

Southwest Fire Management Board

Meeting of October 15, 1996

Albuquerque, New Mexico

Attending:

Cliff Chetwin (NPS, Chair)	Al Alvarez (BLM-AZ)
Frank Smith (NM State)	Mike Phillips (FWS)
Bob Lee (BLM-NM)	Willie Begay (BIA)
Bill Russell (USFS/R03)	Jay Ellington (SWCC/NPS-Board Secretary)

The meeting was called to order at 1000.

OLD BUSINESS

Fire Policy Action Items - Cliff is working on the final format and will be forwarding to the Washington Office shortly. Cliff has sent a letter to SWFCO thanking them for their assistance and contributions to this project.

Internet - Jay continues to work with the USFS in setting up a HomePage on the internet.

John Burton continues to work on a letter to the zones describing the direction the Southwest Area is going with the internet.

Team Awards - Type 1 Team Awards have been ordered and should be ready for distribution to team members in the near future. Board members will work toward obtaining and presenting awards to their respective Type 2 team members.

Prevention Team - The 'Golden' Smokey award sent to the Washington Office after the last Board meeting has been returned. Washington Office stated the nomination was not forwarded through the proper channels. Bob Lee will re-submit.

Bob and Cliff met with the Leaders of the Prevention Team on October 8 to discuss the activities of the team during the past season. Bob reported the work of the prevention team is being considered for national use, is proposing a workshop be scheduled in the spring for Prevention Specialists and IOFR's, making revisions to the Prevention Handbook, looking at ways to improve the ordering process, and working with General Printing Office (GPO) to improve printing procedures, among others.

Bob will be attending the IOFR meeting in Socorro, October 22, to discuss the value of the Prevention Team to the Southwest.

Dome Fire Deployment - Follow-up to last months items:

- #1 Bob passed out a draft of the Deployment Handbook and requested all Board members to respond by 11/01.
- #7 Cliff continues working on the details of a contract with a CISD provider. He will be pulling together various CISD qualified people from

the NPS to brainstorm those items needed in a contract. Should have something by December/January ready for the February Board meeting.
#10 Draft completed and distributed to the Board. Draft will now be presented to Agency Administrators. Should be ready for signature by 11/15.

Entrapment/Deployment Guidelines - Cliff continues to work on a response to USFS letter. Should have meeting set up for November/December with USFS.

Zone Study - Cliff has forwarded the results of the Zone Study to each Board Chair. To date, there has been no response from any of the Zones.

Type 2 Team Prescription - The Board decided to have responses to the last meetings 'Prescription to Restore the Health of the Southwest Area Fire Management Program' from Agency Administrators by December 1.

Cliff has requested from each Zone Chair a representative to the Interstate Board. No response to date.

Cliff has also sent a letter to Denise Merideth, BLM-Arizona State Director, on behalf of Glen Joki's participation at the September Meeting.

Mob Guide Aviation - Cliff has forwarded to aviation committee. He will try to meet with committee at their next meeting.

1996 Fire Season Review - Bill is pulling together a group around Thanksgiving, probably the Monday or Tuesday preceeding, to write the final review on the 1996 Fire Season. The review will provide an opportunity to showcase some good things done this past fire season. Board members have been requested to attend.

Grand Canyon Agreement - Cliff distribute a copy of the agreement to the Board. There has been little change to the Agreement since the last Board meeting. NPS 'Contracting' has accepted the formality of the agreement, with the exception of the working form. Cliff is currently working on a new format of the form and will provide a copy to each Board member by Oct. 31. At that time, all Board members will have a chance to review the Agreement and, subsequently, pass it on to their respective agency 'Contracting' sections.

SWFF Handbook - Willie Begay states the Handbooks are still at the printers.

Crew Board Committee - Willie Begay is working to form a Crew Board Committee. The committee will consist of 5 participants and 1 Board member (Willie, ex officio). Willie will put names before the Board at the next meeting. The Board will work with Willie to develop a charter. Topics to be addressed by the new committee will include:

1. SWFF Crew Handbook
2. Any issues related to crews or the management of crews.
3. Identify and refer issues to the board.

IARR REPORT - Willie passed out the recently completed IARR Report for the Board's review.

Concerns About Type 2 Crews - The NM State Forester has raised a concern about

problems which existed with Type 2 crews from this past fire season. Cliff has responded to the State Forester's concerns with a letter. The Board discussed the concerns raised and concluded that a majority of SW Area Type 2 crews are exceptional and have never present any real problems. It was noted, however, that an occasional problem does pop up in camp or in town, but never on the fireline.

SWFF Crew ID's - The Board decided that due to current airline regulations, the SW Area will move forward with developing and producing a Photo ID Card for SW Area firefighters prior to next season. Cost sharing of equipment will be dealt with at a later date. Willie stated that the Navajo Area is currently issuing Photo ID Cards through their Safety & Facilities Management Division. Bill stated that there are some local businesses that rent the ID card machines.

Air Attack - Bob Lee is working on a draft letter to NWCG, the issues will be addressed at the February meeting.

