



NATIONAL WILDFIRE COORDINATING GROUP

National Interagency Fire Center
c/o U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
3833 South Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

Memorandum

February 18, 2000

To: NWCG Members, Working Team Chairs

From: Executive Secretary

Subject: 77th Meeting Minutes

Attached are final minutes from the January 11-12, 2000, NWCG meeting.

Attachments:

Minutes

National Wildland/Urban Interface

Fire Protection WT List

GACG List

National Wildland/Urban Interface

Fire Protection WT 4th Quarter Report

Summary and Followup Actions

**NATIONAL WILDFIRE COORDINATING GROUP
77th MEETING MINUTES
January 2000**

The 77th meeting of the National Wildfire Coordinating Group was held in San Diego, California, January 11-12, 2000.

Members attending: Don Artley, Chair, Montana Division of Forestry
Roger Erb, Vice Chair, Fish and Wildlife Service
Rick Gale, National Park Service
Ed Shepard, Bureau of Land Management
Harry Croft, Forest Service
Dave Cleaves, Forest Service Research
Jim Stires, Bureau of Indian Affairs
Don Motanic, Intertribal Timber Council
Jim Stumpf, Executive Secretary

Associate Members: Jim Smalley, National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)

Guests attending: January 11, 2000

Mike Funston, IRMWT
Dave Aldrich, SHWT
Gary White, BLM Special Agent
Paul Steensland, FS Special Agent
Pete Noreveck, Supervisory Special Agent
Al Hyde, Brookings Institute
Gail Feldman, Brookings Institute

January 12, 2000

Bob Leaverton, IOSWT
Rich Caballero, IOSWT

1. **SUBJECT:** Approval of 76th meeting minutes.

DISCUSSION: The final 76th meeting minutes were mailed to members after NWCG and Working Team review and acceptance.

MOTION: Accept minutes as corrected and mailed.

2. **SUBJECT:** Comments from the Chair.

DISCUSSION: Good to continue discussion of emerging issues facing NWCG and the wildland fire community.

3. **SUBJECT:** Fire Investigation standards.

DISCUSSION: Two recent court cases have prompted concern for wildland investigation standards. Two NFPA standards set levels for expert testimony and job requisites. NFPA 921 sets standards for investigation. A rewrite, out later this year, will include a chapter on Wildland Fire Investigation. NFPA 1033 sets job skills and requisite knowledge for fire investigators. At this time, 1033 is exclusively for structure fire investigators and may not articulate where we fit as Wildland Fire Investigators. California has a standard for investigators including training, skills demonstration and background as an expert witness available for the Wildland Fire Investigator, but not all States have adopted any standards.

Recommendations to NWCG from Paul Steensland and members of a Law Enforcement Group:

1. Establish an interagency qualification standard for a Wildfire Investigator Certification program with NWCG oversight.
2. Develop a two-tier certification program as an interagency standard across the United States.
3. Develop a Working Team to monitor and update Wildland Fire Investigation Standards. The Working Team membership should also include someone from the fire community who is interested in law enforcement standards.

A Working Team may need to be established to carry out the specific mission, rather than a long-standing team. If standards were developed the product would be a support document to NFPA 921 and 1033, not in conflict with these existing standards. Another way to deal with this would be to make a proposal to NFPA to modify 1033 to the desired standards. NFPA standards says that, "NWCG can write and certify a standard," which would leave the way clear for a Working Team to develop a standard. The current standards are not meeting the need and the training program at Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) needs to be modified to meet current expectations. This training could be at FLETC, or could be conducted outside of FLETC.

MOTION: To proceed with drafting a charter for a Wildland Fire Investigation Working Team, propose membership, and have a charter for approval at May 2000 NWCG meeting. Harry Croft will be the interim NWCG Liaison with this new group to assist in membership and charter development. Paul Steensland will be the chair pro-tem for the Law Enforcement Working Team.

SECONDED AND CARRIED.

