



# **Northern Rockies Coordinating Group**

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

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

**Tuesday, October 18, 2022**

### **PARTICIPANTS:**

**Board Members:** Heath Estey, Bryce Rogers, Aaron Thompson, Tate Fischer, Matt Hall, Rich Cowger – Vice Chair, Steve Holton

**Deputies and Others:** Adriane Beck, Chad Pickering, Jordan McKnight, Pam Jolly, Corey Buhl, Brian Webber, Kathy Pipkin, Amanda Boatright, Jeni Jeresek, Melissa Wegner

**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 due to scheduling conflict.

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

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

- Tasking Update – WFAA List for Critical IMT Positions
  - Ultimately came down to two questions that have been distributed in a survey.
    - Are there critical holes consistently found in rosters?
    - Do those change over the season?
  - Report out on survey next month.
- Tasking – T3 IMT Process
  - Progress occurring; will have draft work to share in November.
- Trail Ridge Fire utilizing aviation support.
- Prescribed fire activity occurring throughout the GACC.

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

- Nationally, the last two T2 IMTs received assignment to Oregon.
- No IMTs or crews available in the Northern Rockies.
- Within GACC, prescribed burning support is occurring for USFS.
- Are back to five-day coverage.

### **Old Business**

#### **IMT Support – Informational Topic – Kathy Pipkin**

- Need exists to identify true amount needed.
- Historically, each team is provided \$2,000 by an individual agency sponsor.
- If are going to have T3 IMTs, those will require fiscal support as well.
- More realistic figure may be around \$5,000.
- Agencies that have fiscal responsibility have been showing that as contribution to cost share.
- Aaron Thompson – need to have an accounting as to what those funds are utilized for, per team, prior to any decision making.



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- Rich Cowger – do need to have a clear delineation between IMTs that pull trailers.
- Tate Fischer – are there opportunities to joint sponsor teams, since the overall number of teams is being reduced?
- Bryce Rogers - CPO is issue as well for accountable property. Are sure all have different rules on purchases and limits. Agree still need to support the teams.
- Kathy Pipkin – suggest tasking to ICs to submit needs assessment per team.
- Jeni Jeresek - request for this decision to be made by December or January so it can be put it in the Financial Plan by February. With the workload of Grants and Agreements staff, would like the Financial Plan to be voted on earlier, if possible.
- Chad Pickering – encourage all supporting agencies to be communicating with sponsored IMT and ensure needs are being submitted for consideration.
- Matt Hall – have only received small requests from sponsored IMT.
- Tate Fischer – see the wisdom in letting the IMTs request what they need from the sponsoring agency.
- Bryce Rogers - teams also need to get requests in early, with the understanding that agencies have a process to go through in order to purchase.
- Aaron Thompson – suggest needs submission could be a component of the Fall IC Report out.
- Kathy Pipkin – suggestion for a base minimum amount per team, and then have IC's request additional needs individually through Board liaison.
- Rick Cowger – would be willing to work with Kathy Pipkin and ICs to develop a list of accountable needs to develop more information prior to reaching a decisional point.
- Aaron Thompson – suggestion to maintain \$2,000 as base for draft fiscal proposal for now, while detailed informational needs piece is being developed.
- Action Item – Rich Cowger will work with Kathy Pipkin and ICs to develop a list of accountable needs to develop more information prior to reaching a decisional point. This information will be provided to the BOD for review prior to the December meeting for discussion, with a vote on the specific amount scheduled for the January meeting. This timeframe allows for any changes to be included in the proposed DRAFT fiscal plan review proposed timeline.

