

NWCG Fire Environment Committee

Date: 25 June 2025

Attendees:

- Cheryl Bright
- Chris Moore
- Wes Hall
- Jeff Fuentes
- Darren Clabo
- Jim Wallman
- Nick Nauslar
- Ben Hatchett
- Robyn Heffernan
- Travis Verdegan
- Natalie Kerhwald

NWCG Reorganization Plan: Need to provide feedback to planners, large plan, not a tweak. Big changes include: Going down to 10 parent committees, 3 branches, ICS structure, FENC under planning and management committee (IPS/IPC), flattened into one subcommittee. No longer a subcommittee, FENC becomes a subcommittee. Only full members can be chair/vice chair (unless have exec board approval). Only one person per agency is a member. Be a significant change for us. This is a proposal, not set in stone. Robyn and Cheryl asked pointed questions, steered the conversation in a good direction. Robyn has been around for 15+ years, this is third reorganization, is our mission and priorities changing? Scope seems to be narrowing, what happens with the business part? Cheryl-If just worry about FBAN and LTAN, that's fine, what we want is clarity on our responsibilities, what is our scope? FENC does a lot of stuff, fire environment is so foundational, no other avenues for other parties to come together, we're not taking care of what we need/want to take care of. If narrowing, great, we want guardrails, but who will handle other stuff? Processes eat people's lunch. Issues mainly stem from processes and not from structure. Each subcommittee should organize feedback due by Jul 11, 2025. Will consider feedback if written down, organized, and constructive.

Cheryl: Could have as many subgroups as wanted, but wouldn't have NWCG pages, no NWCG staff support/presence

Darren: Cannot self task anymore, executive board will hand down activities, can you elaborate? SMEs know what problems are, how can we better address issues rather than layers of bureaucracy. Nick: NWCG feels span of control of committees/subcommittees has lost sight of core mission, new structure aims to avoid this.

Travis: Timing? Nick: implementing Feb 2026 at annual meeting. Travis: making the transition from many things all occurring at once, brings up red flags. Confirmation on fire danger subcommittee? Nick: need clarification on narrowing, 310-1. Travis: FDRA standards being worked on, some dots on planning being connected. Nick: Discussed pre/postfire subcommittees, related or taking responsibility?

Robyn: Open given they don't understand completely what FENC does. It was hard to provide feedback when questions remain unanswered. Hard to say what if any changes we'd like to see in the structure until we know what purpose is and scope.

Nick would like everyone to send in feedback by Monday 7 July COB, email him the form, do not send in to NWCG. If need more time ok, due 11th, will take Nick some time to organize to submit 1 form for FENC.

Safe separation distance: Nick does not know true status, probably not going to support it, waiting on how. Memo? Vote? Bottom line: not support, have pulled out of 390, looking to pull printed copies from the cache or put stickers over text. Didn't realize that everything has to be approved by exec board, we wouldn't have anything in there (or exec board deals with this all the time). Typically research, field test, goes into FBFRG. Why is this being singled out?

Chris: frustrating we don't have an R20 process, never seen them move so fast to squash this. We did sense that a no was coming for adoption. This was a waste of time and frustrating for folks.

IPTM for LTAN/FBAN: Chris has no updates. None from Nick.

290/390/490: 390 has no more SSD, Chris: 290 is not closer to certification, have heard no updates. University of Idaho is frustrated with the process. NWCG was hesitant to use UI because required work to go in and fix things (minimal NWCG). Same issue going around with NWCG making mistakes. The process is really slow. Need a meeting between NWCG and SMEs to figure this out. Need to sort this out asap. 390 ready to turn in final documents on Friday, SSD happened on Wednesday, made changes. NWCG is not going to support name change (too much work to find all refs to S-390). 750k spent updating, can't change a name? Seems problematic. Voiced concern to Dave one more time. 490: submitted final materials to ICF, finishing up before submission to NWCG. Nick adds to 390 name change, why this a big deal? Its full revision of course, names reflect that. Find and create a list of old name helps? Dave was non-committal and it sounds like it is "too much work". Must be a better way to update stuff. Once every 20 years, so need a process. Cheryl says ditto for WIMS! Chris says staff transitions are making this tough, seems like at a standstill.

IFPM S-491? Chris: rep looking for feedback, will submit on Friday. Class causes bottleneck (Dispatch community wants course removed).

Round Robin:

Chris/Fire Behavior: Emailed everyone their section of FBFRG as pdf from website, talking with Chelsea about a date needed at publications for training season. Dec 1 date decided on. Need sections a week before, Nov 28-ish. Want as PDF and needs to be 508 compliant.

Wes/Fire Environment Continuing Education: Quiet right now, got FBFRG and see some things to fix.

Travis/Fire Danger: Didn't get response written down to Chris yet, but have a few semantics. Made transition from him to Cheryl as chair. Trying to keep things on track, need home for things!

Darren/Fire Wx: Breaking out scissors to revise field guide. Trying to address issues with NWS offices that are producing stray products that are not part of standards for fire weather forecasts. Great Basin/Salt Lake mixing height climatology. Discussing with Scott S., not sure how NWS and NWCG can interact. When resources travel out of state/region, confusion with different offices. Don't want similar issues to Haines.

Robyn: NWS choice to decide how to move forward, collaboration is key.

Nick: Trying to change directives now, here's what you have to have, here's list of approved things in fire weather index.

Jeff/States(CAL FIRE): Not much to report, no significant updates, want to release FEMS 3.2, Chief Clark put together a working group about workflow changes, policy/procedures being updated when we move from WIMS to FEMS. Working with ECCs for dispatch levels throughout the day, outline of changes to workflow and shift from numerical values to percentiles for fire danger, holding pattern a bit for now.

Cheryl: FEMS is out there, in production. Have at it, let us know what you find.

Jim: Working with Cheryl on FEMS rollout.

Ben: Fire Weather Testbed Report Now Available (Fire Detection-Integrated Warning Team-Fire Warnings): <https://doi.org/10.25923/4pqf-7g49>