

Meeting Notes

Call Attendees

Jenn Rawlings, BLM; Rita Chandler, USFS; CT Camel, CSKT; Kathy Bushnell, USFS; Ashely Snellman, USFS; Lisa Osborn, USFS; Shannon Bonney, BLM; Kelly McKee, NRCG; Tim Crosmer, MT DNRC; Bruce Suenram, MT DNRC; Ali Ulwelling, MT DNRC; Crystal Beckman, MT DNRC; Jeff Moyer, BIA; Nadene Wadsworth, MT DES; Karen Lamb, ID SL; Ivy Dickinson, ID Firewise; Christine Johnson, FireSafe MT; Bob Hanson, MT Fire Chiefs; Lesley Williams-Gomez, USFS; Chris Johnson, USFS; Courtney Couch, USFS; Chris Barth, BLM

Discussion on fall and spring committee meetings and date/location for fall meeting

- Fall meeting is scheduled for October 17 & 18, 2017 in Lewistown, MT

Review committee contact sheet (Zone Reps/Agency Reps/Ad-hoc Members)

- Rita Chandler is currently vice chair and will be chair Spring of 2018
- Ali Ulwelling is now the NW MT Zone Rep for committee
- Shannon Bonney is now the E MT Zone Rep for committee
- Crystal Beckman is currently chair thru 2017

NRCG Board update – Mike DeGrosky, Committee Liaison (update is at the end of meeting notes)

NRCG website update – Kelly McKee, NRCG Business Manager

Kelly is in the beginning stages of seeing what will work best for new NRCG website. Trying to find the best place to house the website (NIFC, FS, etc.). More information to come....

ACTION –

- Committee - send Kelly any ideas or examples of website that would work well for NRCG
- Crystal – send Kelly new information to post on our existing site

File Sharing – this is a national interagency challenge, Rita will keep us in the loop if she hears anything. Cathy Pipkin was looking into Cloud Vault but ran into the problem that a FS user has to set up the files versus all interagency committee members being able to upload files to share.

GAC Prevention Teams – Tyre Holfeltz (update is at the end of meeting notes)

- No one on the call had anyone to share - identify any local people who are interested in being on a local or regional prevention team
- No one on call the call to support this, this probably needs to be drivin by Prev Team - have breakout at spring IMT meeting
- No trainings needs were identified
- Karen Lamb is attending P201 in TX April 24-25

ACTION –

- Crystal will send out *National Fire Prevention Edu Team, 2017 Program Plan* via email

DES Update – Nadene Wadsworth

MT has received grant money to do a Multi-Hazard Plan (need to clarify if this is an update or new plan?). Nadene is prepping a RFP to go out soon to contract out the creation of this plan. At our fall meeting Nadene will have more information and would like to set some time aside to discuss this more and review draft plan. 6 public meetings will be a part of this plan development. She will let us know when and where these meeting will be when scheduled. The plan includes all MT lands, not ownership specific.

ACTION –

- Crystal put DES Multi-Hazard Plan on fall agenda

NW Zone Update – Ali and Lisa

Lincoln County FireSafe Council is the organization that wildfire community preparedness efforts are put forth through. FireSafe Flathead is a newly formed council. This zone utilizes OLS and the Kalispell area (Flathead FireSafe Council) is prepping for Era of Megafires presentation on April 25th. A follow-up meeting will take place after the April 25th event to discuss more localized wildfire topics. Flathead County is working on updating their CWPP

Rangeland Fire Danger – Tom Frieders, Warning Coordination Meteorologist, NOAA

The Billings service area (including SC and SE MT) will be testing the use of a Rangeland Fire Danger statement this spring and summer. The goal is to let the public know that ag/open/debris burning is discouraged on these days. This danger rating “Rangeland Fire Danger” is below a Red Flag warning. Besides it being a public notice about burning, it will also assist local government with providing a trigger point, for closing open burning, due to conditions. Other states, including ND and SD use the Rangeland Fire Danger, however, each one measures and uses different indexes (SD uses the grassland fire danger index) that dictate when it is a Rangeland Fire Danger day. The Billings area is not using a specific index at this time. Just evaluating precipitations, weather conditions and other factors... ..

ACTION –

- Committee - Tom Frieders tom.frieders@noaa.gov encourages feedback on this; you can also contact him if you have questions or need more info.

Restrictions Update – Bruce

It was supported to leave the existing restrictions training PowerPoint alone and CJ and Bruce will devise a plan on what to create for local government restrictions training.

- Helena and Great Falls Restrictions Plans will be updating their plan year; Kalispell area updated their plan last year.
- Lisa mentioned that information for counties about restriction language will be important (i.e. what they put in their resolutions, sometimes their language conflicts with the other language used in fed or state restriction authority documents.)
- Crystal mentioned that it is on her list to collect exemption examples and try to put something together about County’s authority with regards to restrictions and fireworks

ACTION –

- CJ and Bruce will devise a plan and create training for local government restrictions.

