

# **NORTHERN ROCKIES COORDINATING GROUP**

## **OPERATING GUIDE**



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## INTRODUCTION

All Northern Rockies Geographic Area (NRGA) wildland fire agencies manage wildfire emergencies by [authority](#) outlined in departmental/agency policy and interagency agreements. Additionally, they may also support other all hazard incidents contingent upon agency policy. This Northern Rockies Coordinating Group (NRCG) Operating Plan is intended to provide management direction for cooperation, standardization, administration and operational guidelines for fire and incident management activities within the NRGA. Updates to this document may occur periodically as needed, and must be reviewed and approved by NRCG members, then signed by the NRCG Chair.

The geographical boundary for the Northern Rockies Area includes the States of Montana, North Dakota, and northern Idaho, Yellowstone National Park, and a small portion of South Dakota. This document is intended to provide flexible, yet efficient protocol for coordinating NRCG's business, fully recognizing the independent autonomy of each member's organization.

## AUTHORITY

The NRCG provides general oversight and direction for the fire management programs throughout the NRGA and represents the interests of the [Wildland Fire Agency Administrator \(WFAA\) leadership of the federal, state, and local government agencies represented by the NRCG member organizations](#). These WFAAs have [chartered](#) NRCG to serve the best interests of the NRGA, while respecting the [authorities](#) and limitations of individual agencies. [NRCG's charter](#) resides on the [NRCG webpage](#), along with a current list of the [NRCG Board of Directors](#).

NRCG representatives will communicate to individual WFAAs any recommendations to establish significant new policies in fire or incident management prior to implementation. Members of NRCG are delegated authority to act on behalf of their respective agencies for the purposes of planning, priority setting, and implementation of current agency policies, directions and standards for fire and incident management activities. Each agency will be bound to act within the limits of their respective statutory [authorities](#) while participating as a member of NRCG.

## GUIDING PRINCIPALS

1. Safety is a core value and primary consideration throughout all NRCG activities.
2. Wise and efficient use of funds is an essential consideration in both planning and implementing actions to meet individual and collective NRCG objectives.
3. Interagency communication, coordination, and cooperation are vital to the effective and efficient use of the area's wildland fire management resources. Actions are based on the [leaders' intent](#) as expressed by the WFAAs, which may be updated periodically.
4. Trust and integrity are inherent to the success of NRCG. Deliberations are open and transparent.
5. Differences in member organizations' responsibilities, missions, and capabilities are recognized and mutually respected.
6. Responses to change are through a deliberative process.
7. Member accountability for all actions contributes to excellence.

## **PURPOSE AND CORE VALUES**

1. NRCG's goal is to provide a cooperative forum for seeking consistency in fire and incident management within the NRCG. NRCG seeks to enhance safety, efficiency and effectiveness of interagency fire management activities and support to authorized non- fire emergencies.
2. NRCG serves the [WFAAs](#), or their representatives, and implements their direction.
3. NRCG initiates actions to improve coordination and integration of state, tribal, and federal wildland fire programs while recognizing individual agency missions.
4. NRCG provides geographic area leadership in implementation and communication of policy, standards, guidelines, and qualifications for wildland fire program management.
5. NRCG provides a forum for interagency discussion of short- and long- term wildland fire management issues and related resolution.

## **MEETING MANAGEMENT**

### General

Meeting frequency will be based on purpose and need and will be scheduled 2 times annually. Meeting dates will be selected approximately 12 months in advance and will be communicated to key NRCG committees.

Meetings may be conducted in virtual, in-person or hybrid format and will typically last two to three days, based on agenda. Meetings will begin and end mid- day, when possible, to allow for any travel.

The location of meetings will be based on a balance between four criteria:

- Convenience (easy access to airports, suitable hotel and meeting rooms within an hour's drive)
- Most economical (based on total travel costs)

The NRCG Program Support Specialist is responsible for coordinating with hosting NRCG members for arranging facilities and for contacting and confirmation of all NRCG members.

