



Northern Rockies Fire Prevention & Education Committee

Fall Meeting
December 2, 2020

In attendance: Chris Barth, Larry Elder, Terina Goicoechea, Chris “CJ” Johnson, Anna Henderson, Rita Chandler, Julia Berkey, Jennifer Russell, Isaac Wald, Ivy Dickinson, Andi Colson, Kristin Sleeper, Jennifer Vafiades, Aubrey Davis

Agenda

Review of Action Items from [Spring 2019 Meeting](#) (virtual)

1. Fire restriction guide sent to the FPEC. **DONE**
2. firerestrictions.us webinar. **DONE**
3. Develop cloud-based platform for FPEC
 - a. Prevention materials
 - b. Risk assessment guides/tools
 - c. Migrate Google drive documents to new platform
 - d. Aubrey established a Team in FireNet that can be used to set up “channels” for the various categorized documents.
 - e. Agenda topic for upcoming meeting
 - f. FireNet exclusive makes it difficult for some. However, there are still other that can not use Google.
 - g. SW Fire Prevention Team look at organizing, centralizing existing materials during the 2021 Fire Year.
4. Develop list of risk assessment best practices
 - a. SAM forms are adequate. Baseline for use. SAM Long form is available- designed for self-assessment by property owner in the event a specialist isn’t available.
 - b. FPEC committee liaison to NRCG FOG – use existing tool (SAM) for structure assessments for incident structure assessments
 - i. Would need to tie into NIFC structure assessment tool
 - ii. CJ will put together a white paper for a proposal to recommend Northern Rockies IMTs begin to complete their structure assessments using SAM so the assessment remain archived and accessible to responders after team has demobilized. White paper will compare structure in Collector (ArcGIS Online) vs. SAM (Interra Group) and highlight the importance of an archived record, such as is available in SAM, a platform in which the state of Montana has invested considerable resources to-date.
5. Analyze human-caused fire causes across the geographic area
 - a. Breakdowns by NR, states, zones, agency, etc.

- b. Determine whether the need is to increase prevention efforts for those causes that restrictions address or explore social science as a way to address other causes that are not covered by fire restrictions.
 - c. Rita did some of this work in the spring. Shared it with the NRCG Board.
 - d. Assume that NRCG Board will ask for this info again in spring 2021
 - e. Do we focus on 'do restrictions matter'? Is there a way to know whether fire restrictions affect human-caused fires that restrictions address?
 - i. www.Restrictions.US does archive all restrictions and burn bans since its inception, but only if the restriction or burn ban was allowed to expire, and NOT if it was deleted. CJ is working with webmaster to get the data. It will be organized by NR Restrictions Area. Anna will build WPSAPS planning areas that reflect the geographic boundaries of NR Restrictions Areas. We will correlate the data and check for validity. No timeframe on the project completion. We may use the WPSAPS refresher as an opportunity to share the data.
 - ii. Use of WPSAPS by fire restriction area to tell this story
 - 1. Use in specific areas in 2021 (SW)?
 - iii. Or do we focus on how we can address the human-causes that are not affected by fire restrictions?
 - 1. There is a need to look at better prevention efforts for those other causes
 - f. Rita will look at 2020 compared to 5- and 10-year info from spring 2020
6. WPSAPS training. **DONE**
- a. Any future WPSAPS training planned?
 - i. Discussing two 2 hr. refresher course and possibility of fill WPSAPS course available nationally. Anna Henderson and CJ are planning a 2-hr. refresher that we will make available to all participants in last year's WPSAPS presentation in the Northern Rockies. Likely dates are in January 2021. CJ & Anna will announce the date to Barth, Chandler, and Sleeper for distribution.
7. Need to identify a Zone Representative from Central Montana Zone.
- a. Terina was the rep for several years. Works with CJ and Anna a lot. Need to identify who to work with because her BLM District crosses several zones.
 - b. DNRC has had a lot of staffing changes in their Central Land Office
 - i. Possibility - David Marx - Central Land Office Assistance Fire Management Officer (DNRC)
 - ii. Possibility - Nick Schreiner - HLCNF Rx Fire and Fuels Specialist - Runs the Great Falls and Helena Area Restrictions Calls
8. Need to identify and Agency Representative for State Fire Wardens.

