

Fire Environment Committee

Conference Call Notes

Dec 18, 2023

On the call:

Nick Nausler, Cheryl Bright, Larry Van Bussum, Christopher Moore, Kevin Hiers, Chad Hoffman, Cole Belongie, Tim Brown, Jon Fox (Note taker)

Meeting kicks off at 10:02 am PST

NWCG memo Haines Index and LAL (Darren):

- This is simply being sent as a recommendation, rather than a demand.
- It must be vetted.
- Nick will send this to the agenda for the January NWCG meeting, so please get comments in before then.

RAWS QC (Tim and Darren)

- There is a revised revision of the proposal. Editorial things not needed, but other inputs are welcome. After this check the “draft” will be removed. Tim says the document stands for itself.
- Chris did not review the document yet but will do so before the beginning of January.
- Cheryl understood it which is great.
- Fire Weather subcommittee gives the thumbs up.
- Nick will send this to the agenda for the January NWCG meeting, so please get comments in before then.

FENC Meeting : February 23 meeting on Boise NIFC campus after the NWCG meeting.

- Nick will send out invitations after the holidays.
- NWCG wants all the chairs and vice-chairs to attend the meeting on 2/22.

NWCG proposals

- Due to FENC by January 12 (since NWCG meeting will be January 25th).

FENC Issues:

- Reorganize to allow agency folks on the teams be able to make decisions in an effort to give FENC more authority.
- The sub-committees need to make sure there is enough expertise on the teams.
- Need to make things run smoother.
- Chris and Cheryl stated it is a step in the right direction.
- Discuss more at the annual meeting.
- Nick will work on a proposal that will be revisited in January.

Round Robin:

- **Cheryl (fire danger subcommittee):**
 - The November meeting invited Laurie to join and discuss instructional design of curriculum.
 - This pertains to S191-S391. They learned they should not skip this important step.
 - Discussed modular training since it involves a lot of day job folks rather than incident positions. And this needs to be taken into account.
 - Create modules that could fit into any course curriculum.
 - Trying to incorporate this into S290.
 - WFSTAR could be one of the methods. Then it would get into the refreshers.
 - Fire danger vs fire environment
 - Definitions: In January push to get the sub-groups to support the definitions of various fire dangers. But aware that Darren has some definitions as well that should be incorporated.
 - After a late October meeting...she became the FIMS business lead for DOI.
- John wondered with course updates and the growing focus on convection dynamics controlling fire behavior, safety zone design, and smoke, is there a plan to comprehensively begin to add introductions to the fluid dynamics that govern these fire- atmospheric interactions? It doesn't have to be rocket science, but needs to happen at some point. Nick says we could add that education at the higher end of the curriculum.
 - Cheryl says this could be addressed via modular training.
 - Darren says this is a tough decision. Good for an FBAN, but it might be too technical for most. Maybe we need to discuss diurnal trends a little better. We should not get into the math.

- Chris...says there is a section in 490 that discusses this, but does not include math in the training. Also don't necessarily discuss more basic training sessions.
- Kevin says we need a plan. His experience is conceptually explaining fluid flow is easy and intuitive. It should be a generic explanation.

- **Chris:** 590 steering committee. 37 students during the 1st two weeks of march.
 - 290 making good progress. SME is incorporating feedback.
 - One in the southern area in January.
 - Sent info to Mark Finch to get some smoke information possibly into the class.
 - Breeching some fire danger topics into 290 as well.
 - App which reaffirms learning after the classes. It costs 50K. But asking for feedback
 - 390 kickoff in January. Going to be in person. Created by U of Idaho
 - 490 getting some money for a rewrite. Also through U of Idaho
 - 590 will add S491 as a prerequisite for admission.
 - 2025 funding request for SME...having retirees help with producing content.
 - Update NWCG website with 3 new members.
 - FBSC will discuss S-190 and the need for a revision because it does mention Haines and LAL.

- **Darren: (FWCG).** Meeting last Thursday regarding timeline for HI and LAL removal.
 - Budget: Make a WFSTAR video to explain the removal of these terms. But unsure of costs.
 - Cheryl believes this does not need to be budgeted.
- **Chad: USGS update**
 - 10th fire ecology meeting. Lots of discussion on new tools
 - Fuel moisture discussions. Utilizing evapotranspiration products
 - Fire atmospheric interactions. More work is being done.

- **Kevin:**
 - In California he attended a meeting with fire science community members.
 - Lots of exciting tools are coming in the near future. How to model wild and Rx fires.

- Embarked with USGS and USFWS, National landscape network. Another round of experiments regarding
- Are there any burning needs that the committee would like? There are lots of possibilities. At Fort Stewart in February.
- Andy Baker and John Wallace for USFWS. Exciting co-production for the innovative national landscape.
- Kevin will share a link with the group about upcoming events.
- Tim:
 - Good with the draft RAWs proposal
 - Is the all hand going to be hybrid or in person?
 - Nick says they would encourage in person participation, but there still might be a virtual option. No Teams meeting established yet.
- Larry:
 - GovExec link on travel: <https://www.govexec.com/management/2023/12/biden-require-feds-take-public-transit-other-green-options-when-traveling/392771/?oref=ge-skybox-hp>
 - There is going to be a microscope put on any government travel.
 - The folks making the travel decisions might not understand the importance of in-person training.

Concluding actions from Nick:

- DRI Gap filled data memo will be sent out first week in January
- LAL and HI memo will go to exec board first week in January