

SOUTHWEST COORDINATING GROUP (SWCG)

November 14, 2003 Meeting Minutes

U. S. Fish & Wildlife Regional Office, Albuquerque, NM

MEMBERS PRESENT: Kirk Rowdabaugh (Chair), Bill Waterbury (Vice-Chair), Willie Begay, Jeff Whitney, Bob Lee, Bryan Swift, Nancy Neskaukas, Pam McAlpin, Dugger Hughes, Jay Ellington (Ex. Sec.)

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: None

GUESTS: Bob Lineback, Lisa Bye,

The meeting began at 0900, November 14, 2003.

Minutes for the 10/06 meeting were reviewed and approved.

FOLLOW-UP AGENDA ITEMS FROM 10/06 MEETING:

TYPE 1 TEAM FUNDING

Discussion revolved around each agency funding \$2k, transfer of funds, fund management, and Team spending. SWCG decided the SWCC Center Director will work with the Type 1 Team IC's to develop a Team Procurement Plan. The Plan will be included as part of the overall SWCC Business Plan, which is due January 2004. The Procurement Plan will detail items to be purchased, the cost, and which agency will cover the associated cost.

PREVENTION COMMITTEE

Bob Lee attended the Committee's recent meeting in Silver City. Committee is taking on some of the duties and responsibilities left over from the departure of Rick Rietz, R3 AFM. Minutes to the meeting are located on the Prevention Committee website (via the SWA website).

INFORMATION COMMITTEE

NWCG is reviewing the Media Operations Access Guidelines developed in the Southwest for use nationally. SWCG will be requesting NMAC to provide a response to the guidelines. In addition, SWCG will be requesting NMAC to provide a clarification on the use of 16-18 year-old individuals on the fireline.

THREE-TIER VS FOUR-TIER DISPATCH SYSTEM

See below.

SOUTHWEST FIRE USE TRAINING ACADEMY (FUTA)

Bob Lee provided the SWCG a draft FUTA Charter he developed. The SWCG spent some time reviewing the Charter, along with a copy provided by the FUTA staff, and provided feedback. Bob will take the changes directed by the SWCG and incorporate into a revised draft. Upon completion, the Chair will sign on behalf of the SWCG and forward to the National Steering Committee. Bryan Swift was selected to be the SWCG liaison to the FUTA Steering Committee.

INTERAGENCY HOTSHOT CREW CERTIFICATION

No follow-up discussion.

DEVELOPING A SW FIRE USE MANAGEMENT TEAM

Discussion on this follow-up topic revolved around the nomination process, suppression authority, aviation issues, team standards, and management nationally or by Area. Bill Waterbury stated the USFS is moving forward with the development of one or more teams and would be glad to share their proposal with the SWCG at the next meeting. In the meantime, SWCG decided to check with Susie Stingley, ONCC, on the current WFU nomination form, to collaborate with SW Strategy, and to use separate procedures from Type 1 Team nomination process.

FIRE WEATHER

No follow-up discussion.

SWCC FUNDING/OPERATIONS

The SWCC Business Plan is due for review at the January 2004 meeting. Jeff stated the USFWS cannot, at this time, create an Assistant Center Director position in SWCC due to the lack of a standard PD in the USFWS for the GS-401 series. Bryan Swift is following-up with the NPS to see if this can be accomplished through them.

NEW/CONTINUING BUSINESS:

SMOKE MANAGEMENT IN NEW MEXICO

Lisa Bye, BLM-NM, distributed and discussed the draft rules, regulations, and process for smoke management in New Mexico. There are two threshold levels related to the Smoke Management Program: (1) SMP-1 – projects less than one ton PM₁₀ per day of non-piled material..., and (2) SMP-2 – projects estimated to produce greater than or equal to one ton PM₁₀ per day for non-piled material... Discussion revolved around handling disputes, Zone coordination, State-to-State coordination, Tribal participation, and use of ICS-209. The SWCG will enlist the assistance of the SW Strategy to institute a process for Zone Coordination. After discussions with the SW Strategy, the SWCG will meet with Zone Chairs to discuss the program and implementation procedures. The SWCG recommended to Lisa that the Smoke Management Group also look into using the ICS-209 form for collecting daily information vice requiring units/teams complete a separate form. As a result of this discussion, the SWCG decided that starting with the 2004 fire season units/teams will state in the "Remarks" block of the ICS-209 form the NFFL Fuel Model(s) burning on that day, the Fuel Load in Tons per Acre for each Fuel Model, and intensity in which the fire is burning (e.g., light, moderate, heavy) for each Fuel Model. This will be included in the 2004 SWA Mob Guide. Jay will take this information before the National ICS-209 Committee at their meeting in December to see if it can be built into Block 32 of the form.

NATIONAL NMAC/GMAC MEETING

Kirk provided the SWCG with a review of the NMAC/GMAC meeting held in Boise, ID, November 13. Several of the topics and items covered included:

- o Priority on the use of established Type 2 crews.
- o National Incident Management Operations (NIMO) – Five alternatives were presented. SWCG members will review and respond to NMAC.
- o Work/Rest Guidelines – Newly drafted guidelines were presented to the SWCG. The SWCG members will review and forward responses to Dugger, who will consolidate and send back to NWCG.

THREE-TIER DISPATCHING IN THE SWA

Pam attended a Task Group meeting on November 13th where objectives and criteria for moving the SWA toward a Three-Tier Dispatch System were developed. She distributed the results of the

meeting to the Group for review. A general discussion was conducted covering development of a SW Three-Tier Dispatch Plan, how Fire Program Analysis (FPA) will affect the boundaries and/or constrain the process, and how alternatives from the field would be requested. After the general discussion, the SWCG decided the next step was to solicit responses or request for proposals from the field (i.e. Zone Chairs, FMO's, and Center Managers). Dugger will draft a letter on behalf of the SWCG stating the purpose, objectives, and criteria for moving toward the Three-Tier system. In addition, the letter will request each unit to state whether they can be accommodated in a three-tier system or if not, identify those barriers which would preclude them from moving in this direction based on personnel, funding, and communications, and what mitigation methods are needed in order to make it work. The SWCG will review the letter before it is distributed.

SW STRATEGY

Bill reviewed with the SWCG the action items provided to the SWCG earlier in the year that need to be completed. General topics and issues covered included:

- o (a) Establishing an annual meeting with SW Strategy. Next meeting planned is Feb. 3, 2004.
- o (b) Presented and accepted.
- o (c) Draft finished for 11/24 meeting. Bill to forward SWCG members a copy.
- o (d) Task Team reviewed and approved.
- o (e) Committees provided.
- o (f) Bill update with National WFSA group
- o (g) Updated.
- o (j) Three-Tier System. In process.
- o (k) SWCC budget completed.
- o (l) Post to SWCG website.
- o (m) Update SWA Mob Guide. T2 IMT's fall under SWA MAC Group when in PL-5.

GENERAL:

Dugger was also asked to re-institute Zone Coordination Center Reviews.

Type 1 Team nominations are due to Dugger (SWCC) no later than December 8.

The next meeting of the Southwest Coordinating Group is scheduled for December 15-18 in Tucson, AZ. A conference call is scheduled Tuesday, November 18, 2003, at 0700 (MST).

The meeting adjourned at 1700, November 14, 2003.

/s/ Kirk Rowdabaugh

Chair

Southwest Coordinating Group

je