



# **Northern Rockies Coordinating Group**

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

## **Board of Directors Conference Call**

**Tuesday, May 16, 2017**

### **Participants:**

***Board Members:*** Steve Heppner, Ray Hart, Bryce Rogers, Cory Buhl, Mike Granger, Kevin Benton, Marschal Rothe, Mike DeGrosky, Vern Burdick, Jeff Hickerson, Greg Morris

***Deputies and Others:*** Kelly McKee, Tim Murphy, Harold Gemmell, Pam Jolly, Aitor Bidaburu, Ryan Patrick, Steve Zachry, Dave Jones, Warren Appelkans

**Purpose:** This is a public meeting for the purpose of conducting government business.

**NWCG Update (Aitor Bidaburu):** Predictive services review is wrapping up and the task team is presenting findings to Fire Management board in Boise on May 17, should be coming out soon. Nationally pretty quiet, PL1, supporting 2 large fires, there are a couple meetings going on this week (NWCG, NMAC).

**Predictive Services Update:** Absent

**National, NR, and Operational Updates:** Operations – sending a few miscellaneous overhead to the south, Judy & Mike are in Billings for meetings for the week. Mike Almas is transitioning with Greg Archie in the Operations position. Current jumpers are re-certifying, rookies going through rookie training; jumpers are also getting ready to set up in Silver City.

**Contracting Updates:** Finalizing new awards, new companies and equipment (with amount of equipment, decreased government ceilings). No concerns about amount of equipment, more than enough to meet needs. The NPS hosted the weed wash solicitation; doing government inspections on new weed washers. There are a few new companies and one that has produced 6 over the winter. BLM – MOU inspectors and government auditors are finalizing inspections on fuel tenders, gray water, potable water and tents. Government inspections being done on Type 3 caterers. The FS solicitations are in the final stages of price negotiations, inspections completed. All 3 agencies are in line to get info to dispatch 1<sup>st</sup> week of June. DNRC handling rental cars and Type 2 Crew agreement (DeGrosky – DNRC will meet on May 18 regarding this agreement).

**Safety Updates (Zachry):** 1 jumper got a staph infection in SE from bug bite and spent a couple days in the hospital. CRP report came out this week. Strawberry fatality CRP review should be out soon.

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

***IMT Summit Update (Mike DeGrosky):*** Facilitators are in place (Billy Phillips, Mike O'Herron, Mark Jones) and ready to go. Facility is confirmed and administrative team is also in place. Working on getting facilitators together prior to Tuesday – perhaps Monday afternoon/evening? Agenda is not put together yet, but it will have to be quite flexible. The desired outcome is a final team plan, or recommendations to NRCG to approve Thursday afternoon. Plan has been sent out, asked people to read and make comments. People will still have time to review first thing on Tuesday. Idea is to brainstorm ideas, break out into groups; will move back and forth between plenary and small group sessions.

Mike Granger – Paul Santavy will be representing the AA's, although there may be a few more that attend.

***Plan to share expenses (Facilities/Awards):*** Vern Burdick/MSPOA did not get approval to support funding for awards. Will just rotate another agency in for 2019 and 2024. Kevin Benton/IDL – slotted for meeting facilities for

2019, but their budget has already been submitted; just need to move out one year, will swap IDL and USFS in 2019 and 2020, respectively.

**NR Dispatch Steering Committee Charter:** Per Kevin Benton, Holly Arnzen will be taking over the member slot previously held by Beth Palanuik. Otherwise, charter is approved by the BOD.

**AIS Prevention/Ground Based Water-Handling Equipment (Warren Appelhans):** Equipment committee met last week about AIS, emphasized that this is starting to be a major concern. There is the NWCG guide to prevention, not widely distributed at this time. Warren did talk with Julie Lockman from MTDC, will meet again this week or next, so may change some recommendations. Need to get draft recommendations out. Hope to have final draft recommendation by next week.

Tim Murphy – was there an official request requesting this be a top priority for MTDC/Researchers? Brought up the contractor side and needing to provide them with information and guidance.

Mike DeGrosky – this is a big issue to the Governor, anything NRCG can do to raise the priority to get professionals to work on this will be helpful.

