

Arizona Interagency Coordinating Group Meeting

April 22, 2010 - Phoenix, AZ

Approved Meeting Minutes

Attendance

AICG members - Jeff Hickerson, NPS (Chair); Bill Hart (for Clay Templin), FS; Butch Wilson, FWS; Scott Hunt, AZ State; Ronald Morrison and Chris English (for Leon Ben, Jr.), BIA; Kelly Castillo, BLM; and Ron Sherron, FS-Smoke Coordinator.

Non-members (task group representatives/other) – Michelle Fidler, Fire Information and Education; and Vickie Christiansen, AZ State Forester.

Review and Approval of the last AICG Meeting Notes

The January 26, 2010 meeting notes were 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 or Updated Action Items are in red. Completed Action Items have been removed.

Topic	Action Needed	Responsibility	Date
AICG Chair Functions	<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 ▪ (Transition next Fall) Coordinate meetings and prepares agenda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hickerson ▪ Hickerson/Templin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ongoing ▪ Ongoing
AZ Interagency Smoke Management MOU, Agreement, and AOP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Distribute signed copies of AZ DOI Interagency Smoke Management Agreement to each agency ▪ Research and pursue hiring a summer intern (clerical help for smoke coordination) ▪ Monitor available funds from vacant DOI Smoke Coordinator position and deobligate/transfer excess funds to purchase program equipment needs ▪ Email EBAM (+ parts list) and Trailer specifications for purchasing. ▪ Procure a EBAM for Grand Canyon/Kiabab with available funds ▪ Draft FY11 AOP and workplan, to include identifying "if additional funding was available" options. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ben ▪ Ben/English ▪ Ben/DOI ▪ Sherron ▪ NPS/Hickerson ▪ Sherron 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ongoing ▪ ASAP ▪ 6/1/2010 ▪ ASAP ▪ 6/1/2010 ▪ 6/30/2010
AZ Smoke Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Email, then Comment/Finalize Smoke Guidance Documents – talking points, protocol for managing smoke impacts, monitoring plan (in development), Q/A PIO aid, etc. ▪ Draft Memo for AICG/SWCG to encourage agencies to have unified press releases ▪ Explore/pursue grant funding options to fix Online Reporting system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sherron/ALL ▪ Hickerson ▪ Sherron/Buettner/DEQ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ASAP ▪ 5/11/2010 ▪ Ongoing
AZ Fire Education Committee + Firewise and Closure/Restrictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Draft Charter for AZ Fire Education Committee ▪ Explore Fire Information distribution - website management, coordination, etc. options (contract with PLIC?) ▪ Develop a formalized process for Seasonal Closures and Restrictions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fidler ▪ ALL ▪ Castillo/Garcia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ongoing ▪ Ongoing ▪ June 1
AZ CAR List/CWPP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Track and report status of CWPP and CWPP equivalent to Glen Buettner ▪ Review existing CWPP to identify communities that are not currently on the statewide CAR list 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ALL ▪ Buettner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ongoing ▪ Ongoing
AZ GIS Needs Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monitor Western Fuels Assessment products ▪ Arrange meeting to assess need for AZ GIS working group ▪ Identify GIS representative to Glen ▪ Provide copies (GIS layers of) to the federal agencies of AZ 's Fire District Maps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Buettner ▪ Buettner ▪ ALL ▪ Buettner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ongoing ▪ 9/22/2010 ▪ ASAP ▪ ASAP
AZ Forest Resource Assessment & Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Email draft plan; provide feedback to help identify focus areas and strategic goals to each issue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Buettner/ALL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ASAP
Integrated Landscape Assessment Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify agency Point of Contract (to Glen) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ALL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ASAP

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AICG Action Items, continued

Topic	Action Needed	Responsibility	Date
AZ Radio Frequency Sharing Plan	▪ Draft MOU	▪ Hickerson/ALL	▪ 6/1/2010
Interagency Fuels Agreements	▪ Share/exchange Interagency Fuels Agreement examples (ie. utilizing and funding state resources, etc)	▪ Castillo/ALL	▪ ASAP

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

Congratulations

Scott Hunt recently accepted the Arizona State FMO positions; Butch Wilson recently accepted a regional fuels management specialist position with the FWS and will be moving to Albuquerque in July.

AZ Interagency Smoke Management Program Update – All/Ron Sherron

The FS has received signatures from all the supporting agencies for the AZ Interagency Smoke Management Program MOU and copies have been distributed. The BIA is still waiting to receive signature for the AZ Interagency (Department of Interior Agencies) Smoke Management Program Agreement.

The BIA has rewritten the position description for the DOI Smoke Coordinator position; and it's in the process of being classified by Personnel. In the meantime, Bill Aster, BIA detailer, will provide technical support (soon). The BIA will also pursue hiring a seasonal intern to assist with clerical and administration support. The goal is to have the Smoke Coordinator position hired and filled prior to the end of the fiscal year.