Old Business

- Wildland Prevention Spatial Analysis Program System (WPSAPS):
 - "Train the trainer" course was offered April 28-30, Missoula. WPSAPS user guide/master user guide available. Lolo NF is embracing WPSAPS (applied at the District level). R1 willing to continue support (with finding) efforts within the FS.
- Preseason Fire Restrictions Meetings:
 - encouraged to continue to hold these as feasible. Look at alternative ways to conduct these meetings
- Wildfire Community Preparedness Day/Wildfire Awareness Month

- Several Prep Day events occurred throughout the geographic area (see reports below). There was some coordination in the spring for wildfire awareness month campaigns (radio spots, billboards, gas station tv ads, social media, etc.); however, it is still largely agencies working independently or a few agencies working together. Opportunities to improve for Fire Year 2021 include making resources accessible to all members, combining the existing efforts of the independent actions with the FPET efforts, begin planning efforts earlier, revisit proclamation and member agency support, etc.
- For 2021 - Promote DNRC self-assessment for wildfire risk. Create a theme to promote an effort. One social media calendar with products.
- Multi-state proclamation effort was abandoned in 2020.
- Montana Wildfire Prevention Campaign Efforts
 - This item was tabled in the spring but seems to directly tie to the above item. Consider a task group to organize this effort. Potential for a new mascot or tagline
 - OLS has been in use a while now. Don't Let Your Summer Go Up in Smoke - ID
 - ID moving forward again with this theme in 2021. WY looking to adopt this idea.
 - Don't Let Your Summer was part of a larger Together 4 Idaho campaign
 - Other states are developing fire prevention mascots (Spruce the Moose – AK, Bigfoot: Believe in Fire Safety – OR)
 - There has been a trend to adopt messaging that places value in a sense of place
 - Lesley W (Teton Interagency Fire) shared that Harrison Ford may be willing to help with recording PSAs.
 - **[CB]** An idea for those Star Wars fans (like me) - "Fire Prevention: We can't do this SOLO."

New Business

- continued coordination for fire prevention messaging (radio, billboards/variable message boards, fuel station TV ads, hunting/fishing regulation guides, wildfire awareness month social media posts, etc.)
 - SW Prevention Team is planning to get together January-March
 - Anna, Aubrey, CJ, Julia, Chris, Jen Russell (from FPEC) interested in participating in that discussion to coordinate existing and new prevention campaign efforts for 2021.
 - Anna will coordinate and schedule.
- human fire cause analysis (by state, zone, agency,...)
 - FireRestrictions.US webmaster has data (most) for when fire restrictions areas went in and out of fire restrictions. (CJ)
 - Propose a spring fire restriction coordinator call
 - Chris/Naaman will coordinate a spring call with Restriction and Media Coordinators
 - FireRestrictions.US issues – webmaster getting back up and running, but is there another, better approach?
 - SW geographic area is looking for another solution as well.
 - NIFC is rolling out a new website in early 2021. This may be an option for housing a national fire restrictions platform.
 - Rita – idea for it to be taken on at a national, interagency level. More to come in the spring.

- ID will need a new platform in 2021. Idaho Fire Information has been taken over to be solely BLM now.
- ND does restriction by county. No stages. Burn Bans and associated prohibitions. Lives on state emergency management page. Could do some training with EMs to possibly include info on FireRestrictions.US
- report out on SW Zone Fire Prevention Education Team, proposal for broader approach in the future
 - Anna reported on 2020 SW Fire Prevention Team
 - Chris will share the report with the FPEC
 - Proposal for 2021 FPET effort is working its way through the system
- Fire Prevention Education Team update and the 2021 National FPET schedule (Rita)
 - Do we want to have a FPET that is available to go on the schedule nationally? Would it be the SW Zone team?
 - Plan is to continue to work within the NR and continue training and developing team members. SW Zone FPET lead is coordinating with national FPET committee
- use of FireNet/O365 Teams for FPEC (move from current Gmail)
 - *see "Review of Action Items from Spring 2019 Meeting" above*

