

Arizona Interagency Coordinating Group

Meeting Notes: October 25, 2007

Members in attendance were: Leon Ben, Jr. (BIA), Jeff Hickerson (NPS), Mark Fitch (FS), Mike Behrens (BLM), Butch Wilson (FWS), David Behrens (AZ State), Roy Hall (FS)

Guests in attendance were: Bob Lineback (NPS), Sherry Smith (FS), Steve Campbell (Firewise Committee), John Philbin (BIA), Keith Burnette (BIA)

Intro of new members and update of membership list

Jeff Hickerson will be replacing Bob Lineback on AICG. Bob will remain as an alternate for Jeff.

Smoke update from Mark Fitch

Mark handed out a summary of several graphs from calendar year 2006. Graphs covered request summary, acres treated, emissions summary, and emission reductions technique (2005 vs. 2006). Emission reductions technique (ERT) for 2006 was 25%. Not sure of ERT goal for 2007. ERT goal for 2008 is 25%.

The Group felt that the ERT figures were not really representing what was happening on the ground. Many of the agencies are using techniques other than prescribed burning to achieve fuels management goals. It was agreed all federal agencies will provide final end of year reports from NFPORS to Mark and Ron.

Nancy Rona, ADEQ Air Director, is approving burn requests based on recommendations from Mark and Ron Sherron.

Smoke complaints are still being communicated to Mark and Ron. Mark noted many of the complaints are from new Arizona residents. Public education efforts need to be re-evaluated and enhanced. Need to look at non-traditional partners such as the Chamber of Commerce and Real Estate Commission.

There is a national group headed up by Pete Lahm that will look into exceptional and national events. States can flag activities that exceed PM 2.5 & 10. This would include activities such as prescribed fire and fire use. A site on the internet would be developed as a repository sort of like a lessons learned center for smoke management.

Annual Operating Plan

The FY08 Annual Operating Plan was approved by Jonathan Lee, Chair, on April 11, 2007. All contacts listed in the Interagency Agreement will be listed on the FY09 Annual Operating Plan. This will eliminate the need to annually modify the Interagency Agreement.

FY08 Smoke Funds Transfers – Sherry Smith

For FY08 the Fish & Wildlife Service funding is in to the Forest Service. The NPS and BLM are still working on moving their funds over. Sherry is still waiting for some FS Forests to provide their job codes.

There is an issue with Mark working in a non-Forest Service facility. Issue will be worked out within the Forest Service. Emily Irwin will be the Southwest Region contact. Forest Service may look to agency partners for support letters.

Firewise Committee Update – Steve Campbell and Cliff Pearlberg

Steve Campbell is the new Chair for the committee. There will be a workshop in Phoenix next April. The workshop will focus on the wildfire recovery on private property after the Aspen and Rodeo/Chediski Fires.

Steve handed out the Draft Firewise Vision Statement. Comments are due at the next AICG meeting.

Cliff is pursuing new NFPA course materials that replace the old P-151 course.

Courses being offered by the Firewise Committee are having low attendance by fire departments.

Arizona fire restrictions/closure coordination & lessons learned from 2007 fire season– Jim Payne

Southeast and Northern Arizona coordinated well this season. Central West Zone had a few problems. The media were tuned in to fire restrictions. The SWCC website was used to assist in fire restriction coordination. However, still need more coordination when restrictions are going to be implemented. At a minimum, possibly schedule weekly conference calls to enhance coordination.

There is a need to develop a restrictions/closures group with all interagency participation. The group would be a sub-committee of AICG.

Decision – a sub-committee will be developed to address restrictions/closures. A draft charter will be developed and presented at the next AICG meeting. Agency Representatives – Jim Payne (Forest Service), Cliff Pearlberg (AZ State), Rod Lopez (FWS), Michelle Fidler (NPS), Carlos Nosie, Jr. (BIA).

****Kelly Castillo will get the first meeting together to draft charter.****

Update on Arizona Communities at Risk List

The BLM of Arizona submitted a list of 33 new communities to be considered for the list. The AICG approved the new communities to be added to the list. The risk assessment criterion list (rating system) will need to be revisited and modified as necessary. The Communities at Risk List will also need to be looked at to determine if communities still qualify for the list.

Zone Fuels Collaborative Charters & Prioritization Lists

AICG is still gathering up all zone charters as directed by the memo from Southwest Coordinating Group (November 22, 2005). AICG Chair will contact Zone chairs for the FY08 list of projects and will forward to Glenn Beuttner, AZ State.

Appropriate Management Response (AMR) Talking Point Discussion

Bill Van Bruggen will take lead and develop draft communications plan which includes talking points for next AICG meeting. Bill will work with Michelle Fidler, NPS.

Next AICG Meeting

January 22, 2008, 10:30 AM MST at ADEQ Room C-145.