Lapse funding for DOI Smoke Coordinator position is unlikely to be spent this FY. Additionally, last year's (FY09) transferred funds from the NPS were recently deobligated by the FS unspent. In an effort to best utilize the available funds AICG agreed for the BIA to assess if there is any excess funds available to purchase equipment (additional Ebams and parts, trailer) for the program. The BIA noted it has a limited number of contracting/procurement personnel, so funds may need to be deobligated and/or transferred to another agency for purchasing equipment. The NPS volunteered to directly purchase an Ebam for the Grand Canyon and Kiabab NF, per Ron's request, rather than transferring the funds to another agency.

Additionally, it was recognized that the Tonto NF has been taking on additional financial burdens for the program. AICG finds this problematic, as program funds are being left unspent. As a reminder the FS Smoke Coordinator should pursue funding requests through the DOI agencies as well as take full advantage of salary saving in support in wildland fires as appropriate.

The Annual Smoke Meeting was held March 10. All agencies and each forest were represented.

Ron shared several drafted protocol and support documents related to wildfires and smoke to aid managers and public information officers in the upcoming year. These were developed for the FS, however are applicable to all agencies. The FS plans to adapt these by May 13th. Each agency should review and provide feedback. Michelle offered several additional ideas to help communicate with the public about smoke and fires.

While "purging" test entered data from the online burning permit reporting system (designed to replace the current faxing method), the programmer messed up the program coding. AZ Department of Environmental Quality has no funding to fix the problem. Additionally there is a concern with hosting

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the site. Ron will work with DEQ and Glen to see if they can procure grant funding to make the needed repairs and ensure more (long-term) technical support.

The States of New Mexico and Arizona recently completed editing the 2010 Smoke Emissions Reporting Memo for SWCG. Reporting in AZ will remain the same as last year (via submitted ICS 209's).

Jeff provided a quick update to the New Mexico's Smoke Management Plan revision process.

AZ Forest Resource Assessment Strategy Update – Glen Buettner

The Forest Resource Assessment Strategy is due in June. The Interagency working task group has identified seven key issues – Economics, Fire, Climate Change, Culture, Water & Air, People, and Ecosystem. The group is in the process of developing focus areas and strategic goals for each issue. Glen will share these with AICG members for our review/comments.

Integrated Landscape Assessment Project Introduction – Glen Buettner

This two-year, ARRA funded project is designed to help land manager, planners and policymakers evaluate management strategies that reduce fire risk, improve habitat, and benefit rural communities. Study area states include Arizona, New Mexico, Oregon and Washington. Glen will assemble a working team to help; each agency is encouraged to identify a point of contact in the near future. Additional information can be found on their website: <http://inr.oregonstate.edu/arrafuels/>

Fire Information & Education – Michelle Fidler/ALL

Michelle shared a couple Fire Information & Education charter examples (SWCG and CA Fire Alliance). Once formalized this new working team to serve as an umbrella to AICG for the Firewise Subcommittee and the Closure and Restriction Subcommittee.

Michelle foresees funding as a big challenge for producing and printing publications as well as managing websites. Grant funding and/or contracting with PLIC to coordinate and management various websites maybe options to help support these efforts.

The Firewise charter has been signed and approved. Kelly volunteered Doloris Garcia to formalize the Seasonal Closure and Restriction process.

Zone Fuels Group and Collaboration – Jeff Hickerson

No new Snapshot submittals this past quarter. Agencies should continue to encourage their field personnel to submit documentation of collaborative projects.

Communities at Risk/CWPP Update – Glen Buettner

There will be no "planned" changes to the Arizona Communities at Risk (CAR) list until after the West Wide Risk Assessment/analysis has been completed. Several ongoing CWPPs are nearly completed, and should be adopted in the coming months.

AZ State Forester Introduction – Vickie Christiansen

Vickie introduced herself and provided positive encouragement for AICG efforts to establish and maintain interagency partnerships and collaboration. She plans to focus on improving cost share agreements, to ensure safety #1 and financial responsibility #2. She also reviewed the private land wildland fire policy for state resources.

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AZ State Radio Frequency Plan – Jeff Hickerson

SWCG has tasked AICG and NMICG with developing statewide radio frequency plans. Jeff shared a draft MOU provide by SWCG to tailor from. AICG agreed to try to put something together quickly, however if a lot of additional work/research is required the group will then revisit it in the fall (in an effort to have it ready for the 2011 fire season).

Agency Round Robin

AZ Forestry: Scott will continue to serve as their primary AICG representative (for now).

BIA: Leon continues to be heavily involved in his leadership training.

FWS: Rod Lopez will be the FWS AICG contact once Butch vacates his position.

FS: Clay is meeting with the Forest Supervisor today (finalizing Tonto NF FMP)

Next Meeting/Adjournment

The next meeting will take place on September 22, 2010 at 9:00 a.m. The room location will be announced at a later time.

Upcoming Conferences

- IAWF 3rd Fire Behavior and Fuels Conference
Spokane, WA. Oct 25-29, 2010
<http://www.iawfonline.org/spokane2010/>