

National Predictive Service Group (NPSG) Meeting

Meeting Notes

Location: McClellan Training Center, Sacramento, California

Meeting Dates: October 14-16, 2008

Members Present:

- Tom Wordell – FS/NICC – Fire Analysts Representative – NPSG Chair
- Rick Ochoa – BLM/NICC – Fire Weather Program Representative – NPSG Vice Chair
- Susie Stingley-Russell – ONCC – GACC Center Managers Representative
- Paul Witsaman – NWS, National Weather Service Representative
- Marva Willey – FS/ONCC, Intelligence Coordinators Representative
- Daniel Chan – Georgia Forestry Commission, NASF Representative
- Tom Rolinski – BLM/OSCC – GACC Meteorologists Representative
- Charlie Leonard – FS/NICC – Intelligence Program Representative
- John Barborinas – BIA – Field Level Fire Managers Representative
- Rex McKnight – BLM/NV State Office, Geographic Operations Group Liaison

Members Absent:

- Kim Christensen – FS/NICC Manager – NICC Representative
- Neal Hitchcock – FS/NIFC – NMAC Representative
- Dan Smith – NASF, NWCG Liaison

Guests:

- Robyn Heffernan – Meteorologist – NICC
- John Noneman – Senior Project Manager – National Interagency Fire Center
- Tom Zimmerman – Research – National Interagency Fire Center
- Matt Jolly – Ecologist, Missoula Technology and Development Center
- Larry Bradshaw – Meteorologist, Missoula Technology and Development Center
- Paul Schlobohm – FENWT Chair
- Fred Svetz – Meteorologist, Western Great Basin Coordination Center

Notetaker: Lani Williams – Boise Dispatch Center

Meeting Agenda Topics:

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. WFDSS Update and Future Role of Dispatch
3. End to End Fire Reporting Business Case Update

4. Interagency Fire Management Efficiency Assessment Report
5. Fire Occurrence Reporting System (FORS) Data Standards Update
6. Update/Info Sharing from Meteorological and Intelligence Working Groups
 - a. Follow up on assigned tasks
 - b. SIT/209 Committee Updates and Changes
 - c. IAWF Yellowstone Fire Conference – Recap
 - d. Web Task Group Task and Issues
7. NWCG Restructuring Update
8. Update on FENWT Issues and Topics
 - a. RAWs Network Analysis
 - b. ROMAN Business Case
9. Fire Weather Committee Update
10. GIS Tool Development and Update
11. 7-Day Product Updates
 - a. Map/Graphic Display, interpretation and Fact Sheet needs
 - b. Verification process and tools to automate
 - c. Backup procedures
 - d. Proposal to develop on-line product
 - e. Other future enhancements
 - f. Resource component to 7-Day
12. Lessons Learned from NOPS 2008 Fire Season
13. NWS Update
 - a. NWS National Agreement and Operating Plan Update
 - b. Fire weather grids document review
 - c. LAL forecast issue paper
 - d. Other NWS issue/product updates
14. NPSG Budget – Recap of 2007 and discussion of 2008 projects
15. NPSG Action Item Tracking List Review
16. Promoting continuing education for the FBAN/LTAN, Fire Weather and Predictive Services communities
17. Update on RMRS Fire Lab and GSI, NARR, EROS Fire Potential products
18. Predictive Services Annual Meeting Update
19. Value of Predictive Service Program Research Project
20. Query 209 Resource Utilization Program Presentation
21. NPSG Strategic Plan: Review and Discuss
 - a. Strategies for keeping Task Teams on schedule and managing priorities
 - i. Predictive Services Brochure
 - ii. Product Standards
 - iii. Web Page Review
22. Open
23. Agenda Topics and Logistics for Next Meeting(s)

Exhibits:

- A. Action Items, Decisions and Meeting Topics

- B. Budget
- C. WFDSS Update and Future Role of Dispatch
- D. iRWIn – Integrated Reporting of Wildland-Fire Information – An End to End Approach
- E. Overview of Wildland Fire Organizations and Governance
- F. NWCG Group Types
- G. Establishing NWCG Groups
- H. Defining an NWCG Group
- I. National Interagency Wildland Fire Management Structure
- J. Southwest Area 7 Day Significant Fire Potential
- K. Northern California Operations Lessons Learned 2008
- L. NWS Fire Weather Program; National/Regional Update
- M. WFAS Update
- N. Valuation of Predictive Services - Update

Tuesday – October 14, 2008

Agenda Item: Welcome and Introductions and Meeting Logistics – Tom Wordell

Tom welcomed everyone and covered the agenda.

Agenda Item: Wildland Fire Decision Support System (WFDSS) Update and Future Role of Dispatch – Tom Zimmerman (Exhibit C)

A Pilot Program was in place during 2008, with 64 fires analyzed.