4. **SUBJECT: New Chair for Contracting Group to replace Ed Shepard.**

DISCUSSION: Ed Shepard will be leaving his position at NIFC and recommends he step down from this Chair. Tory Majors is willing to take this over and is recommended to replace Ed.

MOTION: Tory Majors replace Ed as Chair for the Contracting Group.

SECONDED AND CARRIED.

5. **SUBJECT:** Team Liaison assignments.

DISCUSSION: Roger Erb polled NWCG members on the role of Working Team Liaison. As a result, he was able to recommend that we need to routinely revisit assignments. Full resolution will be carried over to the NWCG work session prior to the May 2000 meeting. Roger Erb will send notes to Working Team Chairs asking their opinion on NWCG Liaison's role. Currently, we have more Working Teams than we do NWCG Liaisons, causing some NWCG members to have more than one group.

MOTION: Associate members can serve as a Working Team Liaison. Jim Smalley, Associate Member, will serve as Liaison with Wildland Urban Interface Working Team.

SECONDED AND CARRIED.

6. **SUBJECT:** NWCG Business Plan.

DISCUSSION: It was agreed that we need to add the following into the plan: NWCG Liaison role, agenda provisions for changes, budget flow chart, and time schedules for budgeting, etc. Also, add a section defining the flow for action, informational, and emerging issues for NWCG agenda items and the process from emerging to information to action items on the agenda. We should also include a sample working team charter which includes the required

boiler plate language in the Business Plan.

Table approval to the May 2000 meeting with modifications.

7. **SUBJECT:** NWCG Memorandum of Understanding.

DISCUSSION: Do we need to formally update? Defer until we are able to meet with the DOI Solicitor for broad/general opinion on following through on this update.

8. **SUBJECT:** National Fire Danger Rating Working Team Charter revision.

DISCUSSION: Some changes and modifications have been recommended in the draft charter submitted to NWCG by NFDRWT. Dave Cleaves, Liaison, will take this information back to the NFDRWT for changes and modification. Approved in concept; and we should approve this at our May 2000 meeting.

9. **SUBJECT:** IRMWT Geospatial Information Systems Sub-group.

DISCUSSION: GIS is currently used by all Federal agencies for fire and other management uses. There is very little coordination done on GIS data standards and information sharing with GIS information systems. The IRMWT is proposing a sub- group for GIS under their leadership. The current IRMWT Charter provides the latitude and flexibility to form a sub-group to deal with GIS as an emerging issue. Perhaps we need to determine what the field needs for GIS applications are before we determine the how and why. The proposal is to include GIS needs assessment to start this sub-group process.

10. **SUBJECT:** U.S. Fire Administration Course Curriculum

DISCUSSION: The proposal from the USFA Course Curriculum was discussed. This appears to be something that NWCG needs to follow so we can keep up with what is occurring. The TWT needs to provide some follow-up on these courses to make sure the training courses developed meet the standards that have been adopted (NIIMS/ICS). TWT needs to review recommendations and impacts to the training packages from USFA. Harry Croft, NWCG Liaison, will carry this issue to the TWT for analysis and recommendations. Need to accomplish as part of the futuring planned for the May 23, 2000, meeting.

11. **SUBJECT:** Work session and pre-work considerations.

DISCUSSION: We need to list and capture those emerging issues for our futuring meeting in May. The following are considered known emerging issues and the NWCG member(s) who agreed to continue in a leadership role of each item:

- Social science - Cleaves, Gale and Shepard
- Geographic Area Coordination Groups (GAGS) - Artley, Stires
- NFPA Standard setting and membership on committees - Smalley
- Local government forces (are we really understanding the needs and information from local governments) - Croft, BLM (Shepard's replacement), Hull
- Standards for non-NWCG organizations - Hull, Croft, BLM
- AFAC/FCOG (Fire Control Officers Group) - Gale
- Non-wildland fire emergencies
- Protocol in working with OSHA on fire issues - S&HWT, Hull
- Develop guidelines on how to identify emerging issues and follow-up that is needed, i.e., Working Team versus NWCG responsibility issues for consideration - Artley
- ICS revisited - Gale
- Role and tenure of Working Team Liaison - Erb
- Strategy to coordinate the efforts in development of S-320, 420, 520, and 620 with leadership training courses S-281, S-381 and S-481 - Gale

- Monitor response activities on uses of ICS
- Don Artley will follow up with Bobbie Antonich to ensure that she is available to assist in facilitating the emerging issue discussion at our May meeting.

