



PREDICTIVE SERVICES OVERSIGHT GROUP

PSOG NOTES

February 17, 2023

1000-1330

Attendees:

<input type="checkbox"/> Facilitator:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chair/NICC: Hartman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NMAC: McDonald
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Co-Chair/GACC: Tomaselli	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CGAC: Nuttall	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fire Management: Achziger
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fire Management: Hinckley	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OWF: Fallon	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FMB: Russell
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PS FA: Gardunio	<input type="checkbox"/> PS Intel: SeLegue	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PS Met: Strader
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LTP: Nauslar	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Admin: Johnston	<input type="checkbox"/>

Additional Attendees: Heath Hockenberry, Charles Maxwell, Cheryl Bright, Megan Kephart, Larry Van Bussum

Topic	Presenter(s)	Purpose
Agenda Review and Introduction	Derrek Hartman	Information
Purpose and Intent of Meeting	Derrek Hartman	Information
LTP Discussion	All	Discussion
Wrap Up and Next Meeting	Derrek Hartman	Information

Schedule:

NEXT MEETING: February 24, 2023 @ 1000-1200 MT

Agenda:

1. Long-Term Plan

Previously – LTP put into 2 different parts which were conceptually agreed upon.

As FMB, what are they going to want/need in order to accept this plan and push it forward to fund?

Would like to show where PS is currently and where PS would like to end up.

Option 0 – “Status Quo”

-FMB decides that no part of the LTP will be implemented.

-Prescribed fire and initial attack effort needs will continue to go unfilled.

-Will need multiple STP efforts in the next decade or even annually.

Tasking – What do integrated fire environment decision support services look like?

Many of the developed plans align directly with the Predictive Services Mission statement.

Ask the members to have an objective lens and try to think about this plan and the discussion in an overarching way with the idea that the decision made will impact the entire country.





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Coordinated System Option

Look at it from a systems scope – everything is interconnected.

Provides a strong foundation at the base level.

PS has a principle focus to integrate many different fire factors.

Need for year-round support has become more apparent in the last 5 years with a much larger scope.

Goals:

1. Geographic Area Decision Support – Need to know fire environment conditions for planned and unplanned fires, assist in fire danger analysis, and visualization and communication.
2. National Decision Support
3. National Integration to Use Best Available Science – Integrate within USFS and DOI entities as well as with other federal agencies.

Primary issues:

- No comprehensive interagency support structure.
- Silos are creating highly variable levels of interagency collaboration.
- Lack of vision, cohesion, and program management.
- Fire environment data and system infrastructure issues.
- Lack of capacity to create a process and structure for operational capabilities.

Interagency system is completely based on collaboration and communication – there is currently no budget or oversight direction.

Management of the system is at the local level, GA and National levels has PS as well as mets, fire analysts, etc.

Weather service is a three-tiered system with local, GACC, and national offices with some communication among the various levels. However, operationally, there are many pulls in different directions.

Most regional folks report to some sort of regional director, states have various local chains of command so the coordinating groups are a key piece of focus.

Delegations of authority should occur through higher levels to GACC levels and national representation as they meet year-round and have vertical and lateral reaches.

No-cost: Ensure all areas have an established fire environment working team as currently only some places have them.

Budget Paradigms: DOI already supports predictive services almost completely (mets and analysts).

Would be useful to set up a standard structure and utilize the fair share budget across the board to set up things the regional levels are willing to pay for based on the added benefits.

What if DOI put PS under coordinating groups and a national budget with the fair share idea across agencies?

- Would create program management structure vertically.

Interagency Fire Environment Board structure shows a “command of teams” where DOI is the overarching funding umbrella but under that, there are several organizations that have a chain of command through all levels. Each group is somewhat separate as a chain of command but work collaboratively together as an interconnected group creating a “team of teams” where all are working toward a single goal.

Integration unit pulls things away from the GACCs and puts focus on ecoregions. Would include much more interaction across research entities and levels. Would look at things from a national scope and try to encourage standardization.





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PS agencies are agnostic as interesting things have been developed at GACC level but there isn't much overlap. By putting things into an organizational structure, the programs would save quite a bit of money. Intel positions could be pushed back over toward the GACCs and the benefit would be the two services working together to create a bridge through predictive services.

Long-Term Plan: Version 2 Option 2

"Let the experts be the experts"

Need:

- Reliable and accessible data and products.

No Cost Improvements

- Develop comprehensive fire environment data and products through committees – lack of SME capacity

- Create an interagency operational fire environment science board

 - Comprised of scientists, operational forecasters, and IT specialists

- Oversee implementation of science and technology integration for fire environment including standards adherence.

 - Work with various groups

- Fund PS from national level (off the top)

 - Removes tough position funding decisions from the GACCs

- Restructure PS to better integrate vertically and horizontally with fire management

 - Identify PS Program Managers at each GACC to report to Coordinating Group

- Refocus PS Mission – ensure recommendation still fits the mission statement

- Develop standards for PS products and services that align with standards

- Update and standardized PS position descriptions and ensure coordination about hiring.

- Develop standardized trainings and SOPs for all PS positions, including GACC-specific, to ensure continuity of operations during transitions.

- Identify and develop GACC PS Unit back-ups, essentially couple two GACCs to be each other's support and backup.

Infrastructure

Remote Sensing / Fire Weather Support Unit

- Bolster staffing and support to ensure RAWs are maintained and serviced to a standard.