The target date for delivery is February 2009, with existing sites to alternate program will be taken off-line.

Comparison of current wildland fire processes

- Primary Role
- WFSA – Comparison of multiple alternatives, documentation of preferred alternative
- WFIP – Documentation of fire use decision, long-term risk assessment, decision support, long-term operational plan
- IAP – Short-term tactical plan
- LTIP – Documentation of course of action consistent with WFSA, long-term risk assessment, decision support, long-term operational plan.

Wildland Fire Decision Support System

- Primary Role – Documentation of strategic decision, course of action, long-term risk assessment, decision support, long-term operational plan.
- Strategic Objectives – Resource Benefits and Protection
- Management Action Focus – Strategic and Tactical
- Temporal Scale – Short to Long
- Spatial Scale – Incident or Complex
- Validation – Defined Frequency
- Revision/Update – Continually in response to conditions

- Tactical Responses – Full range of tactical responses available, must be justifiable
- Goals of Development
 - Documents strategic decisions
 - Provides decision support
 - Utilizes appropriate fire behavior modeling, economic principles and information technology
 - Allows for operational plan preparation
 - Is linear, scalable, progressive and responsive to fire complexity
 - Is spatially oriented, graphically displayed, with no reliance on large text input requirements
 - Is internet-based to provide risk and decision sharing simply and efficiently
 - Is applicable to all wildland fires as a single process
- Replaces the multiple process of WFSA, WFIP, LTIP and SIP
- Meets needs of all current users of the WFSA process.

Agenda Item: End to End Fire Reporting Business Case Update, Integrated Reporting of Wildland-Fire Information (iRWIn) – John Noneman (Exhibit D)

What is iRWIn?

- An NWCG sponsored project challenged to:
 - Explore opportunities for developing an “end-to-end” fire reporting system to provide an integrated and coordinated process to collect and report incident/event data.

Who’s asking for iRWIn?

- NWFEA Blueprint Goals/Recommendations (2008)
- NWCG Information Resources Management Strategy Project: Wildland Fire Business Model (Yellowbook 1996):
- eGov Disaster Management Report (2006):

Why iRWIn?

- Fire Reporting is a key function of Wildland Fire and can impact many other process and systems of the Wildland Fire Enterprise
 - Operations
 - Logistics
 - Information
 - Planning
 - Research

What are the Benefits?

- Allow consistent reporting of data
- Reduce, if not eliminate, the duplicate entry of data
- Speed access to data in diverse source systems
- Increase data accuracy
- Increase the availability of data
- Identify authoritative sources

Today’s system includes many different systems that each require data entry.

A Service bus is one solution; a service oriented architecture where all systems connect to one place and share information.

Where do we go from here?

- Phase 1 – Analysis and Business Case Development
 - September 2008 – September 2009
 - Presentation of Alternatives
 - Selection of Alternatives
- Phase 2 – Form a Project Team to implement selected alternative

Agenda Item: Interagency Fire Management Efficiency Assessment Report – Susie Stingley-Russell

Predictive Services was included in the Dispatch Efficiency Study and is mentioned in the Executive Summary. The report is available at:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/management/assessments/>

What management is doing with the study is not known at this time.

Discussion:

- Predictive Services remains understaffed and continues to be affected with budget cuts and staffing reductions.
 - As a multi-agency program, petitioning for funding is difficult.
- ➔ **Action Item 191:** Draft letter regarding NPSG request to expedite hiring of Meteorologist in Region 5 (Southern California Operations Center).
Responsible: Tom Rolinski and Tom Wordell
Due Date: Postponed – GS-13 job is now being advertised on USA Jobs

Agenda Item: Fire Occurrence Reporting System (FORS) Data Standards Update – Tom Wordell

- The initial attempt of what iRWIn is attempting now
 - A User Assessment was completed with funding from the National Park Service
 - 38 Data Elements were identified
 - The findings were presented to NWCG
 - The decision was to develop standards for the identified data elements
 - This work is progressing
 - It appears there will be a Fire Occurrence Sub-Committee in the restructured NWCG Organization
- ➔ **Action Item 192:** Add link to Data Standards on the NPSG Website
Responsible: Tom Wordell
Due Date: Done 12/16/2008 – posted to NICC website under Logistics -> Reference Materials -> Other Helpful Docs

Agenda Item: Update/Information and Sharing from Meteorologist and Intelligence Working Groups

Meteorologist Working Group – Tom Rolinski

The group has been working on the Action Items from last fall's meeting and has been focusing on planning the annual National Predictive Services Meeting the last two months. This meeting will be conducted in more of a working group format.

