

Arizona Interagency Coordinating Group Meeting

September 26, 2008 - Phoenix, AZ

Attendance

AICG members - Jeff Hickerson, NPS (Chair); Rob Lopez, FWS (for Butch Wilson); David Behrens, AZ State; Clay Templin, FS; Mark Fitch, FS-Smoke Coordinator; John Philbin, BIA (for Leon Ben, Jr.); and Kelly Castillo, BLM*.

* Kelly Castillo replaces Helen Graham as the AZ BLM representative.

Non-members (task group representatives/other) - Roy Hall, R-3 FS; Sherry Smith, FS (Agreements Specialist); Jim Payne, FS (Closure/Restrictions Task Group); Glen Buettner, AZ State (GIS and CAR list), and Christine Buda (Recorder).

Review and Approval of the April 16, 2008 AICG Meeting Notes

The April 16, 2008 meeting notes were unanimously approved as distributed, and will be posted on the Committee's website by Jeff.

AICG Action Items

The following is the updated AICG Action Item and Assignment List. *New Action Items are in red.* Completed Action Items have been removed.

Topic	Action Needed	Responsibility	Date
AICG Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Check SWCG website at see if charters, AICG member's list, and essential documents are up to date. If not, contact Jay Ellington. ▪ Coordinate meetings and prepares agenda. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hickerson 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ongoing
AZ Smoke Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Follow up with the Regional Officer to see if FS could pay the indirect fees. ▪ Reply to FS on the updated FY09 AOP. ▪ Replace the Smoke Coordinator's fax computer (BLM will try to provide, if not BIA and then the NPS will try). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hickerson ▪ Templin ▪ ALL (Budget) ▪ Castillo/Philbin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ongoing ▪ 10/3/2008 ▪ 10/31/2008 ▪ ASAP
WF Emissions Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prepare a draft briefing paper for ICs and SWCC to report acres and fuels accurately on submitted 209s (to help improve WF emissions tracking). ▪ Distribute and communicate WF emissions briefing paper (see above). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fitch/Sharron ▪ Hickerson 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1/21/2009 ▪ April 2009
AZ Interagency Smoke Management Agreement and AOP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Update FY09 AOP (include work plan) ▪ The AZ Interagency Smoke Management Program Agreement expires Sept. 2010 – seek efficiencies for a new Interagency Agreement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Templin/Smith ▪ Smith/ALL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ASAP ▪ ongoing
Firewise Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Charter submit and AICG to approve ▪ Finalize Vision Statement and Work Plan ▪ Provide AICG list of members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Behrens ▪ Campbell ▪ Campbell 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fall 2008
Zone Fuel Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Need FY09 Prioritization Fuels List from each zone ▪ Need SEZ Charter – post on SWCG website ▪ Update list of Zone Chairs – post on SWCG website ▪ National MOU status 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All/AICG Zone Reps ▪ SEZ Zone Chair ▪ All/AICG Zone Reps ▪ Behrens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fall 2008 ▪ 10/1/08 ▪ ASAP ▪ Ongoing
Closure/Restrictions Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide AICG list of members. ▪ Recommend to SWCG that the 2008 trail period for the Fire Restrictions website was successful and to continue to fund and support in 2009. ▪ Provide feedback on the AZfireinfo.com website/tool box to Glen Buettner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Castillo ▪ Ben/Hickerson ▪ ALL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fall 2008 ▪ Fall 2008 ▪ ALL
AZ CAR List	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review and update annually <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prepare 2009 announcement to request communities to be added to the CAR list. ▪ Track and report status of CWPP and CWPP equivalent (BIA/NPS) to Glen Buettner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ALL ▪ Buettner ▪ ALL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ongoing ▪ 1/21/2009 ▪ Ongoing
AZ Statewide Strategy Scorecard Matrix	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Email the web link and pdf files to each ACG member. ▪ Provide feedback to Glen Buettner on the scorecard elements and rating criteria. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Buettner ▪ ALL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ASAP ▪ 11/12/2008

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The following is a summarization of discussions for each existing issue or topic.

ADEQ Smoke Management Program Update -- Mark Fitch

Agencies are reporting their prescribed fire accomplishments better this year. The online reporting system is still in the works and is not ready yet. A new burn plan (smoke reporting) form is available; this will provide improved fuels assessments for calculating smoke emissions as well as help register emission techniques.

ADEQ is also tracking wildland fire (WF) emissions. Tracking WF smoke emissions is very important, and we all need accurately report our data. This will also help show the differences between WF and prescribed fire (RX) smoke emissions. Currently, Mark and Ron are using the fuels data submitted on 209's to calculate WF emissions. It was noted that IMTs are more likely to focus on values at risk than fuels data in their 209 reporting. It was also noted that 209 data is typically 24-48 hours out of date. Satellite imaging is starting to be tested on WFs, although the calculated emissions are only rough estimates at this time.

