



NWCG Meeting Notes

July 18, 2023

Executive Board: Kim Van Hemelryck (DOI OWF Liaison), Jeff Aramberger (BLM), Jim Karels (NASF), Erik Litzenberg (IAFC), Dave Haston (USFS), Garth Fisher (BIA), Jim Shultz (NPS), Jim Durglo (ITC), Heath Hockenberry (NOAA), Sara Brown (RD&A), Anne Jewell (DoD), Aitor Bidaburu (USFA), Shane McDonald (FWS-Chair),

NWCG Staff: Katy O'Hara (Coordinator), Sarah Lee (Coordinator), Carmen Thomason (Acting Coordinator), Annie Benoit (Training Program Manager), Jesse Bender (IWDG Coordinator), Erica Lamb (Publications Manager), Toni Suminski (IPTM Project Manager), Chelsea McKinney (Acting IPTM Project Manager), Omaira Falcon (Webmaster), Darci Drinkwater (Executive Secretary)

Guests: Tyson Riggs (Wildfire Commission), Annie Schmidt (Wildfire Commission), Rick Gividen (WFLP), Nick Nauslar (FENC), Marlene Eno-Hendren (IPSC), Mike Ellsworth (IPSC), Amanda Mahaffey (Forest Stewards Guild), Esme Cadiente (Forest Stewards Guild)

Topic & Notes	Decision
<p>Wildfire Commission Preliminary Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Established by statute Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). ○ Focused on recommendations to mitigate and manage wildland fire. ○ 50 members from diverse geographies and backgrounds. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Backgrounds in wildland fire, emergency management, and community preparedness. ○ Consensus-based process to complete two reports to Congress. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aviation report released in February 2023. ▪ Final report due September 15, 2023. ○ One year to make recommendations. ○ Three co-chairs: USDA, DOI, and USFA. ○ Empaneled for an additional 180 days following report release. ○ NWCG has a seat. • Recommendations to mitigate and manage wildland fire: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Very specific: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review of Cohesive Strategy ▪ Aviation Report ▪ Stafford Act ○ Very broad: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mitigate and manage wildfire. • Congressional Direction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Coordination 	<p>Final Report will be presented at the September NWCG Executive Board (EB) meeting.</p>

Additional information beyond these meeting notes (i.e., handouts, presentations, maps, etc.) will require a FOIA request to ensure proper privacy regulations are followed. Please request via FOIA Online website <https://www.doi.gov/foia/make-a-request>.



