

**NATIONAL WILDFIRE COORDINATING GROUP  
85th MEETING MINUTES  
October 2002**

The 85th meeting of the National Wildfire Coordinating Group was held in Gettysburg, PA, October 8-9, 2002.

*Members attending:*            Jim Stires, Chair, Bureau of Indian Affairs  
   Dave Cleaves, Vice Chair,  
   Forest Service Research  
   Phil Street, Fish and Wildlife Service  
   Sue Vap, National Park Service  
   Robert Krepps, NASF, Missouri Dept. of  
   Conservation  
   Kirk Rowdabaugh, NASF,  
   Arizona State Land Department  
   Jerry Williams and Tom Harbor,  
   Forest Service  
   Jim Erickson, Intertribal Timber Council  
   Larry Hamilton, Bureau of Land Management  
   Hugh Wood, National Fire Academy  
   Jim Stumpf, Executive Secretary

*Guests attending:*            October 8, 2002

Barry Mathais, IRM  
Shari Shetler, IRMWT  
Bill Terry, TWT  
Jim Payne, Forest Service  
Paul Broyles, SHWT  
Bill Downs, BIA  
Neil Hitchcock, Forest Service  
Mike Funston, IRMWT  
Denny Trusdale, Forest Service  
Dave Halsted, WUIWT  
Paul Schlobaum, FDRWT  
Wayne Mitchell, FWWT  
George Conley, IQCS

October 9, 2002

Barry Mathais, IRM  
Bob Leaverton, IOSWT  
Bill Leenhouts, FUWT  
Neil Hitchcock, Forest Service  
Mike Funston, IRMWT

Shari Shetler, IRMWT  
George Conley, IQCS  
Bill Downs, BIA  
Linda Langler, Forest Service

1. **SUBJECT:** Approval of 84<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes.

**DISCUSSION:** The final 84th meeting minutes were mailed to members after NWCG and Working Team review and acceptance.

**MOTION:** Accept minutes as corrected and mailed.

### **SECONDED AND CARRIED.**

2. **SUBJECT:** (Threat Mitigation) Risk Threshold Task Force

**DISCUSSION:** The purpose of the group is to improve the understanding of risk thresholds on both prescribed fire and wildland fire suppression to promote safety of operations, especially in transition situations. Lindon Wiebe is leading a sub-group of the task force and will report on preliminary information from the Task Group at the January 2003 NWCG meeting.

3. **SUBJECT:** Thirty Mile status action report

**DISCUSSION:** Changes from the May report to NWCG were discussed. Because of the work load from extensive fire activity this year limited additional action was completed between May and November 2002. Additional actions to implement 30 Mile measures since May include:

- Action 5c, daily work limits was accomplished through a re-issuance of the NWCG work/rest policy.
- Action 18A, competency for Agency Administrators completed by a sub-group.
- Action 21A, fire simulator training package is complete and ready for use.
- Action 28A, improved fire shelter has been selected and will be introduced into the supply system in upcoming years.
- Action 29A, entrapment avoidance has been incorporated into shelter training.

Tasks assigned to the TWT were also reviewed. The TWT has three state representatives on the team to ensure the state interests are reviewed and included in decision-making. The updates in training courses to include 30 Mile Action Plan measures will be completed in the normal revision cycle by 2005. These include:

- Action 5D, on fatigue will be reflected in course modifications that have been started and will be on-going through 2005
- Action 9, transition between incident management teams
- Action 10, evaluations that need to take place between ICT3 and ICT5
- Action 11, standardize the briefing format for the ICT3 to ICT5 incidents.
- Action 13, extended attack issues.

- Action 14, incident complexity analysis between ICT3 to ICT5.

NWCG is supportive of the Forest Service efforts on the action plan and will work to implement measures on an interagency basis to the extent possible in light of what is practicable to the states and DOI agencies. Interior agencies and the states are to meet with Jim Payne (FS Action Plan Coordinator at NIFC) to determine specific policy or other action needs possible to implement 30 Mile Action Plan measures on an interagency basis. Specific actions must be as seamless and interagency as possible given the interagency mix of all wildland fire operations. The 30 Mile Action Plan accomplishments by the IOSWT are found written later in these minutes.

