

MEETING NOTES

PURPOSE: Initial IDOPP meeting for Santa Fe/Taos Dispatch Centers

MEETING DATE: January 28, 2013

LOCATION: Santa Fe National Forest Supervisor's Office

NOTES BY: John Selkirk

ATTENDEES: See Attachment #1, for a list of attendees.

This meeting brought the key players together to discuss the Southwest Coordinating Group's (SWCG) decision to implement the recommended alternatives proposed in the IDOPP Executive Summary, dated September 2012. John Selkirk has been tasked by the SWCG to form and lead a team to further analyze and implement these recommendations as they relate to the Taos and Santa Fe Dispatch Centers.

Goals for this meeting:

- bring participants up to speed on the status and intent of IDOPP
- establish a common understanding of where we are heading with IDOPP
- Select the team that will study/implement the IDOPP recommendations
- provide line managers and FMOs an opportunity to share any thoughts, concerns or ideas they have regarding IDOPP

IDOPP Background:

IDOPP is a national effort to look for ways of increasing efficiencies in dispatch, primarily through consolidation of the smaller/low complexity dispatch centers. SWCG has decided to pursue consolidation of the Santa Fe and Taos Dispatch Centers. See the *Southwest Interagency Dispatch Optimization Pilot Project, Executive Summary—September 2012* for details, as well as the individual guidance for each agency, which is being provided by our Regional/State-level leadership.

Key Issues:

--IDOPP is still a work in progress. The "final" IDOPP Report has still not been signed, although we have been directed to proceed with implementation. See Attachment #2 for some key points from this report.

--Some discrepancies exist in the information we have received. The recommendation to consolidate the Taos and Santa Fe dispatch centers appears to be a firm decision in some documents, yet it is clear that more in-depth analysis is needed before any decision is made. Verbal communication from key participants in IDOPP has provided a different intent than has been conveyed in some of the written documentation.

--Information has been slowly disseminated, partially because this is such a large and complex project. This has led to a number of people feeling left out, resulting in rumors and unnecessary anxiety.

--The formation of a team to study the Santa Fe/Taos Dispatch centers serves as a fresh starting point at which we can revisit the analysis completed to date. We can now conduct a more detailed analysis, and develop an array of alternatives to consider. This is also the point at which the IDOPP study can be controlled at the local level, insuring local management's guidance and input, as well as open and candid communication with all parties with an interest in this project.

Proposed IDOPP Team composition:

The consensus is that we should form a small core team to look at the alternatives, conduct a detailed analysis and make recommendations. The core team will be led by John Selkirk and will include:

--An agency representative from the USFS, who can represent both the line manager's interests and fire management.

--An agency representative from BLM, who can represent both the line manager's interests and fire management.

--2 Dispatch representatives, one from Taos Dispatch Center and one from Santa Fe Dispatch Center

--2 Representatives from the Zone Coordinating Groups: One from Taos Zone and One from Santa Fe Zone. These members should be from agencies other than the BLM and USFS, to provide representation from the cooperating agencies.

The core team will be supported by an ancillary team of subject matter experts (SME's) who will be kept in the communication flow, and whose expertise will be called upon as needed. This ancillary team will include:

--representatives from each of the two unions for the Carson NF and Santa Fe NF.

--representatives from Human Resources Management for the USFS and BLM

--a radio/telecommunications SME, possibly a USFS radio technician

--a facilities SME, possibly a Forest Engineer

--a contracting/or procurement SME

Potential Alternatives to study:

A list of possible alternatives that the team should consider was discussed by the group, which included:

- Status quo: no change of dispatch center locations
- Consolidate the two dispatch centers into the Taos Emergency Command Center
- Consolidate the two dispatch centers into the existing Santa Fe Dispatch Center
- Consolidate the two dispatch centers into a different facility in Santa Fe
- Consider the effectiveness of a “virtual” dispatch center concept, with separate facilities but centralized control and management
- Consolidate into a “super center” concept, including Albuquerque Dispatch Center. This would be a move directly to “Phase 2” or “Phase 3”, as described in the IDOPP Final Report.