Zone Reports

- Central Montana:
 - *no representative*
- Eastern Montana (Shannon):
 - Fire Restriction began June 30 and ran until Oct 21
 - We had eight counties move into Stage 1 Restrictions
 - Two in Miles City area
 - Six in Billings area
 - Prevention: Partnered with DNRC for harvesting/equipment fire prevention PSA on the Northern Ag Network. Also aired on some on the local radio stations.
 - Education: Did not do much due to COVID. Looking to see what next year brings for Wildfire Education Day in Malta.
 - Most of the events were cancelled due to pandemic
 - Did manage to do the Home Improvement Show (3 days) in early March (~3500)
- North Dakota (Aubrey):
 - Reached 2,443 people with Fire Prevention Week Smokey Bear program. Schools received Smokey Bear swag for their 2nd grade classrooms and were given an opportunity to have a virtual classroom visit with Smokey.
 - During the summer, three fire prevention ads were played in North and South Dakota via Northern Broadcasting. NDFS extended that contract into the fall with an ad focused on equipment use due to fire starts from farming.
 - NDFS played an equipment use PSA on iHeart Media for one month, three times daily.
 - Two billboards were placed in Williston and Dickinson, ND – one for farming fire prevention and one for hunting fire prevention.
 - Fire Prevention Week proclamation was signed by Governor Doug Burgum.
 - A Fire Prevention Week press release was pushed out via the NDFS, State Fire Marshal, Governor's office, and North Dakota Department of Emergency Services.
 - A press release on fireworks safety was pushed out via the NDFS and Memory Fireworks.

- 16 fire prevention related press releases were developed, leading to multiple news (tv and radio) interviews.
- 21 graphics and infographics were made for social media.
- NDFS assisted with the North Dakota Department of Emergency Services and North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality to provide information to farmers about spring prescribed burning via posters, press releases, and posters.
- The NDFS continues fire mitigation efforts in the southwest region of the state.
- North & Central ID (Jen):
 - Provided social media content via Idaho Department of Lands- Fire Information Facebook page. This is the first year of the page and followship is up to 9,500.
 - Governor proclamation of Wildfire Awareness Month for May
 - Collaboration with Idaho Department of Transportation to sign all major highways in Idaho with “Report Wildfires” signage.
 - Burn Permit/ debris burning best practices press releases, new paper ads, social media campaign for both Spring and Fall (opening and closing burn permit season)
 - Development of #Together4Idaho group and the “Don’t let your summer go up in Smoke” campaign with social media content, swag (stickers) and vinyl banners distributed throughout the state.
 - 2021 plans for updating Prevention webpage on the IDL main site. This will also include a plan to deal with how to message fire restrictions.
- Northwest Montana (Keith):
 - Had incredible amount of visitor use in the zone this year.
 - Human starts were up this year but is expected with the record number of visitor use.
 - Coordination with Southwest Zone and utilizing their prevention team worked well again. Will take advantage of that again if they are willing. Excellent job.
 - Thought coordination with funding worked well to get more bang for the buck.
 - No restrictions this year, which I think if we did would have had no way to enforce and people would have done what they wanted anyway.
 - KNF/FNF; LEO support was critical and requested severity so they could increase patrols to help us out.
 - Good coordination and attendance on Zone calls.
 - The KNF set a record for highest number of human-caused fires (70) and a record for lowest number of lightning caused (9) for any season since 1970. Lightning only accounted for 2.25 acres of the total 1379 acres.
- South Central Montana (Forrest):
 - Initially planned to attend more local events to share fire prevention messages, however the COVID-19 pandemic led to most of these events being cancelled
 - Prevention/Smokey presence in a parade, farmer’s market, and a reoccurring presence at one of the local campgrounds
 - Seven (7) school programs
 - Started home assessments with the DNRC. Completed four of them.
 - Increased presence in campgrounds and other “popular” spots
 - Developed a relationship with MSU Bozeman and Gallatin College to further message and assist recruiting. Also reached out to high schools in Big Timber Livingston. Big Timber was receptive. Still waiting for response from Livingston.
 - Working on project proposal for the CCC fire crew

