

SOUTHWEST FIRE MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING

October 22-23, 2001

Phoenix, AZ

Board Members Present:

Bob Lee (BLM-NM), Willie Begay (BIA-TriArea), Jeff Whitney (FWS), Pam McAlpin (BLM-AZ), Bill Waterbury (FS-R3), Kirk Rowdabaugh (AZS), John Schulte (SWCC), Chuck Maxwell (SWCC-Fire Weather)

Guests:

Dale Miracle (SNZ-BAP), Bequi Livingston (FS-R3), Jim Paxon (FS-GNF)

Meeting began at 1300.

Medical Standards

The pilot for the Medical Standards program will be implemented in the Southwest for all DOI agencies during FY-02. The USFS will not be participating during FY-02. The program is geared toward those who will be employed or working in an arduous duty environment. A lot of work has to be completed over the next several months for the program to get off the ground comfortably. PD's need to be written to meet the standards of the program. The Board discussed 'batching,' wherever it makes the most sense (i.e. Roswell, Silver City, Albuquerque), being out and ahead of the process, processing state employees, obtaining personnel lists from FMO's, Servicing Personnel Offices, and locations and protocols. A conference call to follow-up the discussion will be held October 26 at 0900 (NM time).

Communications Committee

The committee is requesting funding in the amount of \$5,000. The Board agreed. The USFS, FWS, and BLM will provide.

520/620

A discussion was held on the priorities and strategy to be used for selection of team members. Nominations are due in SWCC by November 1, 2001. Current list has a number of people that will retire within 3-5 years. There's a need to look into the future for processing 520/620 candidates within agencies. A proposal was made to conduct a needs analysis for each agency for potential candidates. The issue of allowing only 6 trainees travelling with the team was discussed. The Board decided to meet with the team IC's in Albuquerque on Jan 23-24, 2002 to discuss future options for 520/620 candidates. Bill Waterbury to provide the Board with a copy of the mentoring standards established in Region's 5 and 6 of the USFS.

Fire Weather Program

Chuck Maxwell, Fire Weather Program Manager at SWCC, provided the Board with a copy of the "Draft – Interagency Agreement for Meteorological Services." Chuck also provided some suggested changes to the document, including clarification on smoke management and Incident Management Team issues. The Board accepted Chuck's

suggestions and requested the suggestions be finalized into a document that would be forwarded to NIFC with the Board's signature attached. Rich Woolley has been hired by the NPS-Intermountain Region to work along with Chuck in the Fire Weather program. Rich is a meteorologist who previously worked in private industry.

Prevention Committee

Bequi Livings, Committee Chair, stated NM Forestry is working on a MOU with a Basic Fire Investigation Training team from the Northwest. A 40-hour course in Basic Fire Investigation (... not Arson) is planned for Spring 2002. A Fire Communication Workshop is being planned for Spring 2002 also. Rick Rietz is coordinating the course. Next meeting of the Prevention Committee will be November 27-29 in Las Cruces, NM and the next meeting of the FUTA Steering Committee is November 16.

Training Committee

Jim Paxon, Committee Chair, will remain as chairperson through the end of 2002. S-420 cancelled this past year due to lack of nominees. Jim stated recruitment is a serious issue for future fire fighters. The Committee feels to resolve the issue there should be more involvement from line officers.

Prescribed Burning along the Colorado River

Jeff Whitney introduced a discussion on the lack of burns being approved for units along the Colorado River by the AZ DEQ. The Board requested the AICG look into the issue.

SWCC Review

John Schulte, SWCC Center Director, introduced a discussion on the inadequate space for SWCC, lack of continuity and control when SWCC has to expand beyond its current physical size, and the minimal amount of space for the Fire Weather/Predictive Services program. After a lengthy discussion, the Board decided that a national review of SWCC operations and facilities should be completed before undertaking any action on John's overall concerns. John will provide the Board with a 'draft' charter for review by November 2, coordinate a conference call for November 9 to discuss the charter and the review team members, and finalize the charter by November 16. It is anticipated that the review will be held during the week of January 7, 2002. The Board will accept the final review at their January 23-24 meeting. A discussion was also held by the Board pertaining to one of the DOI agencies taking over administrative responsibility for the Center Director position and obtaining an upgrade to GS-13. Follow-up discussion will have to be held.

Arizona State Land Department

Kirk Rowdabaugh stated there is a chance that funding will be cut for Forestry by the Arizona State Legislature. The State will be looking for IPA's and non-matching grants. AZLD is still waiting for a reply from the USFS R3 Regional Office on the Joint Powers Agreement. The hold up seems to be the issue of 1 or 2 agreements (i.e. Wildland Fire and All-Risk). Board would like to see one agreement that covers All-Risk.

Fish & Wildland Service

Presently working on JPA with Texas. The issue pertaining to the 100th meridian is acceptable to the State of Texas. Will be looking at State opportunities in NM and AZ.

USDA Forest Service

Ron Moody, Regional Fuels Specialist, will be retiring in early 2002. A recruitment bulletin will be distributed soon. Recently re-advertised the FUTA Coordinator (GS-11) position. Position management reviews of 140+ positions are underway.

Bureau of Indian Affairs

Three new positions being advertised: BAER Specialist, Urban Interface Specialist, and Aviation Specialist. These positions to service the Tri-Area.

NWCG Meeting

The next NWCG meeting will be held May 22-23, 2002 in Whitefish, MT. Each GACC Chair or their representative is invited.

SWFMB Chairperson

Kirk Rowdabaugh assumed the position of Board Chair, and Bill Waterbury was selected as the Vice-Chairperson. They will hold these positions for the next two years.

The meeting adjourned at 1200, October 23, 2001.

/s/

Bob Lee

Chairperson

Southwest Fire Management Board

November 1, 2001