12. SUBJECT: Where have all the firefighters gone (DOI and Forest Service study).

DISCUSSION: Two phases of the study have been completed. The target date for completion (first three phases) is the end of March 2000. Harry Croft or the Brookings Institute will make a presentation to NWCG at the May meeting. Three core issues have been identified, including the aging wildland firefighter, lengthy replacement or training cycle, and the reluctant work force (availability). Phases have been developed to complete this study. The first phase was a census of the fire community, phase two was a work force demographic analysis, and the third phase included focus groups on availability. Phase four was an agency availability survey. The final index will include the following data elements:

- Age
- Employment status
- Job qualification
- Fire experience received in the past 20 years
- Total training received in the past 20 years

Demographic questions include the number of people in the system, differences by geographic areas (including currency, age, sex, qualifications, experience and training), age profile of the firefighter work force, and the length of the training cycle. The Forest Service information has been completed; the information from Interior will be entered into the database as it becomes available. The database sample is currently based on 75% full-time employees; the remainder are seasonal (all types of seasonal employees).

Several focus groups were conducted to gather data for the study. The focus groups included representatives from all agencies, including the National Association of State Foresters. The results of the focus groups were shown as a consensus of those participating. Questions asked included:

1. Do you believe there has been a decline in participation among the work force regarding fire assignments?
2. What distinctions do workers make about being available for fire suppression work in their own district, region, or nationally?
3. What are organizational barriers regarding fire availability and assignments?

Responses included major barriers such as:

- Compensation and human resource issues.
- Fire and safety training obstacles.
- Cultural values and demographic barriers regarding work force acceptance.
- Impact of fuels programs affecting suppression availability.
- Physical fitness testing and conditions at the Incident Base.

There were several agency mission and management factors identified at the end of the focus meetings. These were comments not associated with the other broad topics and include:

- Increase compensation (time and a half).
- Link land stewardship with fire activities.
- Management support for fire activities.
- Agencies need strategic vision for the future.
- Need interdisciplinary approach with all agencies for resource management planning.
- Need a professional system in the future with less reliance on militia.
- Incorporate fire duties in position descriptions.
- Need to improve the image of firefighting.
- Bring in new personnel and attract a younger work force.
- Create a career path and don't rely on seasonals.

The next step is proposed to do more and smaller focus groups (six to eight) in different geographical areas.

13. SUBJECT: Safety and Health Working Team report.

DISCUSSION: Started out as one of the first working groups of NWCG as the Safety Committee. The current Team includes only one State representative, but a Western State representative is needed to replace Dan Francis, CDF.

Strategic goals for the Team were submitted with the budget, including:

- Long-standing issues on smoke and fatigue.
- Relationship with SAFE Program.
- Near-hit analysis.
- Human dimensions in fire safety.
- Changes in firefighting tactics and strategies.
- Development and improvements in personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Firefighter smoke and fatigue issues.
- Better communication in safety issues.

Recent accomplishments include:

- Accident information and report - Safety Gram.
- Historical firefighter fatality record.
- Five -year strategic goals.
- Safety and Health Conference (70 participants) with good reporting and work group activities to develop priorities. Proceedings will be sent out soon.
- Avoid The Flames campaign to alert shelter users to avoid contact with flame in selecting a shelter deployment area.
- Equipment and refurbishing standards developed and published in the Mobilization Guide.
- Removal of the fire shelter from the container training and instruction.
- Geographic examples of safety information and watch-out situations for training and tail-board safety sessions. These pretty much cover the United States.
- Human factors of safety scenarios for interaction with other fire training.
- Safety zone flagging for escape routes, safety zones, etc.
- Fire shelter videos (two) to be on line and available this year.
- Fire shelter standards work is continuing. They hope to have a test protocol in the next year or two.
- Firefighter nutrition and immune system work is under way.
- SAFENET will provide a national mechanism for input and analysis of "near misses."