New Business

I-520/620 - Nominations have been received from Zone Boards for attendance at the course. Breakdown of nominations is as follows:

Logistics	3
Safety	2
Operations	1
Planning	1
IC	0
Finance	0

The Board prioritized the list and will forward all names to NARTC.

Agency Administrator Meeting - A meeting was held October 3rd among Agency Administrators on issues pertaining to Fire Management. Among the many topics discussed, tops on the list was a discussion on smoke management. A proposal was made by NM ED to have SWFMB oversee smoke management through the Zone Boards. Agency Administrator's requested a 'White Paper' from the SWFMB on this topic. The paper will discuss various means for managing smoke management including either the coordination of all smoke emissions through the Zone Boards or creating a new position in NM ED office to oversee smoke management issues. The Board is concerned with being placed in the position of referee should the coordination be passed on the each Zone. Frank Smith will take on the responsibility for organizing and writing the 'white paper' for the Board. The first draft will be presented at February meeting.

The Agency Administrators were invited to attend the Annual Board meeting held each February. The next annual meeting will be held February 10-14, 1997 at Las Cruces, NM.

State Fire Marshal - A request has been made to the Board requesting that the State Fire Marshal become a permanent member of the SWFM Board. The Board discussed the request but feels the State Fire Marshall's position does not meet the overall requirements for being a permanent member. However, a proposal was made to invite the State Fire Marshall to specific meetings. Frank will respond to Toby Martinez, NM State Forester, with the Board's response.

DOE - A request has also been made by the Department of Energy at Los Alamos to become a permanent member of the Board. The Board believes that the DOE is limited to a relatively small area and does not have land resources spread acrossed the Southwest Area. The Board is giving DOE until November 1 to provide sufficient reason for being a member of the Board.

Prescribe Fire - A request has been made to the Board to send a letter to the NM State Legislature supporting the use of prescribe fire within the state. Th request was made through Toby Martinez of the State Foresters Office. The Board does not feel a letter should be sent to the State Legislation at this time, but will support the State Foresters office when the time is necessary and appropriate.

Proposal for Fire Restrictions - Frank distributed a 'draft' created by the NM State Foresters office to address 'Standards of Fire Restrictions' for the State of NM. Frank was looking for input from the Board. Discussion by the Board focused on:

1. Zone preparedness levels.
2. Agency Administrator's should have some discretion about when and where fire restriction should take place.
3. Include in the 'draft' two new sections titled 'Implementation' and 'Preparedness Levels'
4. Change all 'are, must' etc.. to 'should, may' etc..
5. Change preparedness level to fire danger criteria.

The Board indicated that the Federal Agency's do not use across the board levels of restriction, but rather uses restrictions on specific items such as chainsaw use, smoking, etc. Bob Lee passed out a generic form which can be used to inform the public of restrictions and closures.

Fire Management for Agency Administrators - Bill Russell stated the next 'Fire Mangagement for Agency Administrators' course will be held March 3-7, 1997. Al Alvarez will check to see if the BLM Training Center in Phoenix is available and can be used. The course will be geared toward Agency Administrators and their second in command. An integral component of the course will be the use of the EFSA/Complexity Analysis software. The course will be set up by Ron Moody as a 'Train the Trainee' session.

Wood Chipper - Bill Russell stated the Tonto NF has purchased 2 wood chippers for use on urban interface locations. At some point, each chipper should be available to other agencies for use.

Technical Fire Management - Northern Arizona University (NAU) is very excited about conducting a 'Technical Fire Management' course. The course will be geared toward Southwest ecosystems instead of the traditional Northwest ecosystem. It is anticipated that agency instructors will be used as often as possible in order to help keep costs to a minimum. A basic understanding of math/statistics and computers will be required. Primary attendees will come from the SW Area, but will be opened to attendees from throughout the nation as room permits. Credit will be available through the university. Anticipated start date will be the fall of 1997.

NM BLM reorganization - Bob Lee stated that NM-BLM will be going to the Field Office concept. Bob will be working to keep the fire organization within the

current Zone structure.

Bob also stated that the Coordinator/Dispatch position (i.e Cyndie Hogg's former position) at SWCC will be going out Bureau-wide shortly.

Pack Test - The NWCG has approved for next season use of the Pack test as a firefighter qualification standard.

BIA Aviation Officer - Willie Begay informed the Board that the BIA has hired a new Aviation Officer for the Tri-Area. The person will be located in Albuquerque at the USFS office. Willie also stated BIA-Phoenix has hired Nathan Shrouds as the new FMO. In addition, advertising has gone out for a 'fire planner' position in the BIA-Albuquerque office.

Willie went on to state that the Navajo tribe is not sure at this point how they will contract fire operations out. A Tri-Area meeting, probably in Gallup, will be happening soon in which issues of the Southwest will be discussed.

Willie also stated the BIA would like to assist in developing the 'Technical Fire Management' program at NAU with the other agencies.

Meeting Adjourned: 1545

Next Meeting: February 10 - 14, 1997
Las Cruces, NM

Jay Ellington
Board Secretary