- Working on changes to the 7-Day Product (addition of another color)
- Future of Predictive Services

Intelligence Working Group – Marva Willey

- Life Cycle for the new Sit209 Project
 - 2009 Business Needs
 - 2011 Implementation
- Intelligence Specialist (INTS)
 - Rocky Mountain Geographic Area will be hosting the Intelligence Specialist Course in 2009 and is still in need of instructors.
 - The Southern Geographic Area is scheduled to host the course in 2010.
 - The Position Description has been submitted for inclusion in the AD Pay Plan.
- The Web Site Review has been completed.
- 7-Day Product
 - Jay Ellington continues to work on the resource component for the 7 Day Product.
 - The Rocky Mountain Coordination Center adding the resource component in 2009.
- NIMS209 – not much is happening on the Department of Homeland Security development.

Discussion:

- There may be possibilities to link the redesign of the SIT209 to iRWIn and a benefit if inviting Rochelle Pederson to the annual National Predictive Services Meeting.

IAWF Yellowstone Fire Conference – Recap – Rick Ochoa

- The event was well attended.
- These types of meetings provide good opportunities to market Predictive Services.

Web Task Group Task and Issues

The group focused the review to six areas:

- Incident Information
- Predictive Services
- Logistics/Dispatch
- Administrative/Management
- Related Links
- Accessibility (Section 508 Compliance)

A score of 60% was considered passing and all Geographic Areas Passed. The complete review was distributed.

Discussion:

- Each Geographic Area manages their websites differently due in part to agency protocols.
 - These are Geographic Area Websites, not Predictive Services; although Predictive Services has taken responsibility in the past. Findings need to be routed to the Center Managers.
- ➔ **Action Item 193:** Prepare letter of Direction to Kim Christensen for the Center Managers, presenting the findings requesting 85% compliance on 24 of 28 elements.
Responsible: Tom Wordell and Susie Stingley-Russell
Due Date: April 2009

Wednesday – October 15, 2008

Agenda Item: NWCG Restructuring Update – Paul Schlobohm (Exhibits E, F, G, H and I)

Overview of Wildland Fire Organizations and Governance

The new Governance Structure:

- Wildland Fire Leadership Council (WFLC) – Provides strategic leadership and oversight
- Fire Executive Council (FEC) – Coordinated Policy and Direction (Fire/Fuels/Aviation)
- National Wildfire Coordinating Group – Coordinated Policy and Program Implementation

Why did NWCG and NFAEB combine?

- To provide improved coordination for:
 - Policy
 - Standards
 - Operations
- To decrease role confusion
- To reduce overlap and duplication
- To simplify governance

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.

- Goals:
 - Standards and Guidelines
 - Qualifications
 - Communications
 - Fire Policy

- Program Implementation
- Incident Operations
- Funding will tier off these goals

NWCG Substructure:

Working Teams are now Committees and the number has been reduced from over 50 to 14. The Committees are organized into Branches and each Branch has a Coordinator. NPSG is under NMAC, and is not assigned to a Branch. There are three Branches:

- Preparedness Branch
- Policy, Planning and Management Branch
- Equipment and Technology Branch

Restructuring Timeline:

March 2008	Designate Interim Branch Coordinators and Committee Chairs
Spring 2008	Define Committee Scope
Summer 2008	Develop Committee Charters
Summer 2008- Summer-2009	Define and Develop Organizational Support
Summer 2008	Develop New Position PDs
Fall 2008	Recruit and Fill New Positions
Summer 2008-Fall2009	Define and Charter Subcommittees and Task Teams
Summer 2008-Summer 2009	Develop and Implement Transition Plans
Fall 2009	Transition Completed

Discussion:

- Under the new governance NPSG will be a subcommittee under the Fire Environment Committee (FENC)
- Time on the NWCG agenda will be scheduled through the Branch Directors
- NPSG is the only entity that represents a program – and that program has budgetary needs.

Agenda Item: Update on FENWT Issues and Topics – Paul Schlobohm

RAWS Network Analysis

The project was funded through agreement with the University of Utah and CEFA-DRI. The analysis involves the evaluation of our current RAWS network and other available networks including their gridded capability. It will also evaluate access to fire weather data and the future of ROMAN. Tom Wordell is the Business Lead.

Agenda Item: Fire Weather Committee Update – Robyn Heffernan

Robin will be on Maternity Leave beginning mid-December. Contacts for the Fire Weather Committee will be Randall Benson or James Hardy

RAWS Standards continue to be the group’s top priority

Southwest Pilot Project – evaluating two methods to improve RAWS data quality

RAWS Super User

WIMS Super User

DRI RAWs Archive – providing advice to DRI on what changes the users would like – submit requests to Rick Ochoa.

Agenda Item: GIS Tool Development and Update – Robyn Heffernan

Verification Tool

- To verify monthly and seasonal outlooks by verifying fire occurrence and the Monthly Dryness Index (MDI). Remember, we are forecasting fire potential not forecasting fires. The Tool is not available at this time, lacks real data to test.