- Southwest Montana (CJ):
 - Conducted www.FireRestrictions.US User's Guide Webinar in March to allow new users across the region to utilize the tools available on the webpage and communicate their Area's restrictions.
 - FireRestrictions.US is currently down. Working on bringing it online again (moving servers and updating account)
 - Wildfire Prevention Spatial Analysis Program System (WPSAPS) Training in April allowed several agencies from multiple regions to interact with the software developers and beta-testing practitioners to discover WPSAPS utility. The Lolo NF and Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribe Fire Management committed to implementation at least on a partial scale during the 2020 field season.
 - In support of additional WPSAPS trainings both nationally and in the NR
 - In May, Wildfire Adapted Missoula County (WAMCO) contracted with University of Montana Business Marketing class to design a webpage and information system to facilitate communication between interagency wildland fire management agencies in Missoula County and the public. The new information system is up and running, providing interagency partners a platform to share planning, implementation, and accomplishments. Linked large-scale fuels reduction/forest health projects to the Montana Forest Action Plan webpage. Provided a one-stop shop for the public to interact with interagency wildland fire managers, investigate resources available to adapt their communities to wildfire, and prepare for wildfire season.
 - Hosted congressional delegation and Dept. of Ag. Secretary to a tour of hazardous fuels reduction project- Wildfire Adapted Missoula (WAM) in June.
 - SW MT Zone Prevention/Education Team began in late July to coordinate campaigns (BeOutdoorSafe.org and One Less Spark) within the zone and across the region. Interagency funds were leveraged across the region to maximize stewardship and wildfire prevention/education campaigns so visitors would encounter consistent messaging across the region.
 - SW MT Zone Prevention/Education Team continued in August and September. Efforts of the FPET eliminated the need to implement Fire Restrictions.
 - The SW MT Zone Prevention/Education Team will meet in October to finalize annual report and make recommendations for a fully funded prevention/education campaign infrastructure in 2021.

Agency Reports

- Bureau of Indian Affairs:
 - *no report*
- BLM (Chris):
 - Continued the interagency PSA partnership on Northern Broadcast System. BLM aired 18 spots over two weeks covering campfires, the home ignition zone, and equipment fires.
 - Provided financial support to interagency prevention messages in MT hunter regulations guide.
 - Provided financial support to fire prevention campaign on gas station TV throughout the state – in support of the larger SW Zone/Regional Fire Prevention Team efforts.
 - Developed daily social media posts for wildfire prevention month that were posted on BLM Montana/Dakotas platforms and shared with interagency partners.

- Funded four weeks of PSAs on Northern Ag News Network in coordination with DNRC covering harvest safety in Northeast Montana. Eighteen spots were aired during primetime programming over four weeks.
- Provided financial support and subject matter expertise to the Fire Adapted Montana Learning Network – a learning network of wildfire professionals that work collaboratively to develop new ideas, connect people, and share strategies across Montana to support fire adapted communities.
- Provided financial support and subject matter expertise to the Firesafe Montana - a statewide coalition of diverse interests working together to help Montanans make their homes, neighborhoods, and communities fire safe.
- Serve as Restriction Coordinators and/or Media Coordinators for four of the 14 fire restriction coordination areas.
- Provide overall coordination as Chair of Fire Prevention and Education Committee and Agency Representative for Fire Restrictions.
- MT Disaster and Emergency Services:
 - *no report*
- Fish & Wildlife Service:
 - *no report*
- USDA Forest Service:
 - FS will be receiving a National Wildfire Prevention Strategy 2021 – why we need to have Fire Prevention in all aspects of Fire Management. Intended to provide transparency as to what we should also be doing and how regions and units can tie into overarching goals, mission and vision.
 - Couple units in region working towards having Fire PIOs who will also work closely with the Fire Prevention folks.
 - Fully staffed at Regional office now, may be some retirements next summer – stay tuned for what those positions will be.
 - FS has changes with Budget modernization so acquiring extra dollars off the cuff may be more difficult in the future.
 - There are some prevention trainings to come out nationally that I will find the dates on and share soon—likely be virtual so more options to participate for folks who normally wouldn't have the travel dollars to participate.
 - Due to some hiring changes if we in FS lose our currently in place Prevention Technicians, we cannot automatically refill them. We do need to keep prevention boots on the ground so this could be issue in future.
- MT Fire Chiefs Association:
 - *no report*
- MT Sheriffs & Peace Officers Assoc:
 - *no report*
- NPS:
 - *no report*
- State Fire Wardens:
 - *no representative*
- State of Idaho:
 - *see North & Central ID Zone report above*