There are two recent changes to the EPA air quality standards. PM2.5 is decreasing from 65 to 35; Ozone rating is decreasing from 80 ppb to 75 ppb. Santa Cruz County is a new PM2.5 non-attainment area, and will affect the Coronado NF. The Ozone non-attainment maps are expected in March 2009; the Tonto NF may be affected. It was noted that if the Ozone levels are further decreased below 70 ppb three-quarters of the state will be Ozone non-attainment. Mark will keep abreast of Ozone; potential consequences are if prescribed fires are reduced then wildland fires will be bigger.

Currently the Exceptional Events Rule is not applying to WFs (cannot prove the fire was the sole contributor). When large WF events happen, we need to invite the EPA and we need excellent record keeping and documentation.

FY09 AZ Smoke Management Annual Operating Plan – Clay Templin/Sherry Smith

The FS national office is enforcing an 8% administrative fee for indirect costs to each agency contribution for the shared interagency smoke management positions. The fee is not something that can be waived (not recovered) under the Economy Act. The Economy Act is the authority that allows the FS to collect. An updated AOP was distributed reflecting the added charges. The Forest Service policy is enforcing the law and cannot be waived or changed. Any concerns to this change should be routed through Sherry, who will work with Susan McDonnell, Grants and Agreements Specialist in the regional office in Albuquerque.

AICG Charter & AZ Master Agreement Update – Jeff Hickerson

The AICG Charter is signed and approved. A new statewide Master Agreement is currently under development. All interested parties met earlier this week and the draft version should be made available for review in October.

Zone Fuels Collaborative and Prioritization Lists – All

There has been very little response from the zones for their fuels prioritization lists. To help facilitate the data exchange and to encourage more interaction with AICG, the following AICG members have been identified as the point of contact for each zone:

- Central West Zone – Leon Ben, Jr.
- Northern Arizona Area – Jeff Hickerson
- Southeast Zone – Butch Wilson
- White Mountain Zone – Clay Templin

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Glen Buettner will continue to be the keeper of the data.

Update on Arizona Communities at Risk List – Glen Buettner

No new changes to the last approved CAR list. Planning for another data call in February-March 2009; any new submittals will be reviewed during the AICG's spring meeting.

AZ Statewide Strategy Scorecard Briefing – Glen Buettner

In June 2007 the AZ governor along with her Forest Health Council finalized the *Statewide Strategy for Restoring Arizona's Forests* (copies of the Executive Summary were distributed). The *Statewide Strategy* includes several recommendations which directly involve AICG agencies, to include developing a 20-year scorecard plan that will effectively measure forest restoration progress. The Council has prepared a draft data matrix scorecard (also handed out) and is seeking our input, as much of the data source for the scorecards will come through agency/organizational reporting. The Council will be finalizing the scorecard in January-February 2009. Each agency should review the *draft* and provide feedback directly back to Glen.

AMR Talking Points (Final) – Clay Templin

The 2008 AMR response fact sheet originated from this Committee. It may need to be updated if the national WF policy changes this winter.

Closures/Restrictions Sub-Committee Update – Kelly Castillo/Jim Payne

Weekly conference calls were successful; although better PIO coordination is needed amongst the agencies. The 2008 trial for the fire restriction was a great success (well received by FS, BLM, SWCC, as well as effectively used by the media). AICG recommends SWCC to continue to fund and support the restrictions website. It was also noted it is very important to keep the AZfireinfo.com website active, although there is no longer a web manager for it.

International US-Mexico Agreement and Operations Plans – Kelly Castillo

Per a national agreement with Mexico, each bordering zone/agencies needs an operating plan with Mexico to coordinate mutual fire assistance/response. There were several (Mexico/US border fires this past year in AZ. Central West Zone has a completed AOP that can be a template for other Zones.

Next Meeting/ Adjournment

The next meeting will take place on January 21, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. The room location will be announced at a later time.

Upcoming Conferences

- AFE Pacific Coast Fire Ecology Conference
San Diego, CA - Dec. 1-5, 2008
- Wildfire and Invasives in American Deserts Symposium, <http://rangelands.org/deserts/>
Reno, NV - Dec. 9-11, 2008
- Tall timbers Fire Ecology Conference, <http://talltimbers.org/FEconference/>
Tallahassee, FL – Jan. 11-15, 2009
- Effective Communication for Smoke Management in a Changing Air Quality Environment, http://www.cnr.udaho.edu/wildlandfire/regional_workshop.htm
Omaha, NE - Feb. 24-26, 2009
- 10th Wildland Fire Safety Summit, <http://www.iawfonline.org/>
Phoenix, AZ - April 28-30, 2009