### Monthly Team Meetings

Monthly Team Meetings will be held on the third Tuesday of each month, at 1000 hours Mountain Time and shall last for 90 minutes. During the months that the Spring and Fall NRCG Meetings occur, the monthly team meeting for those months shall be cancelled. An agenda for the monthly team meeting will be compiled and distributed to all participants by the Wednesday preceding the meeting, or at least 3 days in advance. Additional special session team meetings may be added to or removed from the schedule at the discretion of the Chair and depending upon the need to address NRCG business.

### Agendas

Agenda items must originate from NRCG BOD members or Committee Chairs. Committee agenda items will be coordinated through NRCG Committee Liaisons. All agenda requests must be sent to the NRCG Program Support Specialist as soon as possible prior to scheduled meetings and conference calls. Late submissions of supporting materials may result in postponement or delay of decisions. The

Chair will make the final decision to include or exclude agenda topics based on time constraints. When submitting a topic, it will be indicated if the topic is for informational or decisional purposes. If it is a decisional topic that could potentially incur costs, then cost estimate information is required at the time of topic submission.

After compiling the agenda, the NRCG Program Support Specialist is responsible for distributing all necessary pre-reading and action item materials out to members. Accompanying materials for agenda items will be distributed by the NRCG Program Support Specialist on the Wednesday before, or as soon as possible prior to, the scheduled meeting.

The Chair may choose to allow informational items if deadlines for distribution are not met. In rare occurrences, NRCG may decide on unforeseen issues without prior notification.

### Decision Making

NRCG will follow a consensus decision making format. This will include initial topic proposal, discussion, and a final vote. The status of current and completed action items will be documented on the NRCG Action Items List that shall be retained in the historical records.

### Quorum and Absentee Members

A quorum is required for NRCG to make binding decisions. For non-financial decisions, a quorum is defined as eight NRCG Members. For financial decisions, each agency expected to contribute must agree and affirm commitment of specific funds. These quorum definitions were adopted during the Fall 2019 NRCG Meeting and were later amended during the January 2020 Monthly NRCG Meeting.

Members who are unable to attend may choose to be represented by an alternate participant to the meeting. The alternate must have a voting Delegation of Authority that allows them to make binding decisions on the member's behalf.

### Presentations

Presentations should be clear, concise, and relevant. Once the presentation is concluded and issues clarified or questions answered, only the NRCG and relevant Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) will discuss the issue and make decisions.

### Meeting Purpose

The primary purpose of any NRCG meeting is to utilize the skills of its members for decision making based on its chartered mission, purpose, functions, and guiding principles.

1. Administration and information sharing will be streamlined by email, collaboration platforms, conference calls, etc. prior to the meeting.
2. Briefing papers should include, as appropriate, an issue statement, discussion highlights, pro/cons, cost alternatives and consequences for not accepting the project or proposal. Committee decision requests must be sent to the NRCG Program Support Specialist as soon as possible prior to the scheduled meeting. The NRCG Committee Liaison will be responsible for advancing Committee recommendations. In addition, written or verbal taskings will be distributed to the Committee Chair specifically outlining expectations for follow-up work and actions from the Committee.

3. Informational materials may be distributed during meetings. The presenter is responsible for providing enough materials for all NRCG Members.

### Agency Information Dissemination

Each member is responsible for keeping their respective agency or organization informed of NRCG proceedings and decisions.

### Bi-Annual Meetings

The NRCG has two bi-annual meetings that occurs during spring and fall. The spring meeting shall occur on or around the first week of April and the fall NRCG meeting will be held on or around the first full week of November. These meetings allow the NRCG Members to share important leadership and seasonal information and participate in team building activities.

### NRCG Committee Report Outs

By establishing a standardized NRCG meeting schedule, it is the Board's expectation that the various committees and zones will meet prior to the Board and provide the Board with a written report out (see [Appendix 1](#)), that addresses accomplishments, taskings, current project status and any issues or concerns that are to be discussed with the Board. In addition, all committees and zones are always welcome to attend the meetings; however, attendance is no longer an expectation.