4. **SUBJECT:** Fire Administration position at Boise

**DISCUSSION:** The applications for the USFA position at the Fire Center closed recently with about 18 qualified applicants on the list. Hugh Wood would like the Fire Director's input on the selection. There was consensus that participation from the agencies would be advantageous. Tim Murphy at NIFC will be the lead fire center contact.

5. **SUBJECT:** Role and sponsorship of the third International Wildland Fire Conference

**DISCUSSION:** The conference is scheduled for October 3 to 6, 2003 in Sydney, Australia. The theme of the conference is *Urban and Rural Communities in Fire Prone Environments Managing the Future at Global Problems* which will be applicable to a wide range of structural and wildland fire fighters. A website has been established for more information at [www.wildlandfire03.com](http://www.wildlandfire03.com).

NWCG involvement was discussed for the conference. We discussed funding and potential for an exhibit for the exhibition hall. NWCG sponsorship and other monetary support was also discussed.

Jerry Williams will collaborate with Larry Hamilton to develop an abstract of the NWCG program and submit it for consideration as a possible conference paper. The abstract draft will be sent to members for final review and comment. The deadline for the abstract submission to the conference program committee is November 3, 2002.

**MOTION:** Develop and provide an NWCG exhibit at the International Conference. Jack Sept and Mike Rotunda, Forest Service NIFC External Affairs Staff will take the lead on developing an exhibit for the conference.

**SECONDED AND CARRIED**

6. **SUBJECT:** Plans and agenda items for NWCG/CIFFC meeting in Boise

**DISCUSSION:** The joint NWCG/CIFFC meeting will be held on Wednesday January 22, 2003. Subjects for the NWCG presentations include:

- Fire research, Dave Cleaves
- Firewise and WUI, Dave Halstead and Jim Smalley
- Nature Conservancy, Ed Brumson
- Canadian topics:
  - Update on their transition to ICS
  - Fire use and prescribed fire and WUI operations
  - Canadian Fire Research

7. **SUBJECT:** Wildland Urban Interface Working Team

**DISCUSSION:** A general discussion on WUIWT projects was presented by David Halstead, Chair. Current projects include:

- Firewise Communities USA will be handed off in 2003, replacing the original Firewise program that was designed for community leadership and industry. The Firewise program involves communities in the development of fire safe communities.
- Developing a project history of Firewise and its effects on the urban interface in reduction of fire damage.
- Developing a *Keeper of the Flame* script that is designed for airing on the Discovery Channel or similar television stations that is the story of Firewise.

The WUIWT provided a very good overview and team activity status. They continue to work in the lead for the improved wildland/urban interface problems in the United States.

8. **SUBJECT:** Federal Fire Policy Implementation strategy project

**DISCUSSION:** Progress by the Implementation Strategy Task Group was delayed because of budget restrictions during the past fire season. Currently the task group is striving to complete the project by February 2003. The final product will be an update of the 1995 Federal Fire Policy implementation strategy. A draft of the implementation strategy will be available for comment after the task group meeting in November.

9. **SUBJECT:** Discussion on merging the FWWT/FDWT

**DISCUSSION:** Roles, inter-relationships and products of the FWWT and FDWT were discussed. In additional discussion included how their products and data are used for tactical and strategic decision making on the ground. The group felt that the working teams should spend additional time developing recommendations on how the working teams could be combined or how their operations could combine and/or interact in the emerging predictive services program area.

**MOTION:** Task the FDWT and FWWT to develop and present alternatives at the January 28, 2003 meeting.

## **SECONDED AND CARRIED**

10. **SUBJECT:** IAWF, *Surviving in the Interface Danger Zone* conference

**DISCUSSION:** The information for this conference was presented to inform members who may have an interest in participation in this conference to be held in Kansas City, Missouri, December 4-6, 2002. The conference is co-sponsored by IAWF, IAFC and the Rocky Mountain Research Station.

