

# Communication, Education, and Prevention Committee (CEPC)

## 2023 CEPC F2F Meeting Notes Fort Collins, CO, October 17-19

### CEPC Members:

Name	Representation	In Attendance (x)		
		Oct 17	Oct 18	Oct 19
Jodie Barram	International Association of Fire Chiefs			
Chris Barth	Public Information Officer Subcommittee	X (partial)		
Faith Berry	US Fire Administration			
Carrie Bilbao	NIFC External Affairs	x	x	x
Tina Boehle	National Park Service (Caron acting in absence)			
Kari Cobb	US Fish and Wildlife Service			
Mark Thibideau	Fire Prevention Education Team Subcommittee			
Doug Hildebrand	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration			
Kenny Jaramillo	Bureau of Indian Affairs	x	x	x
Angie Lane	National Association of State Foresters (Western)	x		
Sarah Lee	NWCG Coordinator			X (partial)
Caron McKee	Administrative support (Acting for Tina)	x	x	x
Kent Nelson	National Association of State Foresters (Eastern)	x	x	x
Mandy Scott	USDA Forest Service	x	x	x
Jon Skinner	Bureau of Land Management	x	x	x
Shawn Zimmermaker	Wildfire Investigation Subcommittee			

### TUESDAY, October 17

#### Expectations for this meeting/where we hope to get out of this week:

P101 – status? Other trainings we need to look at?

Discuss joining with WUI committee/other committees – put together a joint meeting/conference in the next couple of years (like previous wildfire prevention and mitigation conferences)? Also maybe build upon the meeting we had earlier this year with other geographic area prevent/education committees. It's important to connect with others and discuss the cutting-edge research. Canada would be a good partner to invite. CEPC would have more of a coordination role if we did a large meeting/conference; would present on what we do. Jon can begin looking into how we could support a meeting like this.

#### CEPC Subcommittee Updates - PIOSC, FPETC, WFISC, & Training

**PIOSC (Chris Barth):** PIOSC has a lot going on; having regular monthly meetings. There will also be additional work sessions beginning in December to work on specific items such as training (working in conjunction with IPTM modernization) training for S-203/aligning with PIO-3; something along the lines of a 103 course to go along with PIO-T. In discussions about whether to bring 403 back. Another work session will be about branch

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lead positions (do we formalize this or incorporate some other way?). L23-02 will have some follow-up taskings. Looking at standard configuration for information in CIMT world.

A long-term action item is to help to facilitate a national PIO/IMT meeting. (CIM, IMT-1, IMT-2 and IMT-3) – see how PIOSC can help to support these PIOs.

Inciweb working group: PIOSC sent a memo through NWCG to Inciweb/Drupal development team and got good response from USFS to resolve issues. PIOSC had proposed a long-term solution of developing an Inciweb oversight/working group, to get perspective from the field to the development team. The chatter from IMRR needed to be diverted to a different Team people have access to (now through the PIO Toolbox), so the Inciweb/Drupal team can see what the issues are, and issues are documented. WatchGroup is another system – PIOSC would potentially like to see its data incorporated into Inciweb. PIOSC asked CEPC about whether there's a need to formalize this Inciweb working group? PIOSC's recommendation is to continue this as an advisory/working group for now; do AAR from this year; then come back to PIOSC in a year or so to see if more formalization is needed. CEPC discussed this and was good with that plan.

PIOSC is still looking to find a USFWS rep.

PIOSC is looking forward to hearing more from NWCG on first phase of IPTM; what new requirements will be; this may impact next year's budget request.

Chris Barth is starting detail with Rocky Mountain Research Station starting in November, for 120 days (through end of February).

**Fire Investigation Subcommittee:** Will be meeting next week in Chico, CA (36 members). They have reps from all agencies including CalFire and international groups, and some who represent insurance. They have a few projects out for peer review: PMS-412 (Wildland fire origin and cause determination guide); the first revised FI-210 class through NFA was taught a couple weeks ago in Redding as a collaboration (this was a beta-test for the new revision) – after getting feedback they will do any needed updates and then finalize. FI-110 should be available soon - NWCG training coordinator is working to get it onto the portal.