The NRCG Program Support Specialist will be responsible for collecting the written report outs from each committee chair. All written report outs and supporting materials should be provided to the NRCG Program Support Specialist no later than two weeks prior to the scheduled meeting. The written report outs will be included and distributed with the meeting pre-reading materials. A written version of each committee's report-out, along with any supporting documentation, will be retained in the NRCG Files.

## **RECORDS MANAGEMENT**

The NRCG Program Support Specialist will maintain all official NRCG records and will manage the [NRCG website](#). Appropriate and relevant NRCG guidance, memos, reference documents and correspondence will be posted on this site.

### Awards

To request an NRCG award, complete a NRCG Award Nomination and submit per the instructions listed on the form. Awards payment shall follow the established agency payment rotation schedule found in [Appendix 2](#).

### Meeting Documentation

Attendance at all NRCG meetings will be recorded and saved for the permanent record. Minutes of each NRCG meeting and conference call will be taken by the NRCG Program Support Specialist or designee. These minutes shall be both distributed to all NRCG BOD and posted to the [NRCG website](#) within two weeks of the conclusion of the meeting or conference call and filed in the NRCG historical files.

NRCG decisions and supporting documentation, including option selected, will be recorded, and retained in the historical files. All decision criteria used by the NRCG will be recorded and retained in the historical files. The historical files will reside in the USFS official filing structure.

All NRCG Group decisions will be documented in writing. NRCG decision documents will be on Northern Rockies Coordinating Group letterhead and signed by the NRCG Chair. NRCG decision documents will be distributed to the involved agency heads, NRCG committee chairs, incident commanders or other individuals responsible for implementation through electronic mail or be made available on the [NRCG website](#).

### Informational Requests

Requests for copies of sensitive information must be received in writing. The request should be specific as to the topic and dates of the information requested. Information requested under Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) or individual states freedom of information statutes will follow the requirements of those acts/statutes.

### Legal Issues

Issues, inquiries, accusations, or threats; either implied or real; shall be documented and retained in the historical records. Agency Administrators will be informed of potential legal implications. Each NRCG participatory member will be responsible for informing or seeking counsel from their agency's legal departments. NRCG will determine if the issues are agency specific or NRCG focused. If it is agency specific, the issue will be deferred to the agency for resolution. If NRCG focused, the issue will be taken up by NRCG with input from member agency counsel. NRCG will develop a recommendation consistent with legal counsel advice and move the recommendation to the Agency Administrators. All discussion notes, correspondence, decision tools, recommendations and actions will be kept in an issue specific folder in the historical files.

### Historical Files

All NRCG records will be maintained by the NRCG Program Support Specialist according to the approved USFS Records Maintenance Program. Original issue papers and NRCG decisions will be filed electronically in the NRCG files.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### Chairperson

A Chairperson will be chosen to serve a two-year term. A Vice-Chair will be the representative from the next agency in rotation and will assume the chair position as it becomes vacant. Terms will be based on calendar year. Interim vacancies will cause the rotation of the Chair and Vice-Chair to move accordingly. Adjustments to the rotation can be made to benefit NRCG leadership, i.e. to allow new members to gain situational awareness, accommodate impending retirement, etc. NRCG will follow the Chair Rotation identified in [Appendix 3](#).

The Chairperson will also preside over all NRCG meetings and conference calls. Additionally, they will sign appropriate NRCG documents and correspondence representing all member agencies. The Chair



will represent NRCG at other meeting and events as appropriate. When the Chair is absent, the Vice-Chair shall assume the full authority and responsibility of the Chair.

### Vice-Chair

In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair is responsible for serving as Chair and for performing all delegated duties. The Vice-Chair will also attend meetings and other events that the Chair is unable to attend.

### Members

Members are expected to actively participate in NRCG, including serving as liaisons to NRCG committees and dispatch zones. Members represent their own agency's interests and are expected to be informed on agency issues and concerns. Each member shall have a Delegation of Authority in place and shall designate alternates who also possess delegated voting authority.

Additional non-decision-making subject matter experts may also be asked to participate on an as-needed basis. Such invitations must be coordinated through the appropriate delegated NRCG representative(s), the Chair and the NRCG Program Support Specialist.