11. **SUBJECT:** Fire Research Coordinating Group

**DISCUSSION:** This group is established to provide leadership in coordinating and representing wildland fire sciences and technology development and application. Some of the activities of this group will include:

- Avoid unnecessary duplication of efforts, outlining respective roles of research organizations and developing productive partnerships, within the United States and internationally.
- Foster accountability in fire research programming, which includes developing ways to better describe the span of research.
- Organize syntheses of important areas of scientific knowledge
- Promote and facilitate the coordinated delivery, interpretation, and use of the results of scientific and technological findings.
- Encourage research and development on high priority needs.
- Advocate for appropriate level of funding for fire research

12. **SUBJECT:** Replace PMSWT Chair

**DISCUSSION:** Mike Benscoter will be retiring in January and has asked to be replaced as the Chair of the PMSWT. Allen Dietz, BLM was recommended to fill this vacancy. Barry Mathais will follow up to make sure Allen is available for this job.

13. **SUBJECT:** NWCG Operating Guidelines

**DISCUSSION:** The memberships reviewed changes to the NWCG Operating Guide proposed at the May 2002 meeting. These changes are modifications to the wording on how task assignments are passed on to WT Chairs. The consensus was to accept these changes.

14. **SUBJECT:** IRM/PMO update

**DISCUSSION:** A broad overview of activities of the IRMWT and PMO were discussed. Topics covered include:

- Work with the Forest Service and BLM in development of a standard process that satisfies OMB investment management process.
- IQCS/ROSS interface. These are currently the only systems sponsored by NWCG. Both of these systems have links to share data between systems. The project managers are working together to ensure both ROSS and IQCS are able to exchange data as necessary.
- The Data Administrative Work Group (DAWG) has worked to establish and recommend standards for unit identifiers, state codes and dates.
- Work is underway to develop a charter for the Incident Cache Business System (ICBS). The IRMWT will review this charter and provide recommendations to NWCG for approval. The ICBS group developing the charter needs to complete work on the charter as soon as possible. When it's complete and the IRMWT has reviewed and developed recommendations on the charter, NWCG members will review this charter electronically. NWCG cannot wait until the January meeting to approve the ICBS business charter.
- Fire occurrence and a single reporting system is desirable for agencies. IRMWT has not done anything on this but is willing to start work on this if desired by NWCG. This issue is deferred to the January NWCG meeting.
- NWCG project update includes:
  - Resource Ordering and Status System (ROSS) is about complete and it is ready for implementation and management support. The fire season activity for the past couple of years has disrupted and delayed needed training. CDF will not implement ROSS until 2004. This will complicate federal agency seamless dispatching systems in California and is more of a management than a system problem.
  - Incident Qualifications and Certification System (IQCS) design on the project started in May 2002 and is complete within the budget provided. The construction phase will be expanded to 12 months but saving in other areas will provide project completion in two months less than originally set. Changes in the charter reflect changes in the design and test phases of the project.

**MOTION:** Approve the IQCS charter to reflect changes presented by the IQCS Project Manager and changes presented by the Forest Service to strike the PMO approval authority.

### **SECONDED AND CARRIED**

- Incident Base Automation (IBA). Currently the plan is to use ISUITE as it exists. The long term solution is to develop a business lead and conduct a business requirements study before re-engineering or developing a new business solution.
- Fire Plan Analysis (FPA) will follow the NWCG Business management plan and guidelines.
- Emergency Fire Fighter and Vender Payroll (EFF Vender Pay) originally was developed by Alaska Fire Service to issue checks to fire fighters and vendors. The Department of the Interior took over the use and application of the system

and was later joined by the Forest Service. Should this become a national system for use by all agencies in the fire arena? The Forest Service, by OMB direction, is developing its own system for payments. Due to states not using this system, it would be more appropriate for the EFF/Vendor Pay Steering Committee or FFALC to charter re-engineering of this application.