- 24/7 on call support

Ensure support and development for WFMI, Data Architecture Project, and Operations Proving Ground and Fire Weather Testbed

Fire Environment Mapping System – Project Manager and support staff maintained.

Direct WFM RD&A to provide research, development, and tool integration to PS. Increase funding may be needed to accommodate this additional workload.

We do have a RAWs system that works and provides needed data however, not maintaining RAWs impacts international weather models.

Infrastructure is needed but so is service – SMEs are an integral part and should be truly interagency.

Currently, each GACC has a coordinating group, a center manager, an intel coordinator, and at least 1 meteorologist. – There are many positions missing from each and not all GACCs fill the various positions equally.





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IFEDSS: Option 1

PSOG Recommended Staffing Model includes many additional positions that would be standard through all GAs including: GA coordinating group, GACC CM (sets PS unit requirements and needs), PS Manager (lateral from CM), Intel Coordinator, Intel Officer, Fire Analyst, DOI fire analyst, FS Region Fire/Risk Analyst, Spatial Analyst, Lead Meteorologist, Meteorologist

Nationally add positions that will create a vertical and horizontal web of command and support.

1-6: Program Manager with 6

-Nationally – PS Program Manager (not met-centric), IFEOS included, WFM RD&A, JFSP added to complete group with NICC CM and PSOG

-Like the integration with Intel and Fire Environment

-Fire, Fuels, and Smoke Science Program would be tapped into through the WFM RD&A incorporation

-Propose RAWS incorporation and answering to an interagency group and lateral to a national PS Program Manager

IFEDSS: Option 2

GA coordinating group, GACC CM (sets PS unit requirements and needs), IFEDSS Manager (lateral from CM), Intel Coordinator, Intel Officer, Intel Officer Seasonal, Lead Fire Analyst, DOI fire analyst, FS Region Fire/Risk Analyst, Fire Analyst, Spatial Analyst, Lead Meteorologist, Meteorologist, Meteorologist

Helps with recruitment and retention for intel and meteorologists with having positions ranging from GS 7 through GS 13 levels. Builds operational capacity and building a system with backups to avoid failure.

Nationally add positions that will create a vertical and horizontal web of command and support.

Currently, program management falls to positions whose current PDs don't encompass that but there's no one else with the experience, knowledge, or time to do it.

Changing Landscape

Wildland fire mitigation and management is changing. Greater demands to manage decisions at longer timescales with growing number impacts to be considered.

We need to be thinking at a national level or even internationally rather than regionally.

There are many fire management questions to consider and to contemplate who can answer those questions.

National Fire Environment Center (NFEC) creation (Phase 2)

Branch chiefs with several agencies and a full staff of personnel for each branch.

Phase 1 and Phase 2 have link-ups based on what the initial Phase 1 ends up looking like.

You could complete NFEC without Phase 1, but it may not be as successful.

Currently, if the GACCs aren't putting out the products, the responsibility goes to the Center Managers and Coordinating Groups. Nationally, the personnel responsibility is unclear.

There is currently no standard of responsibility or accountability for the products that get put out.

Ultimately having the PS personnel at the GACCs and not report to the Center Managers is a good plan.

Even though the Center Manager is supposed to report to the Coordinating Groups, they still have biased personalities based on their priorities set by their agency employer.





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Organization chart will ultimately be up to the coordinating group and what they decide the organization will look like. – Shouldn't get caught up on who the PS Manager falls under.

Staffing is a major limitation for all of the potential PS capabilities and usage.

Creating standards and integration are incredibly important but seem to be less likely to happen if we simply add positions to the current set up.

How do we come up with the standards? If FMB is going to write the check for creating the new positions and implementing the plan, they will probably still want to know what is going to be different.

How do we do things differently than we have for the past 20 years? There needs to consistently be accountability to uphold the standards regardless of where those standards come from.

The plan not only assists in solving the issue of staffing, but also the avenues of accountability based on a new system structure in order to be successful as a national PS program.

A national program oversight may be the only way to address the accountability issue and chain of command that is followed.

Does everyone support the current PS mission? -Yes

Does everyone support expanded staffing above 212 Model? -Yes

Support for a PS Program Manager at GACC level? -Yes

Support a PS Program Manager at National level (NICC)? -Yes

Support for off the top funding? – Yes

Where does the PS Program Manager reside? -Revisit

Formal votes to be held on all of the above.

PSOG was brought about to figure out how to make Phase 2 to work and how it would be implemented.

212 Staffing Model

There must be upward accountability, or it will still be every GACC for itself and taking care of their own areas.

National office could issue a policy stating what the standards are that should make people accountable but who will ensure the accountability based on the written policy?

Nationally, there isn't a PS Program Manager either.

What do the voting members want to see regarding the org charts?

RAWS currently operates by contracts and levels of service based on those. If it's roped into a bigger agency structure where the BLM isn't the sole managing body, can get away from the contracts. It would be more integrated with regional managing teams and improve functionality.

There is a lot to be gained with the fire environment groups coming together and being interagency. Things are not going to get any easier moving forward and this is already a 20-year problem. This is an opportunity to set things up for success for the future. We don't want this to still be an issue 30 years from now.

Develop different organization options for both the regional and National levels.

Review various org chart options and give specific feedback about what they like, don't like, positions to be added, etc.

What does the vision of a Town Hall look like with FMB?