### Program Support Specialist

The NRCG Program Support Specialist ensures coordination, logistical and business matters. These responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Maintaining the [NRCG website](#)
- Arranging meetings
- Seeking agenda items, setting the agenda, and distributing all agendas, pre-reading materials and action items listings
- Gathering, organizing, and distributing materials and references for meetings
- Facilitating the meetings and/or appointing a facilitator
- Managing conference calls
- Tracking action items
- Recording and distributing NRCG notes
- Providing general administrative support and historical record-keeping
- Ensuring efficient and timely communications to NRCG BOD, committees, zones and ICs.
- Responding to emails regarding NRCG business.
- Preserving and organizing emails
- Ensuring correspondence is on NRCG 508 compliant letterhead and preparing same for e-Signature.
- Maintaining action items listing
- Informing and prompting NRCG, Committee members, and others regarding agenda items and due dates
- Formulating and maintaining contact lists

### Committee Liaisons

The Chair of NRCG will appoint a liaison for each of the established Committees. Liaisons are expected to attend all committee meetings and/or conference calls and arrange for an alternate NRCG representative, whenever necessary. The role of the Liaison is to:

- Receive taskings for the committee from the NRCG Chair
- Deliver taskings to the committee.
- Provide assistance to the committee to complete taskings or for NRCG reviews.
- Receive and review correspondence between NRCG and the committee.
- Provide advice to the committee for projects and strategic planning.
- Keep the committee informed of NRCG deliberations and direction.
- Provide regular updates on committee business and progress on taskings to NRCG during monthly meetings.

A list of [NRCG Committees and Zone Liaisons](#) is included on the [NRCG webpage](#).

### Zone Liaisons

The Chair of NRCG will appoint a liaison for each Northern Rockies Zone. Liaisons are expected to make regular contact with their Zone and attend at least one zone board meeting per year. The role of the Liaison is to:

- Represent NRCG during zone meetings and conference calls and provide a area- wide and NRCG perspective on issues of interest
- Provide a link to NRCG for messages and questions to and from the zone
- Provide assistance to the zone to gather information
- Provide regular updates on zone business and any existing issues to NRCG during monthly meetings.

A list of [NRCG Committees and Zone Liaisons](#) is included on the [NRCG webpage](#).

### Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (MAC)

The purpose of the MAC group is to prioritize incident and resource use during periods of high incident frequency (typically Preparedness Levels 4 - 5). Each member agency will be represented on the Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (MAC) through a delegation of authority from their agency administrator. Although MAC group members can be NRCG members, business items usually addressed by NRCG will not typically be handled by the MAC. The MAC shall follow the [Northern Rockies Multi-Agency Coordinating Group Operating Handbook](#) that is found on the [NRCG webpage](#).

## **PERSONEL MANAGEMENT**

### Awards and Criteria

NRCG recognizes individuals and/or groups for significant contributions to the betterment of interagency fire management efforts in the NRA through the presentation of awards. All nominations should be submitted by using the [form](#) found on the [NRCG webpage](#).

### CIM/IMT Management and Evaluation

Northern Rockies Geographic Area (NRGA) hosts multiple highly skilled and reliable Complex Incident Management Teams (CIMTs) and Type 3 IMTs to meet member agency fire management objectives within the NRA and to assist with National efforts outside the NRGA. Team performance feedback is essential to this process and will be monitored by NRCG. Teams must receive a Performance

Appraisal from the hosting agency on each assignment. This Performance Appraisal must be forwarded to NRCG via the IMT Coordinator located at the Northern Rockies Coordination Center (NRCC). NRCG will review Performance Appraisals and take action to correct deficiencies if/when necessary. NRCG will also make every effort to visit and evaluate each IMT while they are deployed in the field. The main purpose of this evaluation is to help ensure personal contact and maintain lines of communication and coordination. All Northern Rockies IMTs will adhere to the current [Incident Management Team Plan](#) (a.k.a, NR IMT Standard Operating Guide) located on the [NRCC website](#).