**MOTION:** IRMWT and PMO participation in FFALC projects will be the same as if they were chartered by NWCG.

## **SECONDED AND CARRIED**

15. **SUBJECT:** Post-fire emergency stabilization in wildland fire operations

**DISCUSSION:** What should the NWCG role be in qualifications, training, and certification for the Emergency Stabilization Rehabilitation personnel used for fire operations? At this time the ESR teams develop their own qualifications and standards. It is recognized that in today's world the public and agency administrators expect more in the accomplishment of the ESR tasks. ESR personnel need to have some ICS training but do not need to establish a formal qualification and certification system since their positions are generally self qualifying from resource specialty. Bill Leenhouts, representing the interagency ESR team, is tasked to develop a draft of standards that could be used for ESR personnel. In the development of the draft standards that could be used for ESR personnel. In the development of the draft standards consider the input and review between the IOSWT, Agency Administrators, IMTs and other ESR teams.

16. **SUBJECT:** Social Science Task Force recommendations

**DISCUSSION:** The formation and implementation of this task group is a follow up to the *Burning Questions* work done under NWCG sponsorship. A charter was proposed by the group and discussed. The purpose of the group is to identify social science research and application needs and evaluate social science research activity for application to fire-related problems. It will be important to interface with other existing working teams on issue development and implementation of activities generated by the task group. The Task Group will be co-chaired by Jonathon Tayler, USGS and Aden Seidlitz, BLM.

**MOTION:** Accept the charter as modified by NWCG. Dave Cleaves will become the NWCG Liaison to this task group.

## **SECONDED AND CARRIED**

17. **SUBJECT:** Initial and recurrent refresher fire training requirements

**DISCUSSION:** The recommendation that annual fireline safety refresher training be required for all personnel participating in fire suppression or prescribed fire activities



who may be subject to assignments on the fireline. This applies to personnel subject to assignments on the fireline, for example, technical specialists, bus drivers, and ground support personnel delivery resources to the fireline. It is required that safety training be focused on mandatory core subjects and not on minimum time frame standards. The core content is listed at a website entitled *Annual Wildland Fire Safety Refresher Training* and can be reached through the National Interagency Fire Center homepage [www.nifc.gov](http://www.nifc.gov), "safety" link. The IOSWT will include in this information in the 310-1 Handbook.

**MOTION:** Accept the modified recommendation provided by the IOSWT

## **SECONDED AND CARRIED**

### **18. SUBJECT: IOSWT actions on the 30 Mile Fire Review**

**DISCUSSION:** IOSWT Chair discussed the following topics from the Thirty Mile Action Plan:

- Action A-1, Transition fire management - All books (Fireline Handbook, Incident Response Pocket Guide and Interagency Standards for Aviation Operations) will cover the appropriate material on transition fires consistently. The IRPG will have a check list for IA and the other two will contain the complexity analysis.
- Action A-2, Fire management plans - The IOSWT was not involved in developing a common inter-agency format for FMPs. That work was done by interagency group outside of the NWCG organization.
- Action A-3b, pocket card - the project is complete
- Action A-5a, fatigue management - completed in 410-1 Safety Chapter, Fire fighter health.
- Action A-5c, Daily hour limitation - recommend that this be referred to the IBPWT
- Action A-8a, Agency Administrators expectations - The inclusion of this in the 410-1 is not appropriate because it is federal fire policy. It is probably best included in the Standard for Fire Operations.
- Action A-8b, Positive check-in - Already included in several chapters of the Fireline Handbook.
- Action A-11, Standardized briefing format - is included in briefing checklist from the IRPG into the 410-1, appendix A. The 410-1 initial attack chapter will refer to it.
- Action A-12a & b dispatch identification of I.C. - Included in the 410-1.
- Acton A-13 revision of the Fireline Handbook - for the fireline user the action verbs initial attack and extended attack are still needed. Types 1 to 5 have been defined.
- Action A-14 complexity analysis - Already completed and will be in 410-1 revision.
- Action A-15, dedicated I.C. - This will be included in 410-1 in Chapters 2 and 3. The wording will be "The IC position will require focused energy and time to

adequately perform the duties as described below. Other duties are secondary to the duties of the IC”.

