



# **Northern Rockies Coordinating Group**

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

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

**Tuesday, March 15, 2022**

### **PARTICIPANTS:**

**Board Members:** Aaron Thompson, Tate Fischer, Josh Harvey – Chair, Jake Ganieany, Matt Hall, Rich Cowger – Vice Chair, Patrick Lonergan, Ryan Melin, Craig Glazier

**Deputies and Others:** Jeff Moyer, Heath Estey, Pam Jolly, Corey Buhl, Ryan Patrick, Calvin Miller, David Lee, Kat Sorenson, Gaylen Yeates, Jordan McKnight, Jeni Jeresek, Dave Williams

**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 in today's meeting.)

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

#### **NRCG Operations (Corey Buhl)**

- MAC Plan update – will not be ready for final BOD review prior to prioritization piece that will be discussed at the April spring meeting. Other edits have been added and can distribute if any care to review in advance.
  - Meteorologist position is in Boise and will have to go through classification.
  - Assisted teaching S-420 last week.

### **NRCC Update (Calvin Miller)**

- Had a meteorologist come up from Great Basin to assist with NFDRSv4 transition. All associated with the transition should be finalized by the end of this month.

### **Old Business**

#### **MAC and NRCG BOD Voting Membership – Includes BLM ID request to join NRCG BOD – Informational Topic – Craig Glazier and Aaron Thompson**

- BLM Idaho is requesting to become part of the Northern Rockies Coordinating Group. They have jurisdictional lands within the Northern Rockies and would like to become more involved with NRCG. At this time the BLM has agreed to keep the voting membership at one (1) vote per the agency, which would be BLM MT/DKs.
- Desire to be more involved. Dennis Strange would be the Idaho BLM representative.
- BLM MT/DKs State FMO would maintain the one vote for the BLM.
- Craig Glazier - In going through the current charter (from 2018), this would be appropriate.
  - Recommend and volunteer to update the charter to reflect current business practices.
    - Aaron Thompson will also volunteer to assist.
    - Tate Fischer will also volunteer to assist.
    - Rich Cowger will also volunteer to assist.
    - **Action Item: Craig Glazier, Aaron Thompson, Tate Fischer and Rich Cowger will review and update prior to April Spring Meeting.**
- Rich Cowger – Montana State Chiefs is listed in the Charter; however, do coordinate with counterparts in Idaho. Similar to BLM request.
- Motion to include North Idaho BLM into the NRCG BOD with vote being represented by BLM MT/DKs



# **Northern Rockies Coordinating Group**

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

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

**Tuesday, March 15, 2022**

State FMO.

- Vote:
  - BIA NW – Support
  - BIA GP – Support
  - BLM – Support
  - FWS – Support
  - IDL – Support
  - MT DES – Support
  - MT DNRC – Support
  - MT State Fire Chiefs' Association – Support
  - MT County Fire Wardens Association – Support
  - ND FS – Support
  - USFS – Support
  - Approved – unanimous consent.
  - Action Item: Chair will reach out to Dennis Strange and Aaron Thompson will provide Pam Jolly with relevant contact information.

### **NFDRS Briefing Paper Discussion – Informational Topic – Calvin Miller**

- (See briefing paper and proposal in pre-reading materials)
- Northern Rockies has moved forward with updating for NFDRSv4 with completion expected by the end of the month.
- New version will affect some Fire Danger Operating Plans and some programs.
- Aaron Thompson – What are the potential failure points and how can those be address in advance?
  - Calvin Miller – Communicating and working with the field to increase understanding. May see a gap in the 7-day product; however, hopefully this component will be addressed prior to fire season.
- Craig Glazier – Appreciate knowing about any assistance needed.
  - Calvin Miller – Fire Anayslsist positions are critical to the long-term product success. This would be a new position in the Northern Rockies.

### **Supporting NR Operations Officer – Decisional Topic – Corey Buhl**

- List has recently changed and needs updating.
- Request feedback regarding qualified and available individuals. Please send these names direct to Corey Buhl.
- Action Item: Corey Buhl will update the list and it will be voted upon at the spring meeting.