**Fire Prevention/Education Team Subcommittee:** They've had 7 assignments this year (about half the average, due to quieter fire season). All the hosts asked for there to be 11 – 16 personnel on FPET teams. Working on agendas for one-hour trainings for team leaders, members, and PIOs. Doing quarterly meetings, currently more geared towards training.

### Agency Updates

**BLM** – Community Assistance program provides money and expertise for partners; wrote a strategic guide for this, discussing what is important to BLM in engaging with communities. The Wildfire Research Center (WiRē) program has a proven way to go out and help communities – BLM funded a mitigation specialist position with them. Also hoping to reach out to disadvantaged groups to find those who might be more severely impacted by wildfire/climate change and reach these groups.

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Planning to put on a National Fire Education campaign next year from BLM; hopefully to launch next summer – will include info on rangelands, etc. (first BLM is doing a survey of fire staff to learn where to further focus the campaign).

Power company issues have been a big topic for BLM. The budget passed in 2018 covered expedited treatments around rights of way (ROWs); BLM is just getting a rule out; info is being put into ROW agreements.

BLM is updating their Prevention Handbook/Manual.

BLM will be holding a Fire Investigations meeting April 22-26 in Reno.

**USFS** – Finished the PD for Prevention Specialist (likely GS-7) – it's with HR now.

Community of Practice SharePoint site is up and open to everyone now. USFS started doing webinars for the Community of Practice for Prevention and Mitigation (will be every Friday). Community of Practice page has a tab where strategic plans for both prevention and mitigation will be posted soon.

Last week was Smokey's birthday, 80<sup>th</sup> coming up; big campaign and activities planned. Will be working on WPSAPs and more. Two new PSAs are out for tow chains and campfires.

Cohesive Strategy draft report came in, will be reviewed, and report out to group soon.

**NASF – Eastern:** Had a hot air balloon up from NM for Smokey's 75<sup>th</sup> birthday, which was a very successful prevention event; trying to do that again for the 80<sup>th</sup>. Reached out to other partners/states to help share the cost and hopefully have a joint prevention event.

Sent crews up to Canada this summer and got lots of smoke in the U.S. northeast from Canada's fires. Lots of interesting PIO calls related to this!

New Chief Forest Ranger has made changes in open burning laws which go into effect Oct. 25<sup>th</sup> – lots of outreach associated with this (brochures, etc.).

**NASF – Western:** nothing to report.

**BIA** – Just revised Investigation Handbook as well IDIM-6 manual.

Working on coordinating a National Prevention meeting for BIA (possibly Phoenix in March) – not sure yet whether this will be opened to other agencies, or just BIA/tribes.

Working on WPSAPS continuously; testing software and upgrades and keeping student/instructor guides in sync as changes are made.

At the National level, BIA is talking of creating a new position: National Prevention Program and RTRL Coordinator (Reserve Treaty Right Lands). All regional Prevention Specialist positions are filled.

**NPS** – Tina will be finished her detail at the end of November. In the process of hiring a Visual Information Specialist for the FPMC in Boise. Have had a VIS detailer who has helped make NPS-branded prevention graphics.

NPS Director video on Fire Prevention Week.

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## **WPSAPS – What’s new and what’s planned for 2024 (Sam Scranton, BIA)**

Wildfire Prevention Spatial Assessment and Planning Strategies update.

See Sam’s [PowerPoint presentation](#).

Business committee has reps from FS, BLM, BIA, FWS, NPS, and NASF with monthly conference calls; they discuss work plan, and [5-year work plan](#).

New agreement in place: POP Oct. 1 to Sept. 30. FS and DOI funding. DOI FY23 funding off the top; FOI FY24 funding planned from OWF.

Application available for all users (requires EGP account; must request WPSAPs access from EGP).