Lightning Occurrence Tool

A gridded product that combines lightning strikes with precipitation amounts. This tool utilizes the most robust precipitation analysis available. The color of the strike represents the level of precipitation. The tool is available through the Remote Sensing and Application Center (RSAC) and relies on National Weather Service (NWS) data; the data is not available until 1030 daily.

- ➔ **Action Item 194:** Request the NWS provide the data earlier.
Responsible: Tom Wordell
Due Date: April, 2009

Agenda Item: Predictive Service Communication Plan Status – Rick Ochoa

The latest version of the brochure was distributed for review. Send comments to Rick Ochoa or Steve Marion.

Steve Marion is working on the video and will have a draft script available at the annual National Predictive Services Meeting.

Discussion:

- Brochure
 - Flip contents to the back
 - Use correct slogan – Leadership in Decision Support Services
 - Can be printed at NIFC

Smoke Management Product – Tom Rolinski

Pete Lahm was to submit a white paper summarizing the history and identifying the need of a product to be used in smoke management. A group was to be formed to develop a pilot project for 2008. Tom has not received the information of Pete and has contacted him without success.

Agenda Item: 7-Day Product Updates – Tom Rolinski (Exhibit J)

- New changes are noted on an Explanation Page
- An additional color was added
 - Orange – addresses Burning Environment
 - Red – Ignition Triggers

- Verification
 - DRI has been contracted and work is still in progress
 - Can be verified either by Predictive Service Area (PSA) or RAWS
- Online Product
 - RSAC has developed an online prototype
 - Capability for the meteorologist to produce from any computer

Agenda Item: Lessons Learned from NOPS 2008 Fire Season – Susie Stingley-Russell (Exhibit K)

Overview

- NOPS was in a continued drought due to driest spring in record despite an above normal snowpack
- Early fire season below 3000' due to multiple foehn wind events
- Grasses cured by mid-May
- Live fuel moistures were critical early

Prior to 6/20/2008

- 1000+ fires
- Burned approximately 48,000 acres
- Destroyed 100+ residences
- 3 existing large fires with considerable resource commitment

The “Big Event”

- June 20 0600 through June 21 2030 hours
- 5,146 Lightning Strikes
- “A storm from the west brought more lightning than was forecast”

Reflection

- The magnitude and scope of the major dry lightning event of June 20-21 was not foreseen by meteorologists
- Most events under southwesterly flow have only minimal North Ops lightning
- Weather maps did not reveal the typical precursors for a major event, and did not indicate the level of instability that would occur.

The Numbers

- 1,010 fire starts reported
- 10 of 11 CALFIRE Units affected
- 9 of 10 Forest Service Units affected

Escalation

- June 21 – NorCal MAC convened
- June 25 – (29 ICS-209s) NOPS went to Preparedness Level (PL) 5
- June 25 – CALMAC convened
- June 26 – a Gubernatorial emergency declaration for multiple counties
- June 28 – a Presidential Declaration providing FEMA support
- June 29 – California National Guard deployed to BTU
- July 1 – NMAC went to PL 5

Prioritization

- Initial Attack fires were complexed on ICS-209s in order to compete for resources
- Each ICS-209 represented numerous fires of varying size and complexity
- Priority setting was done by lumping units together by dispatch center
- ICS-209s were summarized for NorCal MAC and Incident Commander conference calls updated information
- FireScope MACS 410-1 defines the MAC priority setting process for:
 - CALMAC
 - NorCal MAC
 - SoCal MAC
- CALMAC set statewide priorities for 45+ days

Strategy

- The incidents began to fall into categories:
 - Opportunities for containment
 - Extended Duration Incidents (requiring multiple 14-day commitment of Incident Management Teams and resources)
 - Long Term Incidents (requiring Long Term Implementation Plans with potential for some level of resource commitment until a season ending event)
- Strategy was based on prioritization and these categories

Intelligence versus Information

- What is the system of record?
 - The Sit Report and ICS-209s
 - The Governor's Report
 - CALFIRE's Report on Conditions (ROCs)
 - Incident Management Situation Report (IMSR)
 - Conference calls and Duty Officer Information
 - Joint Information Center (JIC) Information and releases
 - News and Notes
- Lack of common definitions?
 - Staffed versus unstaffed fires
 - Controlled versus Contained
- Use of non-standard terms without a common system of record
- Once utilized by federal, state or information group the demand for information could not be denied

Intelligence/Information Demands

- NorCal local units, incidents, line officers, support personnel and firefighters
- NorCal MAC and NorCal JIC
- SoCal MAC
- CALMAC and Statewide JIC
- FEMA and ESF4
- The Governor's Office
- NICC and NMAC
- The NIIC
- Regional Forester, CPRs, RFRs, etc.

