

## **NWCG Fire Environment Committee**

Date: 22 January 2025

Attendees:

- Nick Nauslar
- Ben Hatchett
- Robyn Heffernan
- Cheryl Bright
- Dave Schultz
- Jim Wallman
- Travis Verdegan
- Chuck Maxwell
- Chris(?) on the phone 907
- Pete Lahm
- Billy Gardunio
- J. Kevin Hiers

### **Updates:**

Nick:

- Dave Updates
- Haines/LAL
- 290/390/490

Dave: Budget stuff/process→requests from committees needed by Friday, Feb 5 will be when staff looks at all requests from committees, interpretation of requests/needs. First step. After that, lots of clarification questions will go back and forth. On webpage, guidelines/resources describing things. Always questions in fire behavior about using NWCG funds, seeing shift away from funding people (not funding salary) to creating product of sort. Example: fuels management request to get video made for burn boss refresher training, 'product' is the video itself. Easiest, smoothest process ends with a tangible thing, but not clear what that looks like exactly. If it fits need, put request in, let's talk about it.

Robyn asks if seen FENC requests? Yes, has seen all of them. Robyn: One from fire behavior about position, can you help us formulate budget request look and feel to maximize chance of success. Fire analyst one (15k). Dave doesn't think it would go as is, Robyn wonders about rewriting, Dave thinks fair question..."why is subcommittee not able to update pubs within their group themselves, ie why outside source needed?" Nick thinks since in middle of 290/390/490/LTAN processes help needed. Chris says no one has time to do extra work outside of day jobs, significant workload added. Doesn't think that'd be very successful, in either case you're paying for someone's time. Dave says all other committees are maintaining pubs internally, why is it different here? Chris: if reword, better chance? Dave says yes (probably better success rate). Travis: Comes back to time for the most part. Not buying things, just time. Problem is more sustainable capacity (word as 'surge capacity?' might hold more water). Dave understands, but coming back to Robyn's question, he agrees to form it to 15k to existing agreement to UA to update pubs, that will be better. Robyn: how to make projects fit into what is

deemed important, identify priorities for next time. Nick: huge mismatch in terms of LTANs and difference between day job and qualifications. Pete: Option exists to work within agencies that feel strongly about this to come up with money. Pull resources from those who care most, time to pony up! Nick: years ago, bunch of requests, prioritized them, can fund some. Doubts that will be case given current budget situation. Pete: need to figure out for smoke committee as well. Challenge all the way around.

Kevin: Sense is that reluctance to fund some projects, on wind reduction factors project, Kevin would be game to pick that up and work with them (Robyn says this is huge, thank you!). Nick: will not push that project forward upon confirmation. Nick likes idea, Chris to rewrite language on FBAN analysis. Fire weather handbook, not an existing contract between person and agency to fund this (Darren working on this). Robyn: NWCG has paid for this. Chris: came through Fire behavior SC. Robyn, need a sponsor to support this. Dave thinks need is valid, but no contract in place and not sure what that'd look like, need path forward to contract piece, has good chance of being funded. Will get questions on the plan piece.

Nick: (per Tami) How much time spent to get agreements to spend NWCG money, is there any change that NWCG can support/provide to make easier? Dave doesn't see that changing. IPTM efforts takes up a lot of time on NWCG, so need agency sponsor. Pete: not easy to find amendable contract, part of the challenge. All takes time. Kevin: for us, moving money could leverage membership of NWCG to facilitate process.

Robyn: Does DoD have money in NWCG pot? Kevin, thinks yes, will have to check. Robyn: Fire behavior work with UA to leverage for fire wx handbook? Dave: IPTM tying everything up. UA and fire wx handbook, graphics are what is needed, not sure of options, but a specific need. Robyn: If UA has graphic designers, that might be an option to look into. What colors of money can be requested? Dave would have to look up, but less likely. Robyn says in the past that's been what board asks for spending plans to move money about (vehicle through DoD).

Nick: Down to two, thoughts? Dave, they'll want to see which is priority. Nick wants fire wx handbook done, slightly higher priority? But an issue with how to get it funded/worked on. Updating pubs in close second place, but easier funding for those. Other thoughts on prioritizing? Robyn and Kevin agree. Robyn: funding harder to get and higher for handbook, show higher level of support for this. Jim: agree, also think about 'one more thing to get this done' should be around for 10 more years, can then focus on other priorities for the future.

Nick: any disagreement? Silence is abstainment...**SOLD! Prioritizing fire weather handbook**, second is fire behavior pubs update. Comments, concerns? Nope.

Nick: Haines/LAL: Briefed exec board, moving forward to remove from NWS products, will see Feb 1 deadline on track. Concerns with what replacing with. No major roadblocks, but will be finding instances, as they come up, will remove. Jim: 6 min for safety group, Dave: will take some time to get things out of all the system, 6 min for safety has good ideas. Briefing went well, no pushback, questions mostly from turnover on board (same q's in past). Nick: voice of

removal will make the video! IRPG on track, but Dave says working through proofs, and quality control of paper.

Chris: 290/390/490: NWCG just reviewed 290 online training materials, back to UI for formatting/grammar corrections. Bigger issue is last year's discussion on key terms/questions, keeping these in 290. NWCG rejected key terms/questions, so will need to clear these out. End is near.

390: Pre-work sent out for review. Finishing up in person unit, Feb 1 test course turned over, will be in first week in March in Boise. Contractor has month to edit. Currently has refs to Behave plus 6, but outdated material since behave 7 (no plus) is what will be needed, will have to figure out how to update. Otherwise, smooth sailing overall.

490: SME group provided input, should be done in August? Course in November

IPTM for FBAN/LTAN: Seven SMEs going to Boise in Feb, Joe Flores reporting back to subcommittee. Dave says some initial meetings happening with Brian Holmes and SMEs (one on ones), meeting with contractor as a group to build relationship as a group.

Nick: Meeting time may be changed coming up. Robyn says FEMS meeting before this sometimes. Nick to put in email, will sort out.

Nick: Annual meeting, 1 day meeting, full day or two partial days, late March/early April.

Nick: any last notes from others?

Billy: continuing to work on data standards.

Cheryl: fire danger subcommittee meeting, change in chair, WIMS end of life (WIMS to FEMS), incorporate Canadian FFD rating into NWCG fire danger, went over SOPs. Lot of good convos, need to look at everything mentioning fire danger and do clean up. Started those convos. Lots of work to do on fire danger evolution.

Travis: In terms of transition, think about what it looks like, how to structure meetings, facilitate, etc. Dave to connect with folks incoming/outgoing.

Jim: Lightning contract, finalizing details, Chuck helping out, instead of separate lightning unit, could transfer to data management program, may need SME help. Nick: finalized SOW, talk of moving to data management program but elicit SMEs for specifics.

Pete: Week of June 23 for ARA training in Boise. Smoke committee hasn't met in a while, will be scrambling on budget things. Will be putting in funding requests.

Chuck: Fire danger, frameworks and standards for fire env, lightning, raws, timeframes, increasing number of external requests from outside orgs/agencies.