Incoming teams from outside of the NRA will be provided with both the [Geographic Area Briefing](#) and the [Incident Management Team Expectations – Leader’s Intent](#), which are both located on the [NRCG webpage](#). IMTs from other Geographic Areas will follow the same operating procedures as outlined above for the NRA IMTs.

## Personal Conduct and Disciplinary Issues

### Team Members

NRCG expects the highest standards of professionalism and leadership within its IMTs.

NRCG will provide an [Incident Management Team Expectations – Leader’s Intent](#), which will be located on the [NRCG webpage](#). This requires Incident Commanders and team members to be ethical and promote, by their duty- based conduct, the Team’s values and mission. NRCG deems that attaining this standard means each member meeting their employing agency’s ethics and conduct standards at all times on an incident assignment. If any member fails to do so while on duty, then on review of evidence regarding any concern deemed in its discretion to warrant fact-finding, NRCG will promptly refer the matter and all associated evidence to the lead employing unit and support that entity’s investigatory procedures. At all times regarding any pertinent conduct issue, NRCG will defer to the member’s employing unit, which NRCG expressly recognizes as the primary, ultimate-recourse disciplinarian for all employees reporting thereto. The primacy of this entity’s disciplinary authority is both recognized and cited by NRCG as the “lead employing unit.”

### NRCG Members

NRCG members are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner during deliberative discussions and as they interact in public settings. Members are expected to respectfully express opinions on different issues based upon their professional knowledge and the interests of the agency they represent. However, biased opinions concerning issues which may affect the personal interests of the member are considered unprofessional and may conflict with the best interests of the interagency fire community (Conflict of Interest). Therefore, members are expected to abstain or recuse themselves from any issue in which they have a Conflict of Interest.

This includes, but is not limited to, participating in an investigation or deliberation, establishment of an adverse policy, and/or drafting of corrective action regarding:

- any group of which they are a member, including NRA Incident Management Teams
- their personal fire qualifications or eligibility to participate in an activity.
- the qualifications, eligibility, or participation of any person with whom they have a close personal relationship.

Members who do not remove themselves from these situations may be required to do so by consensus of the NRCG membership.

### Code of Ethics

NRCG members are held to a high standard. The following code of ethics should be applied to all NRCG members:

1. Recognize that we serve in a position of public trust that imposes responsibility to use publicly owned resources effectively and judiciously.
2. Do not use a public position to obtain advantages or favors for friends, family, personal business ventures or ourselves.
3. Use information gained from our positions only for the benefit of those we are entrusted to serve.
4. Conduct our personal affairs in such a manner that we cannot be improperly influenced in the performance of our duties.
5. Avoid situations whereby our decisions or influence may have an impact on personal financial interests.
6. Seek no favor and accept no form of personal reward for influence or official action.
7. Engage in no outside employment or professional activities that may impair, or appear to impair, our primary responsibilities as fire officials.
8. Comply with agency regulations, local laws and campaign rules when supporting political candidates and engaging in political activities.
9. Handle all personnel matters on the basis of merit.
10. Carry out policies established by elected officials and policy makers to the best of our ability.
11. Refrain from financial investments or business that conflict with or are enhanced by our official position.
12. Refrain from endorsing commercial products for personal gain through quotations, use of photographs or testimonials.
13. Conduct training at the local level to inform and educate local personnel about ethical conduct and policies and procedures.

## **NRCG COMMON BUSINESS TASKS**

### Ratifying Team Roster Recommendations

Incident Commanders for will be selected as outlined in the [NRCG Incident Commander Path Process](#). Roster selections will be carried out per the [Incident Management Team Plan](#) (a.k.a NR IMT Standard Operating Guide) located on the [NRCC website](#).

### Ratifying Mobilization Guides

An approved draft will be submitted to NRCG for final review on or around the April monthly meeting. A vote to approve will be conducted on or around the May meeting.