### **NR Dispatch Complexity Analysis Results – Informational Topic – Kat Sorenson and David Lee**

- (See briefing paper in pre-reading materials)
- Reviewed history of the topic including tasking and methodology.
- Developed a complexity matrix that best represented the Northern Rockies.
- All center managers have had an opportunity to review and comment.
- Aaron Thompson – What was the reaction from the different dispatch centers?
  - David Lee – For the most part responses were positive; however, some centers did disagree with their center's rating. Some advised that the criteria utilized did not best capture their



# **Northern Rockies Coordinating Group**

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

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

**Tuesday, March 15, 2022**

center. These centers were encouraged to share their business practices, so that the criteria may be updated moving into the future.

- Craig Glazier – Appreciate this work and effort. Regarding staffing challenges, were there any discussions around any potential consolidations?
  - Kat Sorenson – One consolidation is occurring now; Bozeman is combining into Billings Dispatch by mid-April. No other talks in the committee currently. However, analysis has shown some logical options that could be reviewed moving in the future. Analysis also highlighted the “other” duties – including training officer workload.
  - David Lee – Truly highlights how staffing and organization is still configured for fighting fire 20 years ago. Needs to be larger discussion around appropriate staffing levels for current situation.
- Aaron Thompson – What are the next steps of this process?
  - David Lee – Next steps are to develop some recommended Table of Organization (TOs) and bring some center managers into any potential consolidation discussions.
  - Kat Sorenson – Can make a recommended staffing plan and move possibly towards the next steps of consolidation. Can have the staffing plans back to NRCG BOD for review by mid-summer. Center Managers did have some good suggestions regarding addressing staffing.
- Ryan Melin – Emphasized the need to address recruitment and retention as well as sustainability under current staffing levels.
- Craig Glazier – How difficult is it to determine adequate staffing levels?
  - Kat Sorenson – Do have the advantage that other GACCs have previously and are currently going through this process and can learn from those experiences.

### **Update for National Committees – Complex Incident Management – Informational Topic – Aaron Thompson**

- Nationally is being supported; question now is how to get there and what does it look like.
- Several proposals on the table currently.
- Rocky Mountain area was proposing piloting this year per their Coordinating Group; however, there has now been a decision that they couldn't go outside the GACC for the summer. If were to go outside the GACC, would need to go as a T1 or T2 IMT.
- Will be giving an update to executives at the end of March.
- Continue to see on the ground administrators not aware of or not understanding complex incident management. Encourage all to do what they can to further this understanding and share information.
- Implementation is set for 2024.

### **IMT Roster Status – Informational Topic – Aaron Thompson**

- Aaron Thompson – Request clarification regarding IMT roster approval and who will be taking over the Team Coordinator role in Kathy Pipkin's absence?
  - Josh Harvey – All rosters were approved at the last meeting.
- Craig Glazier – The number of holes further highlights that moving forward with seven (7) teams is not sustainable.
- Aaron Thompson – Concern over giving approval; specifically, around setting the teams up for success. Concerns over expectations and continuing to provide the IMTs with key support.
- Craig Glazier – Need to identify a good communication strategy to the WFAAs regarding this topic.



# **Northern Rockies Coordinating Group**

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

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

**Tuesday, March 15, 2022**

- Aaron Thompson – What do we need to do to close the loop and ensure the ICs are aware those were approved?
  - Calvin Miller – Kathy was reaching out for approval from other GACCS regarding out of area team member resource support.

### **New Business**

#### **Contract Operations Support – Informational Topic – Ryan Patrick**

- Looking for assistance with upcoming training and inspector workshops. Need instructors and course coordinators. Please canvas agencies and advise of any interested individuals.

#### **Review of Action Items: (Josh Harvey)**

- Differed until review at the spring meeting.

**The next scheduled NRCG Meeting is the Virtual 2022 Spring NRCG Meeting, April 18-22, 2022.**