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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cohesive Strategy ○ Federal Spending and Programs ○ Technology ○ Implementation ○ Aviation ● Workgroup Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Aviation ○ Cohesive Strategy ○ Communities ○ Landscape ○ Post-fire ○ Response Coordination ○ Public Health and Infrastructure ○ Science Data and Technology ○ Appropriations ○ Workforce ● Commission Process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ten workgroup topics are interrelated. ○ Additional opportunities to continue conversations in ad hoc groups. ○ Public portal for recommendations. ● Recommendations and Themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Over 250 findings and recommendations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Specific and broad. ▪ Working to weave into a broader narrative. ▪ Cannot go into details until finalized. ○ Key Themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New approaches- not just a land management issue also a public health issue. ▪ Collaboration ▪ Scaled investments- increase funding across all aspects of wildfire management. ▪ Rebalanced priorities- emphasis on pre- and post-fire phases. ▪ Beneficial fire- improve mobilization and training for prescribed fire. ▪ Workforce ▪ Informed, data-driven decision-making. 	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NWCG Highlights: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Architecture or coordination: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Qualifications and training accessibility ▪ Resource ordering system ▪ Reimbursements ▪ Compacts and agreements ▪ Interagency decision support (Fire Environment Center) ▪ Not prescriptive on how to achieve these goals. • Next Steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Final Report rollout, Congressional hearings. ○ Administrative change can advance in existing venues. 	
<p>FIRESCOPE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NWCG was invited in April to become a partner agency with the FIRESCOPE program. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ FIRESCOPE has defined our national system. • Bidaburu and Litzenberg attend FIRESCOPE meetings already for their agencies. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Discussion is insightful. ○ Helpful to be in on the front end of all-hazard topics. ○ Having NWCG in attendance at the meetings has reduced confusion regarding Complex Incident Management (CIM) and other topics. ○ Every EB member has an agency representative on the FIRESCOPE voting body. • FIRESCOPE has representatives on NWCG Committees. • Concern that if NWCG officially becomes a member the need will arise to join every state and local group that requests. 	<p>Bidaburu and Litzenberg will relay this conversation to FIRESCOPE.</p> <p>NWCG Coordinators will provide a list of FIRESCOPE representatives on NWCG Committees to the EB.</p> <p>Topic added to August agenda.</p> <p>McDonald will reach out to FIRESCOPE chair and draft a response to the invite.</p>
<p>New Publication – NWCG Wildland Fire Staff Ride Guide, PMS 470:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication produced by the Leadership Committee (LC) in 2010. • Publication being formalized with a PMS number. • Guidance on how to set up a Staff Ride. 	<p>Decision on PMS 470 added to August agenda.</p>
<p>Criteria to Join NWCG:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arnberger drafted membership criteria document. • Framework for new membership to ensure the EB is making the correct decision. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conversation starter for EB to discussion membership in an executive session. • Concerns that the EB could become too large a group and then become ineffective. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Difficulties in coming to consensus. 	<p>Arnberger will distribute the draft NWCG Criteria to the EB and collect comments.</p> <p>Decision on NWCG Criteria added to August agenda.</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will not be reevaluating current members. • Currently have request from NASA. 	
<p>Big Swamp and Rum Creek Serious Accident Investigation (SAI) Corrective Action Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BLM requesting EB support to tasking NWCG Committees with corrective actions from the SAI. • Accidents happened on multi jurisdiction ground; Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) has signed off on the plan. • Concerns with after action review (AAR) language. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Following medical response with patient transfer of care medical personnel had a difficult time coming together to conduct an AAR. ○ Request that Emergency Medical Committee (EMC) develop process for bringing these groups together. ○ Provide closure and learning opportunities after a traumatic incident. • Concern that Agency Administrators (AAs) are putting firefighters in locations based on the availability of extraction helicopters. 	<p>Tasked NWCG Committees and Coordinators will refine taskings.</p> <p>APPROVAL for BLM to engage with NWCG Committees and proposed future taskings.</p>
<p>Research to Operations Proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need a process to move research to operations within NWCG. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Checks and balances within the process. • Proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ New science with anticipated implications for wildland fire is submitted to the EB by a short briefing paper. ○ EB determines if the new science requires further investigation for a potential action and tasks the appropriate committee. ○ Avenues for feedback should be provided and then the steward committee will consolidate feedback before delivering to the scientist for a response. ○ The steward committee will recommend an action to the EB. ○ EB will make a final decision. • Provides an opportunity for all agencies to be made aware of the impactful new science in wildland fire and establishes clarity of approach for NWCG to act as needed. • Establish a two-way connection between research and operations. • Ability to reverse the process for research that needs to be conducted. 	<p>APPROVAL of proposal with edits suggested.</p> <p>Edit who can submit to agency science which allows for university collaborations.</p> <p>Nauslar with make edits and distribute to EB.</p> <p>Once the proposal is approved NWCG publications and web will create a web portal and then determine if a PMS number is needed.</p> <p>Coordinators will share proposal with committees at October Connections call.</p>