Greg Morris – what about specificity for WH equipment – is it ALL, just engines, or water tenders, etc. In the draft document it references “avoid drafting from known infested waters” – what are we doing about that piece? Do we have good information on where those places are?

Mike DeGrosky – MT FWP publishes a map, should be easily attainable.

Tim Murphy - what about engines from other GA's that have a bigger impact? Also, it should be any apparatus that is drafting water.

Warren Appelhans – as long as they are not spraying into a live stream (portable hose and nozzles), it is OK. NWCG guide does talk about getting it mapped.

Kevin Benton – regarding chemical treatment, what is FWP recommending for chemical treatment? On the CC, they were using the chemicals set forth in NWCG.

Mike Granger – have Warren/Equipment committee come up with something by the end of next week, will have BOD review via email or another CC. Will help expedite process. Warren will meet with Tim/Julie/MTDC and have two letters of recommendation (one to the field on how to deal with this, and another on priority to research teams).

### **New Business**

Marschal Rothe – asked for date for **Governor's Fire Brief** – Wednesday, June 7 @ Missoula Rural FD HQ (corner of South and Reserve) at 10:30 MDT.

**Mobilization of Local Government Fire Forces Document (Mike DeGrosky)** – recommending approval for 2017, BOD concurs.

**Hiring Risa Lange-Navarro (Harold Gemmell for Kathy Pipkin)** – while Risa was still working, she produced 7-day, monthly and seasonal potentials. Kathy is hoping she can come in on a short-term basis to get those produced.

Mike Granger – just signed annual budget for NRCC (2017) – is this included?

Mike DeGrosky – seems like we have accounted for predictive services in the fair share agency contributions and one of them is actually vacant.

Ryan Patrick – FWS and BLM are covering each respective predictive services, is this an alternative to the previous discussion of having an intern/detailer?

Table for now – need Kathy to provide more information.

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

**BIA NW** – quiet, has been a wet winter, getting through readiness reviews.

**BIA GP** – slow, were having a few fires but got precipitation and fire danger has moderated. There is a possibility that they will have a detailer going to RMCC, if so, might be asking BIA agencies in RM for detailer to fill behind.

**BIA RM** – couple people on assignment, one on way back got into a non-injury accident, under review.

**BLM** – Deputy Secretary of Interior has approved request to fill NR Operations position, waiting for firefighter coverage to be finalized. Finished up burning. Starting the first week of June, Justin Kincaid will be filling in behind Ken Schmid.

**Mike Granger/FWS** - Seasonal firefighters on board this week, doing refresher training. Burned ~6000 acres this spring. 12% budget cut directed and trying to figure out how that works with the organization.

**IDL** - quiet, a few IA fires over the previous week. Personnel being hired, finishing up readiness reviews over the next few weeks. May get drawn into disaster scenarios (flooding), working on Statewide Operating Plan.

**MT DES** – Will not be at IMT Summit, continuing dealing with flooding, will be having a call with the Oregon National Guard to prep in case they need aviation assets this summer, if there is a request would let DNRC and Kathy know. Marschal will be with DES through July 14.

**MT DNRC** – slow, few fires. Have some people out of the GA, continuing with training and inspections on county Co-Op equipment. Governor will be removing 24 million dollars out of fire suppression account.

**Montana State Fire Chiefs** - absent

**Montana Fire Wardens** - absent

**MT Peace Officers** - lost a deputy sheriff out of Broadwater County this morning.

**ND FS** - absent

**NPS** – Mike Davin will be attending IMT summit, Yellowstone ship starts June 1.

**USFS** – budget glitch has put hold on purchasing and spending for a couple weeks. There were a couple issues during smokejumper training, talked with base managers and WO yesterday. Continuing with Safety First engagement sessions around the GA, one last week in Helena which DNRC attended. Some RX burning completed across the region, but probably way behind due to weather. IHC's are starting to come on. IT trailers – 2 are ready to go, and the others are not, expecting a 12K bill to get up to speed, may be a bit delayed due to purchasing, likely will need to talk about as a group regarding maintenance. Melissa sent out a message about Priority Trainees, some response from IMT's, but lack of response from about 3, may need to talk about that process.

**The next scheduled Conference Call is Tuesday, June 20, 2017 @ 1000 MDT**