

# Northern Rockies Operations Committee - Fall Notes

Location: Microsoft Teams Meeting

Tuesday October 18th, 2022 (1300-1500) Mountain Time Zone

## WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS- Harker

### **Attendees:**

Jeremy Harker  
Julia Lauch  
Scott McAvoy  
Jeremiah Miller  
Corey Buhl  
Kendal Wilson  
Jason Wagner  
Kathy Pipkin  
Melissa Wegner  
Tate Fischer  
John Monzie  
Amanda Boatright  
Jordan Mcknight  
Patrick Lonergan

## NORTHERN ROCKIES:

- Northern Rockies Training Center – *Wegner*
  - Staffing – Matt Gibson has taken another job. Position is in phase 1 of fire hire, hoping to have someone in place early 2023. BIA Training Specialist position still vacant (2 years), detailers filling in this training season.
  - 20 courses listed for NRTC this year, will be adding some courses
  - At least 50% training will be in-person this year, various locations
  - Not charging tuition, except the L-courses put on by vendor
  - No longer able to offer reimbursable codes for cadre, still hoping for interagency support for cadre participation
  - Priority Trainee Program – NRCG BOD made decision in Feb that all trainees are priority therefore a list was not kept by GBTC – open to feedback from this group on how it went this season
    - Several noted that it went well (Lonergan, Wilson, Harker)
- Northern Rockies Coordination Center - *Pipkin*
  - NRCC was very successful but also had a very challenging year
  - Staffing: BLM hired new Met.; detailed fire analyst (helpful in fire danger and switching to NFDRS version 4); admin assistant moving to permanent; 9/11 Coordinator in phase 1 fire hire (Overhead Coordinator).
  - Season reports and end of year reports not yet complete
  - IC recruitment notice out (applications through Oct 28). NRCG BOD to make primary IC selections at fall meeting. All current ICs need to apply also.
  - Recruiting for ICT3s, attempt to have capability as transition to CIM
- Northern Rockies Fire Cache(s) - *Krause*
  - Jordan Mcknight gave update
    - Assistant Cache Manager position open right now
    - In the past, day labor hiring, not able to get through this year – fire season mitigated. Trying to do that again next year (HR/Contracting). Potentially hiring more seasonals as an option but may not fix as didn't turn many away this year.

- Northern Rockies Operations Officer- *Buhl*
  - NR IMT3s – would like feedback from NROC prior to the NRCG fall meeting (feedback by 11/7)
    - Borrowed documents from other places to develop plan for NR IMT3s
  - Not nearly as busy as 2021 but still active at the NRCC
  - No major issues came up for Operations Officer or NROC to address
  - Critical Mission Resource Group – guidance updated but not published yet – will be by the spring
- Northern Rockies BOD Liaison- *Fischer*
  - IMTs are the topic lately – 5 IMTs for NR, CIMT transition, and IMT3 planning
  - NRCG BOD has been working a lot more with the Agency Administrators
  - NR FWS Met position still vacant

#### **BUSINESS ITEMS:**

- S-520 candidate prioritization updates – *Harker*
  - 2 sessions prioritized – one at spring meeting, one mid-season
  - Able to get 2 FSC2s into December session, in addition to the prioritized group
- WFM Tasking update- modules certified in 2022- in queue for 2023? - *Jordan McKnight*
  - Certified Kaniksu module (Idaho Panhandle) – now up to 5 USFS WFMs – 3 type 1, 2 type 2
  - None in the queue for 2023
  - Trying to understand better what the region needs and how to stratify between type 1 and type 2
  - Harker - curious on feedback from NR Modules on the national meetings they attend – overall picture and variances between regional programs/modules
- Operations Committee Chair Rotation – *Harker/Lauch*
  - Current Chair- NPS- Jeremy Harker- Rotation to IDL @ Fall Meeting 2023
  - Current Vice Chair- IDL- Julia Lauch- next rotation @ Fall Meeting 2023 (rotation is a little out of sorts) (Recent history—IDL volunteered for 23'-25' chair, NPS 21'-23', FWS 19'-21', BLM 17'-19') MTDNRC is next up on charter list followed by BIA and then Forest Service. Thoughts or volunteers?)
  - MTDNRC will take Vice Chair @ Fall Meeting 2023

#### **UPDATES:**

- *Zone Updates-*
  - North Idaho – *Jeremiah Miller*
    - NIZ has not met yet this fall
    - This winter need to update charter language, SOPs surrounding MAC.
    - This season did not have a need to stand up MAC
    - Would like to see other Zone's guiding docs for examples (Harker – affirmative)
  - NW Montana – *Jeremy Harker*
    - Fairly quiet year, haven't had fall mtg yet
  - Southwest MT –
    - No report
  - Central MT – *Kendal Wilson*
    - Staffing updates: lots of new AAs and other staffing
    - Not busy season but steady, 250-260 fires across zone
    - Used long term management objectives – verbiage
    - Helena tanker base – 850,000 gallons
    - Helena short haul – 3 medivacs as well as 20 IAs
    - Charters need looked at and revised
  - South Central MT – *Patrick Lonergan*
    - Met this morning, CIMT may/may not look like
    - Zone plan needs updated, new signed statewide master agreement by end of year
    - South Central and Eastern combining into singular training zone

- Bozeman/Billing dispatch center consolidation – moving forward Bozeman to be removed from IROC this winter?
- Eastern MT – *Scott McAvoy*
  - Haven't met yet this fall
  - Minimal activity – couple of type 3 incidents
  - Consolidating dispatch centers – very challenging, relied on 10 Ads and injured firefighters, still issues that need worked out
  - Vacancies on helitack – whole new program
- North Dakota – *Jason Wagner*
  - Extremely slow season
  - USFS position still vacant
  - Meeting Nov 1

#### *NR Committee/Crew*

- Business – no report
- IC – no rep
- Prevention and Education
- NAC – no rep
- Training – *Melissa Wegner*
  - Just had meeting - new Chair – Matt H? (SW Zone)
- Aviation – no rep
- Dispatch – *Kathy Pipkin*
  - Tasking coming to Dispatch Steering Committee from AAs via NRCG to look at dispatch improvement project, all aspects
- Hotshots – *Kendal Wilson*
  - Standardization of going to 25 personnel – sounded good but a struggle to staff at 25. Typically 20-23 anyway, even so mobilizing with 20. Moving to 2 assistants. Didn't take office space and vehicles into account.
  - NR IHC meeting the week of Nov 14
- Jumpers – no rep
- WFM

Action Item: IMT3 info - provide input by 11/7 – Harker will send out

Spring Meeting: **March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023 (which two days, afternoon/morning)** – Helena, MTDNRC Office – virtual option (if big conflict comes up, contact Harker)