### Training

- Separate site
- Student guide, Instructor guide
- Application User guide
- Wildland fire learning portal
- 272 attended formal training (also have a self-paced training)
- Future? May package up a training curriculum

### What’s New?

- ArcGIS upgrade
- Field Mapping App
- EGP Required Updates
- Regional Managers Rollup

### FY24 Work Plan

- Complete Required EGP Upgrades
- Backlog of bug fixes
- Regional Rollup
- Report Enhancement (will need agency task groups)
- Mapping Enhancements
- Data layer updates
- National rollup requirements (will need task group)
- Help Desk Support
- Community Assessment Eval (how can we improve this?)

Testing of enhancements & new functions are ongoing – always looking for people willing to test. No trainings are currently scheduled. January is a tentative time.

## **Fire Restrictions Task Team – Quick update & Next Steps (Kenny Jaramillo)**

Original tasking was to identify a suitable platform, what fields/spatial elements, etc. needed plus timeline and funding needs.

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Formed a committee of 6 members; looked into the various platforms already in use across the country, most use AGOL. Came up with survey asking about interest, how restrictions are being used, etc. Survey closed in January 2023, with a big response. Info was compiled – found there is interest, some skepticism about use of funds; restrictions in some areas are based off elevations. The geospatial data standard was approved. Committee found that the definition of restrictions could be updated (in NWCG glossary).

While doing the survey, the committee also submitted a funding request to contract out for building/maintaining a site with a 5-year plan. Would be a hub site and pulling in existing AGOL sites. NWCG liked the proposal but felt it would fall better under WFIT funding, rather than CEPC. Kenny is still waiting to hear back on whether this will move forward, or whether there is a need for an additional request. Kenny asked Sarah Lee about this at this meeting, and she will follow-up with Katy, and will also forward a Business Needs form to be filled out. Data management/timeliness would be big issues for a potential site. Tracking statistics over time could be useful. [Form sent to Kenny and Carrie to fill out].

Next steps: Finding out about funding under WFIT (Sarah may know more info); look into getting a contractor. Down the road, discuss whether this task team needs to be a formal subcommittee, and if so, where they would fall (IT more so than CEPC?). Who would be COR for a contractor?

### Fire Cause Update (Jon Skinner)

\*Jon shared a document\*

New fire causes have been out about a year. General cause categories include Natural, Undetermined, Human (with many sub/specific categories).

People had put fires in the Undetermined category without going back and updating them. This really affects the data. Undetermined fires should be further explained as to why they are undetermined.

Currently, several subcommittees such as data mgmt., fire investigation, etc. are working together to reach out to all the agencies to see: 1) is the current fire cause reporting working for them; and 2) Do we need to write a user guide for these causes?

Action Item: It might be useful to do a survey to other states to find out what they're using; what's useful to them. Angie can informally ask Eastern states and can help Jon on this project. [Involve the WFISC with the task group/team – task team memo?].

### Fire Danger video review for Fire Danger SC – comments

CEPC watched and discussed the video as a group; CEPC members will submit comments via the requested form individually.

Some comments discussed include:

- Seems like this could be used to educate the general public (not just new staff)
- Fire danger is also a predictor of fire ignitions; not just likelihood to spread (this isn't accurately represented in the video).

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- Temp, humidity, and wind are only factors listed. Should it get more into large diameter/small diameter, fuel moisture, other factors? Maybe mention the NFDRS?
- Remove a little bit of the discussion about moving resources.
- Smokey artwork wouldn't be approved – has to be on hat and buckle – USFS would need to approve use of Smokey.