Report on FPE Committee's update at fall '16 NRCG Board meeting – Crystal

The FPE update at the fall NRCG board meeting went really well. There was good discussion about CMATs. The FPE highlights handout was well received and people found it very helpful. **Thanks to the committee and especially Marianne for putting the handout together.**

Standardized evacuation language for MT update – Crystal

The MT Peace Officers and Sheriff's Assoc. (MPOSA has this topic on their radar. It will be a discussion session at the Wildfire Leadership Conference in April at Bozeman <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/wildfire-leadership-conference-registration-31329898570>. It will also be on the agenda for the MT MPOSA June convention in April.

ACTION –

Crystal will keep committee in the loop on the discussion and if anything comes out of these two meetings Crystal will share so the committee can weigh in.

FPE Committee tracking form

Group discussed the tracking form briefly. Rita would like a bit more information about this and it was agreed that at our fall meeting the group can brainstorm and create a plan for utilizing the information collected

ACTION –

Looking for someone to take lead on this topic and facilitate the discussion at our fall meeting

Roaring Lion Reports – Crystal

The two reports are completed, need to post reports on a website and/or make them smaller so they can be emailed out. More info to come from Crystal on where these reports will be posted, possibly DNRC and FireSafe MT websites.

- Roaring Lion Fire Structure Assessment, Jack Cohen
- Roaring Lion Fire Hazardous Fuels Treatment Assessment, Byron Bonney

Prevention Education for Hunters

- ad in MT FWP big game regulations book
- prevention message in hunter safety education classes

ACTION –

Crystal will send out MT FWP ad and Bridger Teton ad to share with group and MT regional contacts for FWP hunter safety classes.

Looking for someone to take lead on this topic and facilitate the discussion at our fall meeting

From the Peaks to the Prairies

USFS Agency Rep update – Rita Chandler

Rita attended national meeting in DC recently, there were discussions on tracking impacts and how the old reporting system will be updated. NR region has made some impressions nationally, with regards to our tracking form, charter and informational handout. Smokey's 75th birthday plans are beginning to formulate. Rita will keep us in the loop. It was mentioned that if regions are interested in developing Smokey 75 plans that there would be funding available. Plans will need to be developed in place in order to receive funding. This can be discussed more at fall meeting if NR region is interested in developing plans.

ACTION –

Looking for someone to take lead on this topic and facilitate the discussion at our fall meeting

BLM – Chris Barth

New regional mitigation and education area coordinator for BLM, looking to start new position April 3rd. This is interested in reviewing fire history information. Please share your data with him or direct him to where it is available.

FireSafe MT – Christine Johnson

Annual meeting scheduled for April 24th in Bozeman, new website coming out soon, looking forward to keeping tied in with group.

Wildfire Preparedness Efforts

- May – wildfire awareness month
- Multi-State Governors Proclamation designate May as wildfire preparedness month
- National Wildfire Community Prep Day, Saturday May 6th

Idaho Update

Karen-

Ivy-

Courtney-

BIA

Eastern MT



From the Peaks to the Prairies

Spring Meeting
March 15, 2017

Updates & Info Received:

NRCG Board Update

Sorry that I am missing the Committee meeting. Please give my regards to the Committee, thank them for their work, and express my regrets for being unable to attend due to conflict with Western States Fire Managers.

I volunteered to be the NRCG BOD liaison to your committee very intentionally; because I value prevention and mitigation work, regard that work as important, and believe it will only become more so in the future.

I believe the greatest challenge for the committee is to consistently demonstrate (to the NRCG BOD) the Committee's value and importance by crafting and developing practical solutions to real-life fire problems.

As a BOD member interested in prevention and mitigation, I am most interested in....a) interagency/cross-boundary efforts and accomplishments, b) a firm embrace of the Cohesive Strategy - in your case, especially the fire adapted communities tenet, c) efforts that are very results focused and go beyond the traditional (not necessarily to the exclusion of the traditional, but unafraid to try new things), and d) solutions that modernize restrictions - focusing first on what we are trying to accomplish rather than the tool. Know the job, then pick (or make) the tool.

Hope this helps. Good luck, have a good meeting!

Michael T. DeGrosky
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NRCG website update

Currently the NRCG website resides on a FS server, and there have been steps taken to move it over to the NIFC server (i.e. under the GACC website). The intent is to clean it up, and remove old and extraneous material.

Before I get too far, I do want to emphasize that nothing would disappear or be taken down prior to the new one being functional and live.

I wanted to get the message out to everyone early, and start to get feedback/suggestions while I am working through this. I will be looking for input from those of you who actively use and post to the site (I know there are some of the committees/areas who probably use it more heavily than others). I would also appreciate the committee chairs giving some thought to material you would like to see on there.