- Montana DNRC (Kristin):
 - Keep Montana Green held the 59th annual fire prevention art contest. This year's theme was 'Everyone plays a part in preventing a wildfire start.' Over 2,200 students from more than 80 schools participated. The competition recognized 31 students for their work.
 - Continued the interagency PSA partnership on Northern Broadcast System. DNRC aired 18 spots over two weeks covering campfires, the home ignition zone, and equipment fires.
 - Funded newspaper ads in the Dillon area during the Bear Creek Fire and periods of very high fire danger.
 - Funded four weeks of PSAs on Northern Ag News Network in coordination with BLM covering harvest safety in Northeast Montana. Eighteen spots were aired during primetime programming over four weeks.
 - Provided fire prevention social media content for the Joint Information Center, Northwest Zone, Southwest Zone, and Southern Land Office covering a variety of topics including: Safe debris and agriculture burning; Arson; Evacuation safety; Recreation safety; Campfire safety; and Hunting safety.
 - Worked with OneBetter Advertising to complete a movie trailer for Northeast Montana covering agriculture and equipment fires. The trailer plays before all movies in select theatre markets.
 - Partnered with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks to get permanent fire prevention signage installed at the top ten most visited Aquatic Invasive Species check stations.
 - Continue to market the Free Home Assessment Program (or Wildfire Site Preparedness Visit Program), engaging over 50 Montanans since July 1, 2020.
 - Supported and led the Fire Adapted Montana Learning Network, hosting quarterly connection calls and building a robust program of work for 2021.
 - Supported 16 counties entering Stage 1 Fire Restrictions with resources and messaging for constituents.
 - DNRC will begin a formal solicitation process for forest restoration and management projects as it seeks to address forest health and wildfire risks identified in the recently completed Montana Forest Action Plan. The Request for Proposals (RFP) submission period will begin December 1, 2020, with all project proposals due on January 29, 2021.
- State of North Dakota:
 - *see North Dakota Zone report above*

Action Items Moving Forward

The following are items that require further action:

1. Continued coordination for geographic area-wide prevention efforts.
 - a. Develop task group to combine independent/FPET efforts
 - b. Develop new campaign and related materials
 - c. Anna will coordinate and schedule.
 - d. Chris will share the SW Zone Fire Prevention Team report with the FPEC
2. Develop cloud-based platform for FPEC
 - a. Continue using google drive, expand/organize resources
 - b. Look at FPEC Teams environment (created by Aubrey) or develop a new Team through FireNet

- c. SW Fire Prevention Team look at organizing, centralizing existing materials during the 2021 Fire Year.
 3. Develop list of risk assessment best practices
 - a. CJ will put together a white paper for a proposal
 4. Report on human-caused fire causes across the geographic area
 - a. Breakdowns by NR, states, zones, agency, etc.
 - b. Determine whether the need is to increase prevention efforts for those causes that restrictions address or explore social science as a way to address other causes that are not covered by fire restrictions.
 - c. Rita will look at 2020 compared to 5- and 10-year info from spring 2020
 5. Need to identify a Zone Representative from Central Montana Zone.
 - a. Possibility - David Marx - Central Land Office Assistance Fire Management Officer (DNRC)
 - b. Possibility - Nick Schreiner - HLCNF Rx Fire and Fuels Specialist - Runs the Great Falls and Helena Area Restrictions Calls
 - c. Chris will talk with suggested individuals/work with FPEC liaison to NRCG Board
 6. Need to identify and Agency Representative for State Fire Wardens.
 7. Chris/Naaman will coordinate a spring call with Restriction and Media Coordinators
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Bin Items

- none
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FPEC Report for Fall NRCG Meeting

- Accomplishments
 -
 - Current Project Status
 - N/A
 - Status of Taskings
 - Report on human caused fires across the geographic area to be presented during upcoming virtual meeting (tentative date: 12/02/2020)
 - analysis by geographic area, states, zones, agency, etc.
 - Next step: Determine whether the need is to increase prevention efforts for those causes that restrictions address or explore other means (eg - social science) as a way to address other causes that are not covered by fire restrictions.
 - Questions or Concerns to be discussed with the Board
 - Need to identify a Zone Representative from Central Montana Zone
 - Need to identify and Agency Representative for State Fire Wardens
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Next Meeting:

- Spring 2021 (Date TBA)