- The Forest Service WO
- The WO Fire Information Desk

Staffing and Workload – “Think Big! This is what we’re trained for”

- IR pod and additional IR capability
- GIS and plotters
- Computer Technical Specialist
- ROSS – Cognos Report specialists
- NIMO as MAC group support
- Additional Intel staff (fed and CALFIRE)
- Additional facilities, computers, and supporting equipment

Managing Communications

- Conference calls started at 0730 am and ended at 1900 pm – at least 8 of those calls required Intel, Fire Weather, and/or Duty Chief
- Establishing who is responsible for the statewide dissemination of information
- Establishing what will be used for the system of record

Managing Work Products

- The volume of information was impossible under standard MACs process given limitations of the current ICS-209 program
- “Newcomers” introduced new products
- Laborsome summaries were compiled for managers and for the JIC
- **End State:** As a system of record, the ICS-209 data base needs the ability to pull reports, make spread sheets, and do data analysis in real time
- Ensure that all products are electronic and keep system from the beginning
- Logical filing system and backup data
- Common area for sharing large amounts of data. . .ftp sites, training and managing accounts
- **End State:** Well understood, common and standard procedures prior to fire season

Wildland Fire Decision Support System (WFDSS)

- Regional WFDSS plan in place spring 2008
- Centralized WFDSS Analyst core group
- GACC Intel sections would initialize runs for emerging large fires
- Ordered in GACC long term analyst support to work with Area Commands, IMTs, and local forest planners
- Interagency involvement in core group
- Ran products for CALFIRE incidents

GACC-wide Crew Spreadsheet

- A summary of incident resource commitments and critical needs within the North Ops geographic area, introduced by NIMO
- The data is pulled from incident’s ICS209.
- The team supporting the Intelligence function at the GACC updated the data prior to 0900 daily.
- One of the tools used by NORCAL MAC group and North Ops GACC for allocation of resources.

- Because of the nature and duration of this siege longer term resource needs had to be identified.
- Team was asked to enter the incident name, the first date for the data and the numbers of resources demobed by date and resource kind and to project this for a 14 day period.
- In addition to summarizing demobilization of critical resources, project the critical resources needed for the following 14 days
- Datasheet was posted on FTP site and a gmail account was set up to send data back and forth

Google Earth KML with IR

- Google Earth overlaid with CONUS Fire Perimeter data and MODIS heat points. This data is updated every 12-24 hours and uploaded to <http://activefiremaps.fs.fed.us/wms.php>. This process was used for the IC briefings.

Managing Work Products

NOS MACS-429 – Prioritization Matrix

- Video Teleconferencing
 - GACC to GACC
 - GACC to NICC
 - Team Meetings
- Video Recordings
 - Camtasia Software
 - Daily Weather Brief
 - Fire Weather Refresher
- Fire Behavior Advisories
 - First issued June 21, interagency in nature for entire state
 - Updated August 4 to reflect conditions
- Long Term Assessments
 - Fire Use Management Team completed assessment July 7
 - Updated locally with FBAN assistance from NICC on August 3
- Sonoma Technology, Incorporated
 - Experimental Smoke Forecast for California Issued Saturday, August 30, 2008, 1030 PDT Northern California (North Ops)
- FTP Sites
 - In general, several locations for data storage, had to work to get everyone on same site
 - <ftp.nifc.gov> – Incident Specific Data
 - Password management
 - File setup and management
 - <ftp.oes.ca.gov>
 - CALMAC briefings and priorities

Escalation

- July 17 – President and Governor visit NOPS, fly nearby fires
- July 18 – Mark Rey visits
- July 25 – Fatality on Iron/Alps Complex
- July 26 – Fatality on Panther Incident

- August 8 – Helicopter crash at H-44 on Iron/Alps Complex – 9 fatalities
- July 26 to August 25 – Returning them home, memorial services, and investigations
- Visits from the Chief of the Forest Service and the Undersecretary of Interior as well as other dignitaries

Year to Date (10/10/2008)

- Total Fires – 4,471
- Acres Burned – 972, 040
- Structures Lost – 783, including 441 residences
- Incident Management Teams Deployed – 76
- Support from
 - Australia
 - British Columbia
 - Pacific Islands
 - Puerto Rico
 - New Zealand
 - FEMA
 - Department of Defense
 - California National Guard
 - 49 states, including California

Reflection

- “Hope is not a Strategy”

Discussion:

- Smoke was not a part of the decision making process for MAC; may need to incorporate into planning and managing of long term events.
- The ICS-209 information may no longer be useful in priority setting.
- The IMSR seemed inadequate in reflecting the magnitude of the situation.