ISSUES:

- Consider increased Missoula Technology Development Center funding and participation from other Federal or State agencies.
- Is the SHWT going to be coordinators or accomplishers of identified duties?
- Driving standards do not seem to be consistent from agency to agency.
- Increase NFPA Standards development participation.
- Working with cooperators who do not have standards, nor do they accept NWCG standards.
- Accident investigation, in some cases, is not consistent and well done. Original accident reports do not always provide specific information on preliminary accidents, so proper investigation staffing is not obtained. Need to provide some clarity for human factors and dimensions, but there is nothing solidified or defined on just where we appear to be going with human factor information.

14. SUBJECT: Coordination of Incident Management courses (S-320, 420, 520 and 620) and leadership courses developed or under development.

DISCUSSION: The training courses outlined should build on each other, rather than be independent courses. The TWT was not very responsive to what the real problem is with this array of courses. We need to ensure that all courses are coordinated and build on each other. The coordination needs to be more positive in the development of course training. NWCG will also consider this issue in their work session on May 23rd.

15. **SUBJECT:** AFAC/FCOG (Fire Control Officers Group) status regarding coordination between them and NWCG.

DISCUSSION: The Australian AFAC group may not be the appropriate organization for NWCG to become linked with. The FCOG group may be closer aligned to the working of NWCG. NWCG Chair will write to the FCOG Chair and invite their participation at our May 2000 meeting. We feel there are numerous common problems and concerns between both groups. Their participation would provide a faster mechanism to share information.

16. **SUBJECT:** Working Team structure.

DISCUSSION: Reviewed commonality in charters and determined there was no consistency. Boiler plate charters will provide sufficient guidance without tying WT hands. The charter should legitimize meetings and provide broad, general direction. Team purpose should remain different between Teams, but the remainder of the charter could be boiler plate. Some WTs seem to be more production orientated, which may not be the true need. TWT and PMS are examples of this.

We need to develop a generic charter with possible differences in purpose. There does not appear to be duplication of effort in the WTs as they exist, but training did appear in several charters. There may be some opportunity to combine Teams to increase efficiency. An addition of a cooperation and coordination clause to all charters will be included in the boiler plate charter. WTs will fill in the blanks, such as purpose and reporting; we would provide membership parameters, State representatives, and periodic NWCG review - possibly through their strategic plan review. Dave and Harry will develop a boiler plate charter for review at the May 2000 meeting. NWCG will continue to have presentations from WTs at meetings, where we will also review charters for concurrence of activities and accomplishments, and strategic planning. WTs will have the opportunity this year to review and finalize or modify the strategic goals and budgets. WT Liaisons will work with their Teams for this update and possible modification. These will be sent to the Executive Secretary April 1 for 78th meeting attachments. WT Liaisons will make the presentation to NWCG for their WT plans and budgets.

ACTION: Harry Croft will add this boiler plate information to the NWCG Business Plan revision

17. **SUBJECT:** Training Working Team Chair.

DISCUSSION: Logan Lee, Forest Service, is recommended to replace George Martin as Chair.

MOTION: Accept the TWT recommendation for appointment of Logan Lee as TWT Chair.

SECONDED AND CARRIED.

18. **SUBJECT:** Publications Management System Working Team.