Spring Meeting
March 15, 2017

Below is an example of a site from the Great Basin Coordinating Group.

<https://gacc.nifc.gov/gbcc/coordinating.php>

Please let me know if you have any concerns or questions. Thank you! Kelly



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Caring for the land and serving people

Restrictions

All:

I have been tasked with modifying the Fire Restrictions & Closure training package, specifically targeted at local governments. The Training package is pretty well done for the agencies. My question is should we try to modify the training package or develop something more specifically oriented to local government fire wardens and Boards of County Commissioners?

https://www.fs.fed.us/r1/fire/nrcg/Restrictions_and_Closures.htm

My initial thoughts are leave the training package alone and to develop a short training session for local government staff.

Thoughts?

Bruce Suenram
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Fire and Aviation Management
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I concur that keeping the original as is and adding to for something that addresses local specifically. Just my initial thought.

Rita

I think it would be a good stroke to leave our (state and federal) training in much the same form as it is; but, I agree that something needs to be produced for local government folks that is tiered to fed/state procedures. Each county is a bit different in that their commissions tend to write unique orders. I would be able to help draft something, but not until June I'm afraid.

CJ

Hi,

I believe the current restriction package should do the trick...what type of local information where you thinking? I also think something should be said about the new Rangeland Fire Danger that will be issued by NOAA. It is intended to help the local fire chiefs/ etc. make calls on open burning and burn permits.

Marianne

SW Zone

Plans for 2017

I'm interested in supporting Jordan's work on Home Ignition Zone. We have 2 new prevention folks on the Forest. Andrea Colson is the new PT at Superior, and Anna Henderson is the new PT at Ninemile. A new Restrictions and Closures Plan will be published by May, 2017. It will focus on heightened prevention prior to initiation of Stage I restrictions. Also interested in fostering relationship with new Co-Op position (Rita Chandler).

Special projects and or events

- Era of Megafires in April
- Firefighter Appreciation Night- OLS theme
- Western Montana Fair- theme TBD
- Sanders County Fair- theme TBD
- UM Homecoming Parade- theme TBD

Successes

- Utilizing MCFPA for planning and implementation of coordinated prevention/education campaigns

Challenges

- New prevention personnel, new FS Co-Op position

Partners

- MCFPA is association of wildland fire agencies and primary source of interagency participation

Additional information

- Jordan Koppen: congratulations on becoming new MCFPA Secretary.



From the Peaks to the Prairies

Spring Meeting
March 15, 2017

MT DES

MT DES will be updating the state hazard mitigation plan, the RFP is almost done and it will be on the street soon.

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Helena Lewis and Clark National Forest

Special Projects/Events

- School programs/camps—year-round (both field and classroom programs)
- Era of Megafires Program, Lincoln – April 26th
- OLS—Social Media, Website– year-round, with emphasis on weekly posts May-October
- Fire Behavior/Haz Fuels Presentation in Helena by Byron Bonney – FireSafe MT/Tri-County FireSafe Working Group
- Community outreach/public programs – June-August -- Fire P&E 101 programs for families (at campgrounds, etc.)
- Montana State Fair, Great Falls – July 28-Aug 5
- County Fairs/Parades – July
- Great Falls Independence Day Parade – July 4th

Partners: Additional partners (from what was listed in Ashley's email)

- Montana Discovery Foundation
- BLM
- Tri-County FireSafe Working Group

Kathy Bushnell

Plans for 2017: We are working on updating our Prevention and Restrictions Plan. Marvin Carpenter, our Fire Planner, has been doing this mostly.

Special projects and/or events: Kathy will be putting a list together and will send that. We will be assisting at an "Era of MegaFires" Event in Lincoln, Montana at the end of April.

Successes: Kathy will address those as she puts the events list together from last year and this year.

Challenges: We do not have one dedicated Officer to prevention, these are all secondary duties for this forest.



From the Peaks to the Prairies

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Partners: We have strong partnerships with the volunteer fire departments, DNRC, Fire Safe Montana, etc.

Additional information: N/A

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Caring for the land and serving people

GAC Prevention Team

- Tyre is lead again this year, Jeremy Olson is PIO
 - Have openings for team members
 - Will always take trainees
 - Looking for people with graphic design experience
 -
- Rotation dates are:
 - May 23-June 5
 - Sept. 12-25
- Just a note, a full prevention team does not have to be ordered, a lead can be ordered or a PIO or a team member
 - You can just order specific needs
 - You can name request vs. order who is up
 - Sometimes just ordering the barebones framework can be helpful to assist with local efforts, data collection, etc.
- And on another note..... ID Fire Response Working Group is being re-established, topic this group will handle include suppression, acquisition of resources, prev. and edu.