Agenda Item: NWS Update – Rick Ochoa, Roger Lamoni, Kim Runc (Exhibit L)

NWS Fire Weather Program; National/Regional Update

2008 Accomplishments

- New National Interagency Agreement
 - Signed August 1, 2008
 - Retroactive to October 1, 2007
 - In effect until October 1, 2012
 - Reimbursement allowed for admin leave after 14-day dispatch, following Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook rules
 - Allows non-Met NWS personnel to fill IMT positions with regional approval
 - Provision to review IMET standards yearly
 - Allows for National Annual Operating Plan
 - Does not supersede local AOPs
 - 2009 NAOP has been drafted; will be under NWS management and NWSEO review this winter

- Experimental Western Region (WR) Fire Weather Web Pages
 - Major WR program accomplishment for 2008 – many hours of work involved
 - Provides consistent layout across WR
 - Brought together several new web technologies (ADA S508 compliant)
 - “Point and Click” FARSITE support, fire weather PFM and Weather Planner
 - Pop up and dockable drop down menus
 - Direct link to new GIS service
- Experimental WR Fire Weather Web Pages
 - Customer feedback has been very positive
 - Experimental period lasts through next May
 - Additional comments welcome
 - NWS plans to experimentally implement this page nationally in FY10
- Google Maps
 - NWS will switch all web maps to Google in FY09

2009 Goals

- ROMAN
 - New MesoWest servers installed at WRH; Hopefully ROMAN servers can also be purchased and installed soon
 - This will provide robust capability for next several years
 - Eventual merging of both into MADIS possible; servers may reside in Boulder, CO
- National experimental Fire Weather Grids
 - NDFD grids at 5km resolution to be experimental nationally by summer, 2009
 - New grids consist of what NPSG has reviewed:
 - 20 ft winds (standard .87 reduction); Max/Min RH; LAL; Haines; CWR(≥ 10 "); Clearing Index; Mixing Height; Transport Winds; Vent Rate; Max/Min Vent Rate
 - LAL grids should help resolve some issues?
 - NDFD server farm upgrade in FY10
 - Local WRF
- New experimental NWS Spot across WR
 - New web GUI:
 - Google Maps interface
 - Incident type selector
 - Directs user to planning tools beyond 48 hours
 - Allow advance request for Rx burns, etc.
 - Allow scheduling of multiple spot requests for on-going Rx burns
 - Allow e-mailing of forecast
 - Submission blocked if no contact information
 - All Hazard Formatters
 - Wildfires; Rx
 - Inland hazardous materials spills
 - Inland waterway hazardous materials spills
 - Coastal waterway spills and vessel accidents

- Search and rescue
 - Test
 - Easier and reliable forecast updating and copying
- Improved WR fire weather grid GIS service
 - OCWWS purchased new fire weather GIS servers for WR
 - Will be installed this month
 - Will allow production of all fire weather grids as GIS shapefiles for WR
 - Planned conversion by January 1
- NWS Chat
 - An internal instant messaging solution that will allow the NWS to communicate with partners;
 - Opportunities for WFOs to exchange info with fireweather users, including GACCs, dispatchers, even folks on PDAs, etc.
 - Any new products on the web can be directly linked in software
 - NWS offices will invite and approve participants so forecasters do not get overwhelmed;
 - Server satisfies all OMB IT security requirements
 - Current timeline is for national test period to begin in the spring of 2009

Agenda Item: NPSG Budget – Recap of 2007 and Discussion of 2008 Projects – Tom Wordell (Exhibit B)

Last Year's Funding \$135,000

Received \$50,000 through Neal Hitchcock last year, this year it will be \$40,000

Receive \$60,000 for ROMAN

Funding Proposals to Date:

- Value of Predictive Services (Fred Svez) – Funded
 - The purpose of this work is to develop a model to investigate the influence of information provided by Predictive Services on the cost of wildland fire suppression.
- Seasonal Assessment Workshops - Funded
- Verification for 7 Day Product
- Fuel Moisture Database
- Web-based Archive Project – may be combined with the Online 7-Day Product
- Travel and Training assistance to the Intelligence Working Group

Decision: Travel and Training assistance to the Intelligence Working Group will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Thursday, October 16, 2008**Agenda Item: Promoting continuing education for the FBAN/LTAN, Fire Weather and Predictive Service Communities – John Barborinas**

Currently there is only one Fire Behavior Workshop held annually, in the Northern Rockies. It would be beneficial if at least one additional workshop could be held to reinforce fire behavior/weather and provide recurrency workshops. It may be necessary to explore the possibility of instituting a recertification process.

Discussion:

- Other Geographic Areas hold similar Workshops.
- Fire Behavior Committee could help develop standards.
- Opportunity to market Predictive Services.

Agenda Item: Predictive Services Annual Meeting Update – Tom Rolinski and Marva Willey

The annual National Predictive Services Meeting will be November 18-20, 2008 in Estes Park, Colorado. Both Working Groups have worked on the agenda.

