted by and the process then initiated; leaving time to account for all of the implications. The understanding would be that the “go live” date would be after the following January 1st.
- DNRC – request proposed schedule be submitted for approval during the June NRCG Monthly call.
- **Kathy Pipkin will compose the proposal and associated protocol schedule, in addition to identifying milestones and implications. It will then be submitted for BOD review and an approval vote will be conducted on the June NRCG Monthly call.**

IMT Standard Operation Guide – Decisional Topic (Kathy Pipkin)

- Updated the team schedules for 2020 - spring 2021.
- And added verbiage for IMT workshop responsibility; which agency pays for the IMT workshop facility; as well as the S-580 rotation as discussed at the fall and spring IC meetings (all are highlighted in yellow).
- Need to identify timeline for draft review.
- FWS – Do have a few edits and will send those to Kathy Pipkin.
- **Request all edits and comments be submitted to Kathy Pipkin prior to June 5th; will vote to approve revised draft on the June NRCG Monthly Call.**

NR Water Wizard proposal for 2020 Fire Season – Specification Development Update – Informational Topic (Tim Murphy)

- (See Proposal and Operations Committee Tasking Reply)
- Approve any or all of the above force multipliers and request their Contracting Officers (Mt. DNRC, IDL, BLM, BIA, NPS & / or USFS) to work with Equipment Specialists to develop specifications & procurement tools by 6/15/20 through 10/15/20.
 - (Propose the following Contracting Officers work the best procurement tool to secure services as described in the Water Wizard Document)



Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

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

Board of Directors Conference Call Agenda

Tuesday, May 19, 2020

- USFS R1 – Task Forces, Strike Teams & Single Resources proposed (Debby may need help from AQM?)
 - BLM – Type 2 Sprinkler Systems (BLM has ranchers that understand these systems)
 - NPS – Type 1 Sprinkler Systems (Glacier NP had the Rent for Rain system in 2017)
 - Mt DNRC – Camp Crews solicitation with Fed clauses so all NRCG can use. (DNRC has the other Crew agreements)
 - USFS R1 – Type 3 & 4 Sprinkler Systems (Jack, Chris, Anthony & State EFFs to develop & order parts & pieces)
 - Could explore the possibility of Fire Departments stepping up to do some of the ST & TF
- Approximate cost to develop specs. \$8,500 for 2ea. HETS & Water Supply Tech. Specialist Mt DNRC Short Term Workers. (NRCG Cost Share?)
 - Review use in After Fire Season 2020 AAR of such packages for potential long term agreements, similar to the Heavy Equipment Task Force success story in NRCG.
 - Operations Committee did not generally support the task forces & strike teams; however, did support the sprinkler systems and camp crews.
 - Recommend working with cache and Forest Service equipment shop to develop the Type 3 & 4 sprinkler systems. Will also develop a source list for Type 1 & 2 sprinkler systems if needed in 2020. .
 - Can also work to put together camp crew specifications. Did steer away from the kitchen crews due to health and safety requirement challenges.
 - Identifying a NRCG agency contracting officer may also be a challenge.
 - DNRC – Expressed thanks to the operations committee.
 - Motion for Tim Murphy to move ahead developing contract specifications for sprinkler systems and the camp crews.
 - Motion seconded.
 - Approved – majority vote.
 - IDL abstained.
 - All others present support.
 - Chair and Tim Murphy will communicate direct with Kevin Benton regarding information on the specifics and history of this topic, as needed once he has had time to read the documents.

2019 US/Canada AAR – Decisional Topic (Andy Schell)

- (See Recommendation)
- Desire to have this passed up through CGAC and NMAC; with desire for an international AAR with Canada.
 - Recommendation will need edits to reflect this proper chain.
- DNRC – supportive of a joint AAR.
- BLM – supportive as well; in addition to possibly developing a best practices document.
- USFS – ask that if AAR is moved forward, please involve Chris Lorrans.
- Vote to move recommendation ahead.
- Approved – unanimous consent.
- Andy Schell will send a revised copy for NRCG letterhead & signature. Craig Goodell will then take this



Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

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

Board of Directors Conference Call Agenda

Tuesday, May 19, 2020

item forward to CGAC.

