



Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

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

Board of Directors Conference Call Agenda

Tuesday, October 17, 2023

PARTICIPANTS:

Board Members: Darron Williams, Bryce Rogers – Vice Chair, Aaron Thompson, Dennis Strange, Brett Lloyd, Matt Hall, Rich Cowger – Chair, Paul Cerda

Deputies and Others: Dave Martin, Bob Jones, Charlie Gorman, Phil Ketel, Pam Jolly, Kate Holsapple, Jeni Jeresek, Tara Dana, CJ Johnson, (Nate Linder, Shane Colman, and Charles Tuss – Northwestern Energy)

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 conflicts.*

Northern Rockies GACC and Operational Updates:

- *Unable to participate due to scheduling conflicts.*

CGAC Report Out (Craig Glazier and Corey Buhl)

- *Unable to participate due to scheduling conflicts.*

NRCG Operations (Corey Buhl)

- *Unable to participate due to scheduling conflicts.*

NRCC Update (Kate Holsapple)

- Continuing to process some resource orders daily.
- Moved to five day work schedule and will be closed for the Veteran's Day Holiday.
- Have scheduled a NRCC AAR for November 2nd.
- Continuing to work through Center Manager transition.
- Intelligence Coordinator is in place.
- Functional Areas are continuing to gather statistical information for yearend reporting.

Old Business

Dispatch Improvement Tasking – Next Steps – Standing Item – Craig Glazier

- *Unable to participate due to scheduling conflicts.*

Response to NMAC Correspondence L2023-03 – Decisional Topic – Kate Holsapple

- *(See pre-reading materials.)*
- Reviewed line by line the suggested edits.
- No objections expressed; group approval consensus.



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New Business

Northwestern Energy (NWE) – Enhanced Wildfire Plan Presentation – Informational Topic – Charles Tuss, Shane Colman, Nate Linder (20 minutes)

- Intent is to introduce the NWE Wildfire Team and discuss where are heading with this Enhanced Wildfire Plan and how can better partner and coordinate with NRCG in the future.
- Completed a five-year strategic road map; incorporating grid hardening measures.
 - Intent is to re-evaluate each year.
- Additional increased focus on how activities affect wildfire risk.
- Plan really focuses on situational awareness and reducing communication gaps.
- Do utilize SFDI as one input towards decision making.
- Intent is to inform all that NWE has an official wildfire program. Emphasis on keeping power on; reducing risk to the community; and ensure public safety.
- Overall intent is for collaboration, coordination, and increased communications.
- Are exploring some artificial intelligence (AI) camera options also; interested in collaboration opportunities on other tools as well.
- Board provided both feedback and informational resource suggestions.
- Rich Cowger – Board is interested in pursuing a collaborative relationship.
 - Would envision having this group tie in with operations and intelligence individuals directly. However, Board will need to have further conversation around the interaction specifics.

Co-Op Fire: Montana and Idaho Master Agreements Update – Informational Topic – CJ Johnson (20 minutes)

- *(See pre-reading materials.)*
- Reviewed one-page briefing document.
- Sub-geographic Area Operating Plans are not a requirement. Are currently working towards a standardized approach for the entirety of the Northern Rockies.
- Are drafted to the level at which they are scoped.
- Montana:
 - Tomorrow the working group that negotiated master agreement will meet. Intent is to gain initial concerns from partners and cooperators from this last season that would impact the drafting of the sub-geographic operating plans. Encouraging all to participate.
 - If there is a proposed realignment of offset exchange, designed for those discussions to be had at the local level, with regional and state bureau approval prior to implementation.
 - Matt Hall noted that supplemental financial support agreements may be tied to these, including some that are dispatch support related. Important not to delay conversations.
- Idaho:
 - Will be discussing concerns and successes from 2023 season and suggesting updates. For USFS, some of this will be occurring at fall USFS FMO Meeting.
 - Idaho working group will convene late January to discuss validating plans.
 - Prior to January meeting, likely that local individuals will be engaged and beginning to draft those plans.



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- NWCG Sub-Geographic template is currently circulating. This was written towards a specific agreement with Fire Department New York. Intent of this specific document is not the same as intent of these plans in the Northern Rockies.
- Zone Board Chairs will most likely be the entity for ensuring these plans are written. Will be up to each agency to ensure that they participate in these conversations. Initial movement could potentially be communicated through NRCG BOD channels; however, it most likely falls to purview of the working groups to ensure all are invited, encourage all to participate, and ensure timely completion.

Review of Action Items: (Rich Cowger)

- Dispensed with review in the interest of time.

The next scheduled NRCG Meeting is the Fall NRCG Meeting, which will be held in Missoula, MT (hybrid format) November 6 -9, 2023.