Intelligence Working Group Agenda

- Working Group Charter
- Update Operating Plan
- 209 Charter and Development
- FamWeb applications
- Query 209 program
- Fuel Moisture/Lightning Probability
- GACC Webpage Review
- Training and Development Program
- Historical Fire Weather
- Appropriate Management Response/WFDSS
- Cognos Workshop
- Agenda is available at: <http://gacc.nifc.gov/training/intelligence>

Meteorologist Working Group Agenda:

- 7-Day Product
- Monthly/Seasonal Product
- Discussing future
- Pared down to three areas, with each area break down
- Defining:
 - High Risk
 - Critical Events
- Verification – how to incorporate and improve
- Future of Predictive Services

Agenda Item: NPSG Action Item Tracking List Review – Tom Wordell (Exhibit A)

The Action Items Tracking Table was updated.

Action Item 115 – Develop a tracking mechanism and post performance measures. Robyn Heffernan continues to work on this item.

Action Item 128 – On 7-Day Sign Fire Potential MOS equations from DRI; contact Tim Brown to discuss and staff out backup/contingency plans, costs, etc for the 7-Day MOS equations. This will be accomplished with the on-line 7-Day Product.

Action Item 151 – Enter Priority Action Plans and Tasks into Microsoft Project Manager. Shari Shetler has not had time to complete this task, this item is not critical.

Action Item 170 – Standardization of daily Products. Robyn Heffernan will develop template for daily product from GIS data available from the RSAC Portal Page.

Action Item 178 – Explore the development of web-based Briefings/Conference Calls.

➔ **Action Item 178:** Explore platform opportunities available to all agencies for conference meetings.

Responsible: Rick Ochoa

Due Date: February 2008

Agenda Item: Update on RMRS Fire Lab and GSI, NARR, EROS Fire Potential Products – Matt Jolley and Larry Bradshaw (Exhibit M)

WFAS Update

- Outline
 - New archive search tool on WFAS
 - Growing Season Index on WFAS
 - Real Time Mesoscale Analysis Derived Products
 - NDFD Percentile ERC Forecasts using NARR
- Growing Season Index
 - Image processing added to WFAS under Experimental Products
 - Now available on the WFAS website
 - Should improve data availability
 - Next step is to calculate GSI on the RTMA / NDFD grid
 - Geographic area subsets will be added next
- Real Time Mesoscale Analysis
 - Hourly gridded weather data for the continental United States
 - Temperature, dewpoint, winds, precipitation
 - WFAS is deriving 24 hour summaries from those grids
 - Max / Min Temp
 - Max / Min RH
 - Precipitation amount and duration
 - Summarized over observations time similar to those at RAWS station (1400 MST) not 0Z to 0Z or 12Z to 12Z

- Flexible enough to summarize over other periods such as those needed for morning briefings
- Adding Alaska to processing in the coming months
- Heavy Fuel Moistures from RTMA
 - Use the gridded meteorology from the RTMA to derive a 100 and 1000 hour fuel moisture grid
 - Use these grids to initialize the NDFD fire danger forecasts
 - Finished the prototype system
 - Still needs to be added into daily data processing scripts
- Other RTMA Related Goals
 - Calculate national gridded KBDI
 - Calculate a gridded Energy Release Component and Burning Index for fuel model G for forecast verification
- ERC Percentile Forecasts
 - NDFD Forecasts
 - Working with NWCC to evaluate the indices extracted from key RAWS locations
 - Calculate the gridded climatology for each grid cell using the North American Regional Reanalysis climatology
 - 25th, 50th, 75th, 90th and 95th percentiles were calculated
 - Express the ERCg forecasts from the National Digital Forecast Database relative to their the preceding percentile categories

Agenda Item: NPSG Strategic Plan Review and Discuss – Robyn Heffernan

Robyn updated the group on the current status of the Strategic Plan and led the group through the update process.

Goal 1 Priority 1

- Need to integrate the Current Action Items Table with the Strategic Plan
- Performance Standards are tied to the products and should be identified in product implementation.

➔ **Action Item 195:** Modify G1P1 to include tasks that are currently within the Action Items Table.

Responsible: Tom Wordell and Robyn Heffernan

Due Date: April 2009

Goal 1 Priority 2

- User Assessment Process is mostly completed, need to decide if a new goal should be added or this one revisited.
- Too soon to go back through the process; paper needs to be published to provide credibility.

Goal 2 Priority 1

- The leads are the Meteorologist and Intelligence Group's Chairs.
- Need to narrow the scope and define the courses and training opportunities.

➔ **Action Item 196:** Contact Chuck and narrow the scope to be able make the Actions more specific.

Responsible: Robyn Heffernan and Tom Wordell

Due Date: April 2009

Goal 2 Priority 2

- Provide efficiency to management group.
- A number of actions items have already been completed.
- Need to identify who has what talents within the group.