### Wednesday, October 18 – Field Day

#### Trip to Boulder for Marshall Fire presentation and field tour.

- Office of Emergency Management, Boulder County Disaster Management Director Mike Chard, Boulder County Sheriff's Office Communications Director Steve Silbermann, Mountain View Fire Rescue Deputy Chief Sterling Folden, Disaster Management Coordinator's Shannon McVane and Monika Weber (Mitigation Specialist), and Boulder County Sheriff's Office Deputy Randy Wilber.  
<https://boulderodm.gov/about-odm/>
  - Check out the FLA on the Marshall Fire.
  - Responded to two other wildfires north of Boulder a couple hours prior to Marshall – initially called in as a downed powerline (no fire reported).
  - Lessons – engage the community, be transparent, critically assess actions, complete AAR and improvement planning (follow through); be prompt, be honest, and solve the problems you can. Are our first responders prepared? Challenge your assumptions.
  - Crisis communication – empathy, facts, and hope. LISTEN!
  - Consequence management – 0.1 % of incidents it is OK to deviate from ICS doctrine into a “mission command” situation calls for independent action(s) – return to ICS, check in when time is right.
  - Addressing chaos – assess the impacts, manage needs and initial capability, reflex time.
  - Have an evacuation plan, but also plan for re-entry. Need to prepare people for fire recovery and debris management. May look at building into CWPPs.
  - Delegation of Authority should be referred to as a delegation of responsibility.
  - Need better education on alerts and systems for alerts.
- Brant Porter, NPS, field guide (Mike Smith initial IC of Marshall Fire was dispatched to a fire).
  - Fire origin and possible multiple ignitions.
  - Set the scene - fuel loading and weather conditions; December 30<sup>th</sup>, people on vacation.
  - Look at escape routes and safety zones (Costco evacuation – seems like it would be a good place for shelter in place - roof was on fire).

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THURSDAY, October 19

## Strategic Plan Review & Update

CEPC members reviewed the Strategic Plan and made edits (see track change edits in [Teams folder](#))

\*Angie Lane will be vice-chair of CEPC, per rotation listed in the Strategic Plan.

## NWCG Coordinator Remarks and Update (Sarah Lee) – 0900

Sarah recently accepted the Deputy Program manager position at NWCG. Katy O'Hara will be our new NWCG coordinator starting in November.

NWCG had been at 50% vacancy; now the only vacancies are audio-visual lead and a couple positions under that – they are very close to being 100% staffed.

Call for budget requests (FY25) will come out in November, and are due at the end of January.

Web transition for NWCG going on in November (2-17) (working on searchable digital library); once it's back up, can load anything that isn't digital.

Fire Restrictions website proposal – under WFIT? Sarah will pass this along to Katy O'Hara to follow-up, and will send the "Business Needs Form" to be filled out.

Action Item: P-101 is good to go; Carrie to follow up with Rick Gividen, NWCG Wildland Fire Portal Governance Board.

## Smokey Bear 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday Committee Update (Mandy Scott)

- Accepted into Tournament of Roses Parade on Jan. 1<sup>st</sup> (region 5 is handling that). The Chief and R5 Forester will be on the wagon. Angie will represent one of the state forester positions. Will have same wagon with mule train as before. Will also have a booth for fire prevention info.
- National Garden Club has Smokey/Woodsey poster contest – is on their website and on [SmokeyBear.com](http://SmokeyBear.com).
- Smokey Bear reading challenge pilot with Georgia Public Libraries – will later go national. Targeting public schools and public library including military and Tribal libraries.
- Smokey Bear Live 4 broadcast – planning meetings began this month for upcoming topics.
- CA State Fair – will do a broadcast from there.
- Smokey's Birthday event will be in DC on the 9<sup>th</sup> – will present Smokey Awards and poster contest awards. Will also be in the Macy's Day parade.
- Putting together a toolkit which will be available on the website by end of December.
- NASF is also putting a link on their website where people can add their events.
- Cache products will be available end of Nov/early December.
- Rudy Wendolyn Painting Tour (two sets of a series of Smokey paintings) will be sent out to be used as displays. Requests for these fill up very fast! (Look for schedule in the near future).
- Agents of Discovery – this will be the last year (will be tailored to the 80<sup>th</sup>).
- New Smokey Reader will be coming out (for kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade) with Fire Danger Rating System.
- There will be a Smokey scientist card (reprint from his 75<sup>th</sup>) – features array of jobs/people in the fire world.

