

New Mexico Interagency Coordinating Group Meeting

Nov. 14, 2011 and Dec. 13, 2011 (Combined) – Santa Fe, NM (These meeting were not a traditional NMICG meeting, but rather was dedicated to finding solutions between the agency partners related to wildland fire reporting requirements and protect public health in the proposed NM’s SMP rule revision.)

Approved Meeting Minutes -

Participants

Jeff Hickerson, NPS (Chair); Emily Irwin, FS; Lisa Bye, BLM; Jason Riggins, FWS, Trent Botkin, NM State Forestry; Josh Hall, FS Air & Water Quality; and Rita Bates, NM Air Quality Bureau. Susanna Ehlers, FS Air Quality joined via conference call. Not everyone participated in both events.

Action Items *(specific to this meeting)*

Topic	Action Needed	Responsibility	Date
NM Smoke Management Rule Revision	▪ Conduct additional workload analysis/thresholds for IMT assignments and fire size.	▪ Hall	▪ Dec. 1
	▪ Draft Wildland Fire Language in the Rule	▪ Rita Bates	▪ Dec. 13
	▪ Contact SMP Revision Working Team for a potential meeting early in 2012.	▪ Rita Bates	▪ Jan. 5
	▪ Draft a definition for IMT	▪ Hickerson	▪ Jan. 15

The following is a summarization of the discussion.

New Mexico Smoke Management Plan Revision, Wildfire Requirements – Hall/ALL

Recognizing some agencies might not be able to comply with the proposed wildfire requirements in the proposed SMP Revision documents, Josh presented a workload analysis based on fires by size, fires managed by incident management teams (IMT3, IMT2, and IMT1), and by fuel type. Overall the data analysis indicated that the number of large fires (> 100 acres) is increasing each year as is the total number of acres consumed per year.

Rita emphasized the overall need and purpose (intent) of the Smoke Management Program is to protect health of New Mexicans from the impacts of smoke from fires. She also encouraged the Group to read Chapter 1 of the current SMP rule to refresh ourselves.

The Group discussed the various options presented in Josh’s analysis as well as explored some others. The Group quickly recognized that there is no one perfect criteria or measurer that will cover all wildland fire scenarios that could pose a public health hazard from smoke. Additionally, the Group also had fears of making the rule too complicated with multiple conditions that no one would understand or comply with it. Thus amongst the Group, we started focusing on the basic criteria for ordering an organized Incident Management Team (overall complexity, proximity to values at risk and communities, duration, as well as multiple or complex fuel types, etc.) as perhaps the best universal indicator for the need for tracking emissions and communicating to the public.

In that light, Rita asked Josh to conduct some additional analysis focusing on acreages and Incident Management Teams. She also volunteered to draft new wildland fire reporting language based on our discussion as well as the new requested analysis. Additionally the Group asked Rita to consider including some general language encouraging agencies managing multiple events and/or long duration fires to initiate communications with the Air Quality Bureau early in the process (rather than waiting until it meets an acreage threshold, or there is a “problem” or “issue,” etc.).