### Approving Committee Charters

Each committee will have a charter approved by the NRCG. Committees are required to review charters and update as needed. Amendments to charters will be submitted to the NRCG Program Support Specialist and forwarded to NRCG for consideration. The NRCG Program Support Specialist

will acknowledge receipt of the charter review in writing or via email to the committee chair and inform when the charter will be heard. NRCG will review and discuss the charter and make decisions. Additional information or clarification of the charter needed by NRCG to reach consensus will be transmitted to the committee chair via email. Any delays caused by obtaining additional information will be transmitted to the committee chair. Final decisions by NRCG will be transmitted to the committee chair via email. The NRCG Program Support Specialist will file all documentation related to the charter and actions taken in the NRCG historical files.

### Approving Sub-committees

A sub-committee may be approved by NRCG. Requests for the establishment of a sub-committee will come from the chair of the committee requesting the establishment to the NRCG Program Specialist. The request should contain rationale for the need and benefit of the establishment of a sub-committee. Sub-committees may include subject matter experts and specialists. Requests shall be submitted to the NRCG Program Specialist as soon as possible prior to a NRCG meeting or scheduled conference call. The NRCG Program Specialist will acknowledge receipt of the request via email to the committee chair and inform when the request will be heard. NRCG will review and discuss the request and make decisions. Additional information or clarification of the request needed by NRCG to reach consensus will be transmitted to the committee chair via email. Any delays caused by obtaining additional information will be transmitted to the committee chair. Final decisions by NRCG will be transmitted to the committee chair via email. The NRCG Program Specialist will file all documentation related to the requests and actions taken in the NRCG historical files.

### Dissolving Committees and Task Groups

Committee and task group dissolution may be deemed necessary at any time and may originate with NRCG or the committee/task group itself. Some reasons for dissolution may include, but are not limited to:

- Completion of assigned task or project.
- Lack of additional projects or taskings that warrant continuation of the group.
- Change in policy or direction that makes the group obsolete.

If NRCG reaches consensus that a committee should be dissolved, the NRCG Chair will be responsible for the decision to the committee/task group chair explaining the rationale for the decision.

If a committee or task group reaches consensus that it should dissolve, the decision and rationale should be presented to NRCG in the form of an issue paper. The issue paper will be reviewed and discussed by NRCG at the earliest possible time, which will typically be during its next scheduled conference call or meeting. A final decision will be made and communicated to the committee/task group chair.

### Communicating with Executives

Each NRCG member is expected to brief their respective Agency Administrator (agency executive) regarding any and all pertinent and relevant information in a timely manner. Each NRCG member is expected to communicate urgent issues to their respective agency executive. NRCG will conduct reviews of the NRCG Charter and revise as needed. The Charter will be submitted to the WFAA's for approval and signature. Any issues not resolved by NRCG through consensus will be elevated to the

WFAA's by the Chair of NRCG. NRCG will encourage WFAA participation in all NRCG functions. Written communications with WFAA's will be shared with all NRCG members and filed in the NRCG historical files.

## **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

### Cost Share for NRCC/NRTC operations

#### Funding of Projects

Only projects that are mutually beneficial and sanctioned will be considered for funding by way of an interagency and/or cost share agreement. The NRCG budget is approved within the NRCG Financial Plan. Any activities approved will be added to the plan and voted on by the members. These activities funded will be for reasons of economic efficiency and multiplier effect and will not bypass agency program and development processes or authorities. All activities proposed for funding by NRCG should submit the following information:

1. Project Proposal: Name of Project
2. Project Goal
3. Description of problem to be addressed.
4. Description of quantitative outcome (measures of success)
5. Cost Analysis
6. Description of current status/situation
7. Description of existing constraints (e.g., must interface with payroll system)
8. Description of the relative priority of project (i.e., what are the consequences of not doing the project?)
9. Project duration and relative size (e.g., one month; small, easy fix)
10. Description of alternative strategies, pros/cons, and estimated life cycle cost
11. Description of resource availability (i.e., who will be responsible for doing the work?)
12. Description of funding alternatives (i.e., who else can fund this project? Why should NRCG assume this responsibility?)