DISCUSSION: PMSWT isn't really functioning as a WT, but we need to have people providing service for PMS publications. Each Team will provide a point of contact to PMS to liaison and work with PMS for publications. Replacement candidates for the PMS leadership

should be passed on to Roger Erb by February 10. A recommendation for new leadership and a revisited charter will be presented to NWCG at the May meeting. All WT Liaisons will take information forward to their Teams and ask them to designate a Boise based person who will represent their Team to the PMS WT Chair. Team meetings will probably not be needed and work will be accomplished on a one-to-one basis.

19. SUBJECT: Fire Wise workshop.

DISCUSSION: Three pilot workshops have been completed and the training package is being finalized. Washington, Connecticut, Minnesota, and Georgia are the designated sites for planned workshops. Each of these workshops will be different. The implementation team has developed several partnerships for sponsoring and support of the workshops. These include Toshiba, Compaq and Microsoft. Partners have the advantage of product recognition as part of the Fire Wise workshops. Website activity is still very active.

20. SUBJECT: NFPA update.

DISCUSSION: There are several Committee actions for a number of standards being revised or reissued. Some of these include: 1051 Wildland Firefighter, 1142 Water Supply for Suburban and Rural Firefighting, RV Parks and Campground, OSHA program, Safety Officer, and 1999 Protective Clothing for Medical Operations. NFPA is moving ahead to develop a set of building codes. They have established a partnership with Western Fire Chiefs for their fire code. NFPA is also developing a recommended practice for Use of Foam for Structural Fire Departments.

21. SUBJECT: Forest Service issues and actions.

DISCUSSION: There are five significant reports that will be completed by the Forest Service within the next 3 months that will generate much discussion and controversy, affecting all levels of the agency.

1. National Management Review: This report provides a strategic examination of persistent issues and problems over the past 10 years that have remained unresolved. The report recognizes success in initial attack and fuels management, and focuses on cultural changes in the work force that have resulted in reduced internal fire support capability, friction between fire staffs and agency administrators, and a compelling need to integrate fire considerations into ecosystem management.
2. Large Fire Cost Review: This report provides a comprehensive overview of two large, costly fires in California to determine if there are underlying, unaddressed causes for such high suppression costs (\$150,000,000). The review will suggest alternatives to reduce suppression costs, to outline recommendations for policy and program adjustment.
3. GAO Report - Cohesive Fuels Strategy for Western Forests: This strategy will fundamentally establish agency direction for hazardous fuels reduction for the next 10-20 years, representing a significant agency effort, both in costs and acres treated.
4. GAO Report - Preparedness: This is a focused effort to address three issues identified in the report - Work Capacity Tests, radio compatibility, and the aging work force.
5. NWCG Demographics Study: This is an outgrowth of both of the above GAO reports, and was mentioned earlier in this document.

22. SUBJECT: Wildland and Prescribed Fire Qualification System Guide, 310-1.

DISCUSSION: The final draft of these standards was distributed to NWCG for review after all other comments had been discussed and resolved by the IOSWT. There probably are no fatal flaws in the document, but everyone may not be 100% pleased. National Mobilization and Geographic areas have been added to the final glossary. There have been no other changes in the documentation. Arrows in the Area Command qualification from Type I to

Area Command are misleading. Recommend removing the arrows to clarify.

MOTION: Accept IOSWT recommendation to approve the January 2000 edition of 310-1, with graphic changes in Area Command and correction of minor typos.

SECONDED AND CARRIED.

23. SUBJECT: Social science update.

DISCUSSION: Action items have been developed for social sciences in fire management :

- Understanding of fuels report (Jerry Williams).
- Better blending of fire management with social science aspects.
- Social scientists in fuels management.
- Social scientist psychologist participated in the Range Report work within the State of California.
- Develop a complete list of social science aspects of fire management.

This will continue as an emerging issue for NWCG.

24. SUBJECT: International Association of Wildland Fire.

DISCUSSION: The new IAWF president, Mike DeGrosky, would like to meet with NWCG to determine if there is any way we could work together. Don Artley will invite DeGrosky to the November (or winter) meeting.