Heavy Equipment Taskforce Supervision – Decisional Topic (Andy Schell)

- (See Proposal)
- With primary consideration being safety, decided that task force leader was the appropriate qualification.
- USFS – For clarification, this is eliminating the HEQB – is that correct?
 - Andy Schell – yes; form eliminates this need and addresses this change. Also recommend that the task force leader is solely dedicated to that heavy equipment task force in order to ensure span of control.
- USFS – Foreman is part of the contracted work force. The HEQB has historically been the agency connection; concerned about maintaining this with the task force leader.
 - Andy Schell – primary concern was safety; over time experience level on this aspect will increase.
 - DRNC – do feel have a good pool of experience with this qualification.
 - USFS – concern that the qualifications are different between the two positions; looking at the accountability and managerial part.
 - Andy Schell – feel that this mitigates part of the historical occurrences.
 - Tim Murphy – supportive; however, the amount of equipment working for one individual is still a point of discussion in regards to the national memo that was received.
 - FWS – would it be possible to mobilize a heavy equipment task force without an available task force leader?
 - Tim Murphy – would not want to have supervision provided only by Division Group Supervisor.
- USFS – still have some concerns regarding this recommendation; would like more time to address from an agency specific standpoint.
- FWS – agree with USFS.
- BLM – appreciate the recommendation; however, would like some more time to review.
- DNRC – For clarity, recommendation is to have a task force supervised by a task force leader.
 - Tim Murphy – typically a task force leader has crew bosses and engine bosses below them.
 - DNRC – do have the option of putting Heavy Equipment bosses within the task force. They are a scarce resources at times.
 - USFS – not prepared to support on this call at this time.
 - FWS – concerns over the ability for continued utilization of the unique tool that is the heavy equipment task force.
 - DNRC – important to note how dependent that the region has become on this particular resource.
- Topic will be reviewed further by BOD members and placed on the June NRCG Monthly call for a vote to move recommendation ahead.



Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

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

Board of Directors Conference Call Agenda

Tuesday, May 19, 2020

Wildland Fire Module Certification – Decisional Topic (Andy Schell / Jordan McKnight)

- (See WFM Ask paper)
- Important to note that this tasking includes language regarding IHCs. This is in addition to the WFMs that were discussed and approved during the fall meeting.
- Jordan McKnight - would like to remove IHC language; however, ask that board approve the intent.
- USFS – concerns over other agency configurations; support in theory, would like more specific information regarding typing. Need more clarification prior to agreeing to support.
- Andy Schell – intent is to take the current certification processes and putting it into a checklist type style.
 - Kathy Pipkin – there are NWCG Standards for WFMs.
- DNRC – moved and supported to approve tasking.
 - Andy Schell – motion is to approve request to begin this process.
- Vote to approve tasking.
- **Approved – majority vote.**
 - BLM no response, as had to drop off call; all others present unanimous support.

Review of Action Items: (Mike DeGrosky)

Postponed due to duration of call.

NRCG Conference Calls – Decisional Topic (Ralph Rau)

- USFS – concern over the average length of the monthly calls; allotted time on calendar may no longer be adequate.
 - Acknowledged that this particular call had many carry over items for vote due to lack of quorum on previous calls earlier in the year.
 - Participation by all agencies is critical to accomplishing business.
- USFS – additionally, inquire if moving to an every two week schedule for the NRCG Covid-19 call would be appropriate now.
- BIA RM – propose scaling back Covid-19 calls to every other week.
 - **Approved – unanimous consent.**
- **DNRC – Will move to an every two week NRCG Covid-19 call schedule and cancel the call scheduled for May 20th.**
 - Next NRCG Covid-19 call will be on May 27th.

The next scheduled NRCG monthly conference call will be held June 16, 2020 at 1000 Mountain Time.