## **INVESTIGATIONS, REVIEWS, AND INCIDENT CLOSE OUTS**

Any NRCG member may be requested to serve as the NRCG representative on any fire-related investigation or review. Several types of reviews are discussed below.

#### **After Action Reviews (AAR)**

ICs may meet with the NRCG to conduct a post-season After Action Review each fall to discuss and identify issues for management action.

#### **Fire and Aviation Safety Team (FAST) Reviews**

FAST Reviews will be initiated during high fire activity by accessing policy, rules, regulations, and management oversight relating to operational issues. Mobilization of a FAST team will follow procedures in the NRA Mobilization Guide.

#### **Incident Closeouts**

NRCG members will represent the Northern Rockies Geographic Area at incident closeouts and complete the [Incident Management Team Close Out form](#) to ensure quality team performance and communicate any issues to the NRCG chair.

### **Incident Management Review Reports**

NRCG will ensure personal contact and maintain lines of communication and coordination with each Northern Rockies IMT.

### Accreditation

The NR CG will use accreditation guidelines outlined by the NWCG. Specific documents to reference are the Field Manger’s Course Guide and PMS 310-1.

### Issue Papers

#### Format and Purpose

All issues shall be submitted in standard, agency recognized briefing and white paper formats.

#### Process Procedures

All issue papers should be submitted to the NRCG Program Specialist as soon as possible prior to a scheduled meeting or conference call. The NRCG Program Specialist will acknowledge receipt of the issue paper via email to the submitter and inform when the issue will be heard. Urgent or sensitive issues submitted to NRCG will be brought to the attention of the NRCG Chair. The Chair will decide whether to call a special meeting or hold the issue for the next regularly scheduled meeting.

Each issue paper will be reviewed by all NRCG members, and decisions will be made. Submitting parties may be invited, at the discretion of the Chair, to present their issue paper at the meeting or conference call.

#### Resolution of Issue Papers

Action will be taken by NRCG on all issue papers submitted. Decisions will be made and clearly communicated back to the submitter.

## **COMMITTEES**

### Approved Committees

A list of current NRCG Committees, their [Liaisons](#) and Charters can be found on the [NRCG webpage](#).

### Committee Membership

The NRCG Committees will be comprised of representatives and Subject Matter Experts (SME’s) from member agencies.

### Common Tasks

Interagency Standing Committees are established through NRCG direction and have dedicated charters. Issues and concerns of mutual interest will be tasked to the appropriate committee by the

NRCG with specific instructions by correspondence from the Chair, or by instruction from the Committee Liaison.

### Reporting and Tracking of Tasks

Taskings will be documented via the NRCG Action Item Log and sent to the respective standing committee Chairperson. Committees can be requested to present updates via the NRCG agenda either at NRCG meetings and /or conference calls for information sharing, discussion and decisions. Written Report outs will be expected to be received at the next NRCG Spring or Fall meeting and /or conference call from the date of requested completion, unless the Liaison is notified of a need for an extension of time, at which point the Liaison will notify both the NRCG Chairperson and the NRCG Program Specialist.

### Committee Minutes

Minutes of meetings, as per each respective charter, will be taken and distributed to Committee members, the NRCG Program Specialist, and posted to the appropriate committee page on the [NRCG webpage](#).

### Charters

Committee and Advisory Group Charters will follow standard formats and be posted to the appropriate committee page on the [NRCG webpage](#).

### Task Groups

NRCG or NRCG Committees may appoint Task Groups. Task Groups are formed when a specific task is needed that requires SME's. The general purpose of Task Groups is to examine a specific problem or issue and return with a report and recommendations for resolving or addressing the problem or issue. Task Groups will produce a statement of work that outlines the specific products expected, with target dates. A leader will be appointed for each Task Group. Personnel from outside members of the NRCG or NRCG Standing Committees may be appointed to Task Groups. A Task Group shall sunset upon completion of its assignment. Tasking, reporting, tracking and minutes shall comply with the same requirements of standing committees.