### **NRCG Pre-Use Inspection Process – Decisional Topic – Rich Cowger**

- (*See briefing papers in pre-reading materials.*)
- Per Ryan Patrick's previous presentation - desired end state would be a memo from the Board outlining expectations and process.
- Aaron Thompson – current process in the Northern Rockies of having this is nice; however, after further research, it seems to be a duplicate effort as this equipment is re-inspected upon arrival. Reservation around setting expectation to determine this as a mandatory requirement due to ongoing staffing challenges at dispatch centers. Is a good “best management practices” and endorse when possible; however, not supportive of making this mandatory.
- Chad Pickering – in agreement with above summation. Dispatch supporting the inspections is not viable moving forward. Do have a nice inspection area created at the AFD.
- Matt Hall – follow up with operations needed that this function may not occur moving forward.
- Bryce Rogers - Agree lack of depth and capacity is affecting the way it is now from how it was historically.



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- Brian Webber – recommendation to leave as is and establish as a best practice moving forward.
- Action Item – Per Rich Cowger, no change; no NRCG memo will be issued. NRCG intends to follow above recommendation.

### **CGAC Representation – Decisional Topic – Aaron Thompson**

- Vote on Proposal
- Proposed Verbiage:
  - “The Northern Rockies Coordinating Group rep to CGAC will be appointed to a one-year term during the Fall NRCG meeting. The representative can agree to annual extensions based on interest and participation, if the NRCG Board agrees to it. The expectation of the rep is to attend all the CGAC monthly meetings and the annual in person meeting. It is the expectation of the Board that if the rep can't attend a meeting, they find a replacement. The Northern Rockies Operations Officer is encouraged to stay engaged with the NR CGAC rep as that is the logical support for the NRCG.”
- Need to address what document proposed language will reside in.
- Need to address if there is a need for a rotation.
- Not all agencies on the Board have stakeholder interest in CGAC representation.
- USFS, Craig Glazier, is taking this first rotation.
- Northern Rockies Operations position would also have an expectation to be participatory in those meetings as well; however, the BOD member would be the representative.
- Matt Hall – support how it is written; support reviewing as a standing topic at Fall meetings and identifying who will represent for the next year.
- Tate Fischer – support above also.
- Recommendation to include in DRAFT NRCG Operating Handbook.
- Action Item - Rich Cowger – no need for independent formal vote, as will be voting on approval for final DRAFT Ops later on. Item will be a standing topic at Fall meetings and incoming representative for the next year will be identified. Above language will be included in the DRAFT NRCG Operating Handbook.

### **NRCG Charter Update – Informational Topic – Craig Glazier, Aaron Thompson, Tate Fischer, Rich Cowger**

- Craig Glazier and Aaron Thompson met with Kathy Pipkin and identified a path moving forward.

### **IC Selection Criteria – Decisional Topic – Rich Cowger**

- Potential Criteria Items:
  - Agency/Cooperators over Non-Agency
  - In GACC versus out of GACC
  - Years of service - three or six years as IC versus over six years
  - Willingness to participate on National rotation versus In GACC rotation
  - Character
  - Communication with NRCC, NRCG and the NR fire community



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- Vision and futuristic thoughts
- Kathy Pipkin – think the supplemental questions do cover all these items.
- Aaron Thompson – suggestion that Board will only be selecting ICs and the Deputies and Trainees will then be selected by those chosen ICs and the Board would approve those selections.
- Rich Cowger – move to vote to accept above listed criteria items.
- Vote:
  - BIA – Support
  - BLM – Support
  - FWS – Support
  - MT DNRC – Support
  - MT State Fire Chiefs’ Association – Support
  - MT County Fire Wardens Association – Support
  - MT Sheriffs and Peace Officer Association – Support
  - USFS – Support
  - **Approved – unanimous consent.**

### **New Business**

#### **Progress Update – ACDP Policy Requirements – Informational Topic – Kathy Pipkin**

- Dispatch community was given a one-year extension regarding ACDP qualifications.
- Are still planning on implementing full policy in the future.
- Next May, Northern Rockies will be putting on a course to train enough individuals to be able to meet that policy.
- Center turn-over makes retaining enough qualified individuals challenging.

#### **Review of Action Items: (Rich Cowger)**

- Differed in the interest of time.

**The next scheduled NRCG meeting is the NRCG FALL Meeting that will occur November 8-9, 2022.**