General Discussion Issues and Concerns:

Some ideas and concerns that came out of the meeting include:

- The proposed timeline of having a consolidated dispatch center operational for the 2014 fire season is probably unreasonable. Altering the infrastructure (facilities, telecommunications systems, etc.), will take time for engineering/contracting/construction, and this will need to fit into the overall program of work. This often requires a 2-year time frame, meaning that a consolidated facility may not be ready to occupy until the 2016 or 2017 fire season.
- Union involvement is essential, as there are master agreements with the unions that need to be adhered to.
- The team may want to utilize a facilitator, especially at the initial meetings. A facilitator might become a part of the core team.
- Communication will be critical throughout the process, especially with the employees who will potentially be affected. We need to be careful how this process, (and the results) impact the employees.
- The team needs to look at the results of other consolidations of dispatch centers that have occurred in the past, to learn from those experiences.

ATTACHMENT #1: Meeting Attendees, IDOPP Meeting January 28, Santa Fe, NM:

John Selkirk	BLM--NM State Office
Dave Evans	BLM—Farmington District
Pat Pacheco	BLM—Farmington District
Sam DesGeorges	BLM—Farmington District
Randy Gonzalez	USFS—SW Regional Office
Art L. Abeyta	USFS—Carson NF/NFFE President
Maria T. Garcia	USFS—Santa Fe NF--Forest Supervisor
Joe Norrell	USFS—Santa Fe NF Deputy Forest Supervisor
G. Renee Isackson	USFS—Santa Fe Dispatch Center
D. Marie Gallegos	USFS—Taos Dispatch Center
Maria Valerio	USFS—Taos Dispatch Center
Loren D. Suazo	BIA—Northern Pueblos Agency
Danny Montoya	USFS—SW Regional Office
Kenan Jaycox	SW Coordination Center
Lindsey Quam	NM State Forestry—Santa Fe
Donald Griego	NM State Forestry—Santa Fe
Buck Sanchez	USFS—Carson National Forest--Forest Supervisor
Steven Miranda	USFS—Carson National Forest
Duane Archuleta	USFS—Carson and Santa Fe National Forests
Bill Van Bruggen	USFS—SW Regional Office

ATTACHMENT #2: IDOPP KEY POINTS

The following key points are taken from the IDOPP Final Report, dated 1/9/13, and will give the reader a general idea of what the report contains, and the overall intent of IDOPP.

1. The IDOPP Final Report was dated 1/9/13, and is an extensive document: It is a 97 page report, with 171 pages of appendices, and 276 pages of exhibits, plus links to numerous other lengthy documents.
2. IDOPP is intended to improve dispatch functions—by making dispatch more efficient and cost effective, and improving safety in field operations.
3. “The existing dispatch and coordination system is reasonably efficient, but it is prudent to examine the system and re-tool dispatch for the next generation.”
4. The Bridge Team believes there are “enormous potential cost savings and efficiency gains available through nationwide dispatch optimization and consolidation.”
5. IDOPP performed a “limited analysis” on the alternatives. Alternatives require further analyses to develop credible cost and savings projections prior to implementation.
6. The various alternatives were designed to(1) improve operational efficiency; (2) produce long term cost savings, (3) maintain or improve safety and levels of service, and (4) meet all applicable laws and regulations.
7. The Bridge Team recommends that we conduct “implementation planning,” including detailed analysis, cost and savings projections, performance measures, and appropriate human resources/civil rights/labor union involvement, prior to finalizing any consolidation plans.
8. A team of subject matter experts will develop an action plan that includes standard operating procedures, staffing levels, PDs, budget formulations, and IT needs. Accurate operating cost data must be gathered during implementation to better estimate cost savings.
9. Implementation will rely on management’s ability to fund the infrastructure improvements, PCS moves, etc. necessary to consolidate dispatch centers.