### Expectations of the Standing Committees and Task Groups

1. All committees and task groups will function effectively, efficiently and within the scope of their respective approved charter or tasking.
2. Each Committee or Task Group Chair will be responsible for assuring the minutes of the Committee meetings are recorded and sent to the NRCG Program Specialist for webpage posting.
3. The Chair or representative will submit a written report out from the Committee outlining issues, work accomplished and status of assigned tasks.
4. Committees have the authority to appoint task groups to assist with issues within the Committee.
5. Committees and Task Groups are not allowed to task each other. If a committee or Task Group feels a task is beyond its scope of responsibility the task will go back to the NRCG and the NRCG will deal with it appropriately.
6. Committees and Task Groups will actively address tasks submitted by NRCG but should not



hesitate to tell the NRCG if they feel unable to complete the task for whatever documented reason.

7. Committees and Task Groups will keep NRCG apprised of all members.
8. The Committee charter will be reviewed as needed by each Committee chair and respective Liaison. Any changes or additions to a committee charter will be proposed, thru the Liaison, to NRCG for consideration and approval.

### Committee Liaisons

A NRCG Liaison will represent NRCG during Committee meetings and other correspondence and serve as the main communication link between NRCG and the respective committee. A [NRCG Committee Liaisons listing](#) can be found on the [NRCG Website](#).

## **SIGNATURES - NRCG BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Rich Cowger – NRCG, Chair**

**Josh Harvey – IDL**

**Bryce Rogers – NRCG Vice-Chair**

**Matthew Hall – MT, DNRC**

**Heath Estey – BIA, Great Plains Region**

**Jake Ganieany – MT DES**

**Tate Fischer – FWS, Regions 5 & 7**

**Ryan Melin – ND Forest Service**

**Aaron Thompson – BLM, Montana/Dakotas**

**Steve Holton – MT Sheriffs & Peace Officers Association**

**Darron Williams – BIA, Northwest Region**

**Paul Cerda – NPS**

**Patrick Lonergan – Montana County Fire Wardens Association**

**Craig Glazier – USFS**

**Dennis Strange – BLM, Idaho**

# APPENDIX 1 – NRCG COMMITTEE REPORT OUT TEMPLATE

(Insert Committee/Zone/Area Name) | Report Out  
(Insert Year & Season) NRCG Meeting

(NRCG Meeting Date Month, Day, Year)

---

**(INSERT COMMITTEE, ZONE OR AREA NAME)**

**Accomplishments:**

- 

**Current Project Status:**

- 

**Status of Taskings:**

- 

**Questions or Concerns to be discussed with the Board:**

-

## APPENDIX 2 – NRCG AWARDS AGENCY PAYMENT ROTATION

# NRCG Recognition Awards

### Payment Agencies Rotation

2022	BLM/DNRC
2023	Montana State Fire Chiefs / Sheriffs and Peace Officers Officer's
2024	U.S. Forest Service / Montana Disaster and Emergency Services
2025	Idaho Department of Lands / Bureau of Indian Affairs
2026	National Park Service / County Fire Wardens
2027	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service / North Dakota Forest Service

## **APPENDIX 3 - NRCG CHAIR/VICE-CHAIR ROTATION SCHEDULE**

- Fire Chief's Association\*
- Bureau of Indian Affairs – Rocky Mountain Region\*\*
- North Dakota Forest Service
- National Park Service
- Sheriffs and Peace Officers Association
- Bureau of Indian Affairs – Pacific Northwest Region
- State Disaster and Emergency Services Division
- U.S. Forest Service
- Fire Warden's Association
- Bureau of Land Management
- Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
- Idaho Department of Lands
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

2023-2024:

\* Chair – Fire Chief's Association

\*\* Vice Chair – BIA Rocky Mountain Region

## **APPENDIX 4 - IMT MEETING FACILITY PAYMENT ROTATION**

### Payment Agencies Rotation

- 2023 Bureau of Land Management
- 2024 Montana Disaster and Emergency Services
- 2025 National Park Service
- 2026 Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
- 2027 U.S. Forest Service
- 2028 Bureau of Indian Affairs
- 2029 Idaho Department of Lands