<p>Incident and Position Standards Committee (IPSC) Safety Zone Standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request for change submitted to IPSC. 	<p>Lee will draft a memorandum with a cc to National Multi Agency Coordinating</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If approved will be added to the January 2025 edition of the Incident Response Pocket Guide (IRPG). ○ Risk Management Committee (RMC) and Fire Environment Committee (FENC) approve the proposed change to the standard. ○ IPSC vetted with agencies, and it was requested to have testing done before adopting. ● Draft guidance for using the new calculations in the field. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Drafted by Jimenez, Nauslar, and Fransted. ○ QR code for feedback for fireline individuals and Incident Management Teams (IMTs). ○ Manually input calculations, not an application. ○ Tool to help inform decisions. ○ Need a diverse test group in different environments. ○ Evaluated across all agencies. ○ Teams can request Jimenez be resource ordered as THPS when testing. ○ Safety zones will be larger. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The idea is not the build a huge safety zone but to test the calculations and evaluate in real time. ● Concern that we are solving a problem that does not exist. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Many nuances. ● Need to provide clear guidance to the field of what we are asking of them. ● Feedback from the field will help direct EB decision. 	<p>Group (NMAC) expressing EB support for IMTs field testing new Safety Zone calculations. Draft will be sent to EB prior to release.</p>
<p>Type 1 Command and General Staff (C&G) Trainees and the Use of Field Evaluations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>NWCG Standards for Wildland Fire Position Qualifications</i>, PMS 310-1 currently states the Type 1 C&G trainees need to take S-520, Advanced Incident Management or Complex Incident Management Course (CIMC) before becoming fully qualified. ● In July 2022 the EB stated in NWCG Memorandum 22-002, Transition Plan for CIM Pilot Phase established the pathway for currently qualified Type 1 C&G responders to be granted Complex position competency by their certifying official and provided options for currently qualified Type 2 C&G responders to transition to Complex qualification, through successful completion of either S-520, Advanced Incident Management, or the Complex Incident Management Course (CIMC), or the NWCG Complex Incident Management (CIM) Field Evaluation Form. ● All agencies except the Forest Service (FS) approved the use of the Field Evaluation or S-520 or CIMC to gain Type 1 qualification through IPSC vetting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ FS states that the Field Evaluation and S-520/CIMC are not equivalent. 	<p>No change will be made to PMS 310-1.</p> <p>The CIM Field Evaluation does not apply for Type 1 qualifications. Trainees must attend either S-520 or CIMC.</p> <p>Bender clarified FAQs on the Incident Workforce Development Group (IWDG) StoryMap.</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Field Evaluation is an interim transition tool for CIM and not Type 1 qualifications.● FS FAQG currently has language that support the Field Evaluation for Type 1 trainee qualification.● States are currently allowing the Field Evaluation for Type 1 Trainees but encouraging employees to take S-520/CIMC.● S-520 selections have been made if an individual has a Field Evaluation they are moved to the bottom of the list.● EB will decide if the Type 1 C&G pathway will be removed from the system in June of 2024.● NWCG role is to set the minimum standard then agencies have the discretion to require more of their employees.	
<p>Engaging Non-Traditional Partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Conversations with outside entities stating lack of engagement with NWCG spurred the drafting of this document.● Due to feedback from the EB this topic was moved from the Joint Session agenda back to the EB only agenda.● Increasing capacity means we need to engage all available resources.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Without compromising safety.● Increasing engagement between traditional and non-traditional resources.● Understanding barriers limiting our access to these resources.● NWCG standards need to be streamlined not lowered.● Need to increase education, many prospective resources do not know what the NWCG mission is.● IWDG is currently working on a tasking from NMAC to increase incident support capabilities, including increasing participation from non-traditional agencies/organizations.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Thus far have identified 30+ groups that could provide resources or more engagement.○ Top barriers include lack of agreements, reimbursement constraints, external qualifications systems, and underutilized or unknown qualifications pathways, such as RPL or endorsements.● This topic is expected to be included in the Wildfire Commission Report.	<p>Suggested edit to title, Pursing Full-Spectrum Interoperability or Engaging Under Utilized Partners.</p> <p>Lee will assist Litzenberg with setting up a meeting between NWCG, NMAC, and IWDG to discuss a potential joint tasking to identify issues/barriers and potential solutions in the next month.</p>