25. SUBJECT: ICS proposal.

DISCUSSION: The original paper suggesting that FEMA be the custodian for ICS was put together by the Coast Guard and sent to FEMA for possible action. It appears that FEMA is not interested in becoming the custodian of NIIMS/ICS. Steve Hill was not present at the meeting, but we feel we need more information on this proposal. We also learned that Steve Hill is no longer with the USFA. Don Artley will follow up with USFA to attempt to determine who their representative will be.

26. SUBJECT: Future meetings.

DISCUSSION: May 22-25, 2000, Boise, Idaho. We will begin at 1300 on May 22 and conclude on May 23 at 1700 (NWCG-only work session). Our regular meeting will start on May 24 at 0800 and conclude at 1700 on May 25. The IRMWT will give an overview presentation to the group.

October 10-12, 2000, Shenandoah National Park. FEWT will give an overview presentation to the group.

Week of January 29, 2001 - start at 1300 on January 29 with a work session, followed by the normal NWCG meeting October 11-12. NFDRWT will be featured WT; meeting somewhere in Texas.

Tentative June 4-8, 2001, North Rim Grand Canyon - Rick Gale will make arrangements.

27. SUBJECT: Working Team presentations.

DISCUSSION: We discussed the Working Team presentations that we have had over the past year, and agreed that we need to provide better guidance to WT Chairs. All presentations have been extremely valuable to the members, but there has been considerable variability in content. We need to better describe our expectations to the WT Chairs so we can take maximum advantage of the opportunity for face-to-face interaction.

One idea was to suggest that the WT making the presentation schedule a meeting concurrently with our meeting, so the entire WT could attend the presentation. Other suggestions for content included:

- Purpose of the WT and its history.
- Review strategic plan and associated budget needs.
- Recent accomplishments.

ACTION: Harry Croft agreed to put together a draft of expectations for Working Team presentations for our review at our May 2000 meeting.

77th NWCG MEETING SUMMARY AND FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS				
Issue	Action	Responsibility	Accomplishment Date	Status
Assist in forming LE Working Team	Provide interim liaison with LEWT for possible membership as a Working Team.	Harry Croft	May 2000	
Contracting Work Group Chair	Appoint Tory Majors Chair of Contracting Work Group.	Jim Stumpf draft letter for Chair	February 2000	
WT Liaison's role	Solicit input from WT Chairs.	Roger Erb	May 2000	
WT Liaison's role	Revisit role and tenure of WT Liaisons.	Roger Erb Harry Croft Dave Cleaves	May 2000	
NWCG Business Plan	Correct and modify the NWCG Business Plan for final approval.	Harry Croft	May 2000	
NWCG Memorandum of Understanding	Determine DOI Solicitor recommendation in updating.	Rick Gale	October 2000	
U.S. Fire Administration Course Curriculum	TWT will do an analysis and make recommendations.	Harry Croft	May 2000	
FCOG participation	Invite FCOG participation at our May 2000 meeting.	Don Artley March 2000		
Working Teams' strategic goals and budgets	WTs review and finalize or modify strategic goals and budgets for 2001, 2002, and 2003.	NWCG WT Liaison	Due to Executive Secretary 4/1/2000	
TWT Chair	appoint Logan Lee Chair of TWT.	Jim Stumpf draft letter for Chair	February 2000	
PMS WT Charter and realignment	Make a recommendation for new leadership and a revisited charter for PMS.	Roger Erb	May 2000	
WT boiler plate charter	Develop a boiler plate WT charter for NWCG review and inclusion into the Business Plan.	Harry Croft Dave Cleaves	May 2000	
WT presentations	Draft a list of expectations for WT presentations.	Harry Croft	May 2000	
NFDRWT Charter	Approve revised changes based on recommendations and modifications	Dave Cleaves	May 2000	

EMERGING ISSUES				
NFPA Standards	NFPA is continually developing and modifying standards and guidelines	Jim Smalley, NFPA, will follow up and try to keep NWCG current		
Social science studies	Determine what social concepts may be adopted to improve the fire program	Rick Gale		