- Action A-16, 17 & 28 are not construed as an IOSWT mission.
- Action A-27, Risk management process - this is included in IRPG, 410-1 and Red Book.

This IOSWT will provide this feedback to Jim Payne, Thirty Mile plan implementer.

**19. SUBJECT:** The BLM Red Book as an Interagency Guideline

**DISCUSSION:** Currently there is too much agency specific policy between the Forest Service and BLM in the existing document to make it interagency in nature. The text itself provides good documentation, but the overall book needs some work to become an interagency document. The IOSWT is having difficulty trying to coordinate the *Fireline Handbook*, *Incident Response Pocket Guide (Yellow Book)*, and the *Interagency Fire and Fire Aviation Operations (Red Book)*. To have consistency in these three publications, the IOSWT should be responsible for the development, writing, and maintenance of each.

**20. SUBJECT:** Geographic Area Coordinating Advisory Group Charter

**DISCUSSION:** As a result of joint meetings between the GACG and NWCG it was determined that a more formal relationship was needed for implementation activities. We feel it would improve communications/cooperation within and between the GACGs and the NWCG.

**MOTION:** Approved the Charter as submitted.

**SECONDED AND CARRIED**

**21. SUBJECT:** Incident Commander Task Group formation

**DISCUSSION:** It appears that this would be a good opportunity for the Type 1 Incident Commanders to share in many of the decisions that affect their mission. It appears to be a good opportunity but may be premature to make this decision today given organizational decisions that need to be addressed within NWCG.

**22. SUBJECT:** FY 2003 budget

**DISCUSSION:** Based on knowledge of appropriation and the reduction from FY 02 the members feel comfortable in approving the budget as illustrated. The attached spread sheet shows the Working Team/Advisory Group funding distribution and projects for FY 2003.

**MOTION:** Approve the FY 2003 budget

## SECONDED AND CARRIED

### 23. **SUBJECT:** IOSWT/ICS Consortium relations

**DISCUSSION:** The Consortium is proposing a change in the NIIMS/ICS position title and duties of the Medical Unit Leader to Fire Fighter Rehab Unit Leader. The feeling from IOSWT is that this will probably occur for the structural community with a note that it is designed for the structural fire fighter only.

### 24. **SUBJECT:** ICS organization

**DISCUSSION:** The Canadians and Australian work groups are including Sector Units in their revised organization structure. The current ICS permits the Task Force or Strike Team Leader to be assigned to a section of line below a designated Division but there isn't much use of segment (or sector) line assignments within the United States.

### 25. **SUBJECT:** Incident Management Team configuration

**DISCUSSION:** The determination of IMT size and configuration has been under study by the IOSWT, ICs and Agency Administrators. The first recommendation was to have 44 on a Type 1 team and 27 on a Type 2 team that would consider all risk as well as wildland fire applications. The IOSWT received very few comments on the proposal to adopt a new standard for Type 1 and II IMTs. However, past comments received and the few recent comments on changing team size standards in the National Mobilization Guide indicate that there is a wide range of opinions on this matter.

Therefore, a decision not to change the team size standard at this time was made. NWCG does realize that there is a problem with the configuration of teams and will review this again in the future.

### 26. **SUBJECT:** Future meetings

**DISCUSSION:** 86<sup>th</sup> meeting - January 28 and 30, 2003. January 29, 2003 will be a joint NWCG/CIFFC meeting in Boise, ID.

87<sup>th</sup> meeting - May 13 - 15, 2003 St. Louis, MO.

88<sup>th</sup> meeting. October 1 - 2, 2003 NWCG, September 29-30, 2003 a joint meeting between NWCG/FCOG in Sydney, Australia.