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- New ad campaign/PSAs will come out in January.

## Action Items Review

CEPC members reviewed the [Action Items](#) list and made updates as needed.

## Digital Library/Website Review & NIFC.gov Fire Prevention Page Review

NWCG site:

- Bruce Woods needs to be taken off the website.
- Add: Link USFS Community of Practice SharePoint page for graphics, etc. (under “Useful Resources”)
- Submit form to have Maureen taken off and Mandy added.
- Check with Tina to see if she’ll still be liaison for PIOSC (if not, take off website; Angie Lane is acting PIOSC liaison until Tina gets back); take Robin Broyles of PIOSC on website; check with Candy about whether she’ll stay on PIOSC – or nominate Brant or other NPS rep?
- Add link to BLM’s prevention/mitigation/investigation video: <https://youtu.be/tvdui1hn8GI>.

NIFC.gov Fire Prevention page: <https://www.nifc.gov/fire-information/fire-prevention-education-mitigation>

- Add link to USFS Community of Practice SharePoint page (and add to FS partner’s page): [\[need link\]](#)

**Wildfire Research (WiRē) – overview of program and research in Grand Co affected by the East Troublesome Fire. James Meldrum, Research Economist, USGS - presentation in CEPC Teams folder.** Group has been working together around a decade on the interface between wildfire mitigation and education programs – work with local communities.

Actionable social science to support evidence-based education programs. Building data set to look at how people think about risk. Mitigation on private land and preparedness of community residents are essential. All projects have either local, regional, or state partner involved. Scales of projects are a few hundred to a few thousand homes – very localized/small-scale.

Two pieces to the approach:

- Rapid wildfire risk assessment by professionals (Home ignition potential, Background conditions, Defensible space, Access).
- Social surveys of residents in the study area.

A goal is to link homeowners to local partners.

Insights

- Perspective matters when discussing risk.
- Residents prefer local and more detailed media sources. Local fire department is often top information source.
- Personalized information influences response to outreach.

## 2024 Face to Face Meeting

As of now, we have the Schoodic Institute in Maine reserved for October 2024, but no deposit made. Need to decide by end of calendar year at the latest (dates would be week after Indigenous Peoples' Day week with



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Monday and Friday travel - Oct 21-23). Would fly into Bangor, then 1.5-hour drive (would need rental cars).

\*Will discuss this more during November conference call.

### Action Items from this meeting

What	Assigned to	Comments/date complete
Look into how we could support a large information sharing/networking workshop with other committees – find out who might take the lead? Work on defining the goals for the workshop and look into who might be interested in joining.	Jon	
Fire causes - survey other states to find out what they're using; what's useful to them. Angie can informally ask Eastern states, and can help Jon on fire causes.	Angie/Jon	
Notify Angie Lane of her position of vice-chair	Carrie	<b>Emailed 10/23/23</b>
Check in with Sarah/NWCG if she knows of anyone interested in being a note-taker for CEPC	Carrie	
P-101 – Carrie to follow up with Rick re: getting on portal	Carrie	<b>Called 10/24/23</b>
Check into whether Jodie Barram is/should be a primary (voting) member and her status as she has not made many meetings this year	Carrie	
Be thinking about potential upcoming budget requests	All	
Maintain WPSAPS student/instructor guides; ensure they're updated as needed	Kenny	<b>Ongoing</b>
Follow up on Fire Restrictions budget proposal/whether it falls under WFIT	Sarah/Katy	<b>Sarah emailed Kenny &amp; Carrie WFIT Business Need Form 10/19/23</b>
Fill out/submit WFIT Business Need Form for Fire Restrictions app	Kenny/Carrie	
Make needed updates to digital library (see notes for details)	Carrie	
Wildfire Prevention Strategies Guide/PMS 455 (March 1998) – consider proposal for updating in the future? (in the long-term). Maybe discuss this with Fire Prevention Team members.	Jon?/All	