NWCG Strategic Plan

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The NWCG's vision for the future is:

The nation's resources and communities are protected and enhanced through safe, comprehensive, and cohesive interagency wildland fire management.

NWCG Mission

Provide national leadership and establish, implement, maintain and communicate policy, standards, and guidelines for wildland fire program management

NWCG Goals

QUALIFICATIONS, STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

Wildland fire organizations share common qualifications, standards, and guidelines which are developed through collaborative interagency processes

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Agency and cooperator organizations are staffed with qualified employees who meet the needs and goals of wildland fire programs today and in the future

COMMUNICATIONS

Multi-directional communication regarding wildland fire programs and concepts fosters understanding, acceptance and support of wildland fire organizations

NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR WILDLAND FIRE, INCLUDING THE COHESIVE STRATEGY

Differences in federal, state, tribal and local policies are recognized at all levels of wildland fire organizations; adaptations in fire management are incorporated locally.

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION & DELIVERY

Wildland fire agencies and cooperators share common business practices for wildland fire programs

INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

Wildland fire organizations respond to, manage and support incidents safely, seamlessly and efficiently

Guiding Principles

SAFETY

We believe safety is our core value, therefore, public and firefighter safety is our first priority in all wildland fire management activities.

COST EFFECTIVENESS

We believe the wise and efficient use of funds is a high priority, therefore, we will consider and evaluate the costs associated with implementing NWCG's objectives.

INTERAGENCY COMMUNICATION, COORDINATION & COOPERATION

We believe that interagency communication, coordination and cooperation are vital to the effective and efficient use of the nation's wildland fire management resources, therefore, we will base our actions on the collective needs and capabilities of the interagency community.

LEADERSHIP

We believe effective wildland fire management is the result of leadership at all levels, therefore, we will provide and promote leadership throughout all NWCG activities.

TRUST & INTEGRITY

We believe trust and integrity are inherent to the success of the NWCG, therefore, deliberations will be open and transparent and we will honor, respect, and support the decisions of the NWCG.

RESPECT

We believe in mutual respect for the differences in member organizations' responsibilities, missions, and capabilities, therefore, NWCG decisions represent a consensus and are supported by all.

EXCELLENCE

We believe in excellence throughout all NWCG activities, therefore, we are deliberative in our decision-making process and are accountable for our actions.

GOAL 1 – Qualifications, Standards and Guidelines

Wildland fire organizations share common qualifications, standards, and guidelines which are developed through collaborative interagency processes

Objectives

1. NWCG is a nationally recognized organization for wildland fire standards

2. NWCG has efficient processes for reviewing, updating, implementing, and communicating standards and guidelines

4. Stewardship roles and responsibilities for the development, implementation and maintenance of data, products, and IT applications are clearly defined and understood

5. Interagency standards for personnel training, experience and fitness are appropriate and regularly maintained

6. Interagency standards for equipment and supplies are appropriate and regularly maintained

7. Interagency guidelines for fire management operating procedures are appropriate and regularly maintained

8. Interagency data standards are appropriate and regularly maintained

9. Standards for NWCG publications and other products are appropriate, current, and regularly maintained

Critical Success Assumptions

1. NWCG has a diverse, knowledgeable, and experienced cadre of experts

2. NWCG is timely in decision making

3. Guidelines are in place for development, implementation, and monitoring of standards

4. Current industry standards are used to develop MWCG products

5. IT systems and applications support the documentation, use, and monitoring of interagency standards

6. NWCG regularly communicates understandable standards to its stakeholders

Barriers

1. Intractable processes reduce our ability to make timely decisions

2. Declining federal and partner budgets

3. Agency-centric decision-making

4. Differences in partner missions and capacities to adopt and implement standards

5. Operating environment differences between agencies

6. Differing, sometimes opposing interests of stakeholders

GOAL 2 – Workforce Development

Agency and cooperator organizations are staffed with qualified employees who meet the needs and goals of wildland fire programs today and in the future

Objectives

1. Wildland fire's qualifications and certification system meets wildland fire management needs and provides an interface to the all-hazard arena

2. Have an effective system for employee development and growth that is focused on creating and supporting a sustainable wildland fire management workforce

3. Wildland fire leaders are experienced, highly-trained, and recognized for their fire and resource leadership skills

4. Have a plan that provides resource and workforce capacity to meet the interagency wildland fire community needs

5. Have a system that provides performance accountability for all positions in 310-1

Critical Success Assumptions

1. Agencies allow employees with current expertise to participate in wildland fire management activities

2. Agencies are responsive to meeting the current and future wildland fire workforce and leadership staffing requirements

3. Training and certification requirements are transparent to individuals and supervisors and holds both accountable

4. NWCG is responsive to needed changes in curriculum and delivery priorities and methods

5. Supporting IT systems align with the business requirements to ensure meeting technology changes, advances in training delivery, and accountability for training and skills enhancement

Barriers

1. Retiring workforce, loss of qualified IMT leaders and shrinking workforce to succeed traditional positions

2. Declining federal and partner budgets

3. Traditional course development and revision processes are slow and time-consuming and lack clear priorities and collaboration

4. Limited past succession planning - interested workforce not well-identified or supported

5. Increasing complexity of fire programs and incidents

GOAL 3 – Communications

Multi-directional communication regarding wildland fire programs and concepts fosters understanding, acceptance and support of wildland fire organizations

Objectives

1. NWCG information is available to the wildland fire community, agency leadership, and other interested parties

2. Collaboration between NWCG and the external affairs staff of its partnering agencies is promoted and supported

3. NWCG strategic plan, vision, mission and objectives are well-defined and understood by its groups, the wildland fire community and agency leadership