➔ **Action Item 197:** Develop a questionnaire to determine talents and skill levels.

Responsible: Robyn Heffernan and Susie Stingley-Russell

Due Date: November 2008

Goal 3 Priority 1

- Projects that NPSG supports as well as partners.
 - Seasonal Assessment Workshops
 - The Valuation of Predictive Services project
 - Communications Plan

Goal 3 Priority 2

- Develop and implement a Partnership Plan.
- Parts of this have been completed, process needs more formalized.

Goal 4 Priority 1

- The Handbook; which was completed in 2007 and scheduled for annual review.
- Review should be coordinated at the annual National Predictive Services Meeting.
- Signature group for the Handbook has yet to be determined.

Goal 4 Priority 2

- Confusing when compared to Goal 2 Priority 2.
- Appears to pertain the the operational portion of the program.
- Verbiage needs to be changed.

Goal 4 Priority 3

- Workload Analysis was completed as part of the Dispatch Efficiency Study.
- Includes futuring to be in position when funding opportunities occur.

Status of Simplified url – Robyn Heffernan

She has not been able to acquire this yet.

Agenda Item: Value of Predictive Services Program Research Project – Fred Svetz (Exhibit N)

- Develop a model to investigate the influence of information provided by Predictive Services on the cost of wildland fire suppression.
- Project by Kim Rollins and Laine Christman, University of Nevada, Reno

- Expected costs for fire suppression will be calculated from model results, as well as at the additional expected opportunity costs of having moved a resource away from its home region.
- Upon development of a sound but simplified model; three regions of Nevada with actual fixed resources and varying geographic characteristics and probabilities of significant fire occurrence are being considered as possible locations of interest.
- Currently, a literature review is in progress to assess what others have done to address the matter of resource allocation and how they executed those methods.

➔ **Action Item 198:** Provide assistance to Laine Christman with the FarSite Tutorial.

Responsible: John Barborinas

Due Date: April 2009

Discussion:

- Fire Suppression Costs
 - Project requires data on fire suppression costs.
 - Fred Svetz is assisting with this.
 - Data may be available through Fire Program Analysis (FPA).
- Reviewers
 - Draft of conceptual model needs to be reviewed.
 - Reviewers: Tom Wordell, Susie Stingley-Russell, Marva Willey

Agenda Item: NPSG Action Item Tracking List Review (continued) – Tom Wordell
(Exhibit A)

Action Item 182 – Obtain briefing on the potential thin client AWIPS and the projected timeline. Sher Sharnz will be briefing FENC in December 2008.

Action Item 183 – Send out letter soliciting user specifications, recommended products and identify sources of information data. Tom Rolinski is still waiting to hear from Pete Lahm.

Action Item 185 – Issue direction that only qualified meteorologists will issue the 7-Day Product. This item still needs to be completed.

Action Item 186 – Develop a proposal to demo a product this summer, define product needs and requirements. This item is related to Action Item 183.

Action Item 187 – Explore the possibility of purchasing pins or pens for marketing. Tick Ochoa will explore and have suggestions by February 2009.

Action Item 190 – Contact Kim Christensen and have the Center Managers involved in investigating the impact of WFDSS to the Dispatch/Coordination System. Have Tom Zimmerman participate in a conference call with the Center Managers this fall.

Bin Item – Joint Fire Science Program (JFSP) proposal - CLIMAS

- Project Proposal from the University of Arizona
- Focus on the Southwest
- List of questions to the group from Greg Garvin:
 - What would be interesting to or used by the Geographic Areas?

- What components would the Geographic Areas want to have for a fire history analysis?
- What time frame would the group like to have presented?
- Discussion:
 - Would like to see how fire regimes changed over time (decades).
 - Would like to see at the PSA level;
 - Results need to be in manner that is useful to planners.
 - Access to historical data base from which projections are being made as well as predictions.
 - Maybe seasonal variations.
 - Mapped and graph as well as tabular, graph show departure
 - Would like access to the data.

➔ **Action Item 199:** Provide feedback to Greg Garvin concerning JFSP Proposal.
Responsible: Tom Wordell
Due Date: Done – Completed November 2008

Agenda Item: Query 209 Resource Utilization Program Presentation – Tom Wordell
Import database from 209 data that can become part of CHEETAH
Parameters can be edited; possible to perform error reports within the database
Product will be presented at the annual National Predictive Services Meeting

Future Meetings:

Winter Meeting

Dates: February 9th-12th, to begin at 0800 on Tuesday

Location: Boise, Idaho

Rick Ochoa will secure meeting room.

Spring Meeting

Dates: April 28th and 29th, half days

Location: Virtual Meeting

Virtual Meeting week of April 28th and 29th

End of Meeting