4. Communication and coordination between branch coordinators and committees and branch coordinators and the NWCG Executive Board results in efficiencies and accountability

5. The roles, responsibilities and priorities for communication are well-defined for the NWCG Executive Board, branch coordinators, Program Management Unit, committee chairs, and NIFC External Affairs

6. Well-defined and efficient processes for information flow exists between NWCG, the wildland fire community, agency leadership, DHS, the all-hazard arena, and other interested parties

7. Reduce the redundancies among interagency wildland fire websites

Critical Success Assumptions

1. NWCG branch coordinators actively participate with committees and coordinate with Executive Board liaisons

2. Committees and branch coordinators collaborate to develop work plans, propose budget requests, and present accomplishments that are linked to NWCG strategies and priorities

3. NWCG Executive Board and the Program Management Unit annually validate NWCG Strategic Plan goals

4. A lead communication specialist is closely engaged with NWCG

5. NWCG participants accept, understand, and adopt the NWCG Strategic Plan and changes in NWCG business practices

Barriers

1. Declining federal and partner budgets

2. No full-time position dedicated to NWCG communication

3. Inconsistent and conflicting IT security requirements that result in limited effectiveness of communication

GOAL 4 – National Framework for Wildland Fire, including the Cohesive Strategy

Differences in federal, state, tribal and local policies are recognized at all levels of wildland fire organizations; adaptations in fire management are incorporated locally.

Objectives

1. Wildland fire policies and the Cohesive Strategy have common interpretation within the wildland fire community

2. NWCG policies facilitate implementation of national, state, local, and tribal wildland fire policies, priorities and long-term initiatives

3. Employees at all levels have a clear and common understanding of the Federal Fire Policy and the goals of the Cohesive Strategy

4. The wildland fire workforce at all levels (locally and geographically) have a clear and common understanding of local and state fire policies and the guiding legislation that supports wildland fire management

Critical Success Assumptions

1. NWCG policy development and implementation must facilitate a thorough review, recommendation and approval process

2. Policies must be supported and advocated across wildland fire organizations

3. Close coordination must occur with FEC, NASF Fire Committee, and NGO Partners

4. Policy is articulated to the field in a timely manner in clear text

5. Governance in place and recognized at all levels

Barriers

1. Different agency missions and responsibilities of NWCG members create confusion in understanding policies and the mission of NWCG

2. Different agency organizations, cultures and stakeholder interests

3. Inconsistent communication strategy within and between agencies and NWCG members and partners

4. Perception of conflicting goals between and within agencies due to multiple resource program goals (e.g. wildlife, recreation)

5. External influences

GOAL 5 – Program Implementation & Delivery

Wildland fire agencies and cooperators share common business practices for wildland fire programs

Objectives

1. Interagency collaboration and participation are promoted and supported

2. Data is shared across systems and agencies

3. NWCG products and services are monitored annually for effectiveness, implementation, prioritization, workload balance, accessibility and accomplishment

4. The NWFEA Program is established, well-defined and understood

5. Decision support systems are continually enhanced and integrated as standard practice into wildland fire agencies

6. IT applications are rapidly developed, based on solid business cases, and are readily available to support wildland fire business and programs

7. IT systems align with the NWFEA target architecture

8. A single wildland fire IT investment processes is well-defined, understood, transparent, and consistently applied at all levels

9. A single wildland fire change management process is well-defined, understood, transparent, and consistently applied at all levels

10. Well-defined budgetary processes effectively leverage partnering opportunites and support the work of NWCG

11. NWCG is based on a "Service-First" concept - work is organized, leverages partnerships across agency boundaries, and provides integrated quality service to the wildland fire community

12. NWCG nimbly responds to changing technologies, strategies, and environmental conditions

Critical Success Assumptions

1. Interagency participation and cooperation

2. Compliance with NWCG policies, programs, and procedures

3. Efficient review and implementation of changes in policies and business practices

4. Supporting IT systems align with current and future business requirements to ensure meeting the business practices, technology changes, data management and accountability f NWCG programs

5. Deliberative evaluation of committee roles and responsibilities to meet changing and future needs of stewardship areas and expertise needed

6. Ability to pool resources to accomplish programs

7. Clear identification and acceptance of stewardship responsibilities

Barriers

1. Declining federal and partner funding

2. Conflicting demands for time and multiple priorities for subject matter experts

3. IT systems and applications lag behind business needs

4. Reducing workforce - fewer employees and multiple resource program goals

5. Overburdened by processes

GOAL 6 – Incident Management

Wildland fire organizations respond to, manage and support incidents safely, seamlessly and efficiently

Objectives

1. Accountability policies and processes for incidents are well-defined and implemented

2. NWCG collaborates with the Department of Homeland Security for interfaces in emergency service operations

3. Communication systems (voice and data) provide interagency interoperability

4. Have a well-defined and understood interagency infrastructure in place for safe, timely, and effective response to incidents

5. Have adequate resource and workforce capability to effectively respond to wildland fire incidents

6. Highly-skilled fire leaders actively support agency administrators through decision support processes

Critical Success Assumptions

1. Agency missions and policies are accounted for

2. Collaborative and transparent decision support process used on incidents

3. Timely, accurate intelligence to assist in setting priorities and decision making

4. Communication systems that provide interagency interoperability (voice and data)

5. Commitment by all to militia concept

6. Capability for contracting

Barriers

1. Conflicting unique agency direction

2. Competition for resources outside mission (including non-fire and international incident support)

3. Lack of interagency workforce management vision and strategies

4. Lack of interagency interoperability communication technologies and equipment (especially voice and data) hinders the ability to efficiently respond to and work in complex incident environments

5. External influences

6. Increased complexity in incident environments (wildland urban interface, climate, fuels, social and stakeholder values and interests)