

NWCG Fire Environment Committee

Date: 24 September 2025

Attendees:

- Billy Gardunio
- Nick Nauslar
- Robert Clark
- Chris Moore
- Robyn Heffernan
- Ben Hatchett
- Dave Schultz
- Travis Verdegan
- Jim Wallman
- Pete Lahm
- Tim Brown
- Darren Clabo
- Wes Hall
- Cheryl Bright

Agenda

- **S-390/490:** Chris: 390 returned to subcommittee for certification (end of sept), 490 info docs submitted to NWCG, test course in Tucson 3rd (week?) of Oct, cert by end of Dec. Dave: anything major will get flagged and fixed, but little issues will get documented and dealt with during revision cycle. Once certified, then get exec board sig, then will be out for next spring training season.
- **LTAN/FBAN IPTM:** Nick: Chris got recs document signed and moved up. Nick dropped ball in endzone, taskbooks got approved/posted, Dave is graciously working to vet this to get recs approved (IPSC has to go through process, check for issues w rec'd changes). Additions are not required training, so won't make for additional burdens. LTAN quals changing, remove FEMO and FIRB, replace with *any* single resource boss. Don't want to raise bar to become LTAN, want to remove barriers but maintain bar. Oct 9 Chris briefing IPSC.
 - Dave stresses where we're at in the process, good to get into 310-1 for 2026 version. No issues foreseen for 2026 version. RFC is going through different process, unknown how long will take to go through. IPTM in good spot.
- **SSD Memo:** Nick shared draft, diplomacy important, wants to get out soon but no rush. [action item: respond to SSD memo via email to nick!] Concerns from NWCG? Dave: didn't see anything major, a few minor revisions noted.

- **FEMS/WIMS Transition:** Cheryl: It's happening, data feed is coming through WIMS XML, still believe Oct 1 it will be completely gone. FEMS, Travis: transition is happening, done everything we could do to mitigate impacts. Know there is training/documentation that's being asked for. Big thing likely to raise eyebrows is our replacement of WIMS in entirety is not goal that was met, knew this was. Some loss of continuity of operations for some states is a part of this. Mitigated. ASOS, RAWS, real close to having everything worked through Synoptic. Message of being realistic with the scenario, but use as opportunity to raise awareness to the things we have been successful in. People are impressed how fast can bring up seasonal trend graph, impactful statement (hours to seconds and available for everybody). Resoundingly positive message about where we are. The transition is the cards we were dealt. Need to adapt to new information, need to understand how system works, what could/should be changed (or not). Communicating since January about this transition; once experience it, it will mean something.

Cheryl: has been info sent out in automated messages. Lots of unknown users of WIMS. How to message them?

Nick noted how this is a tough process to transition and get folks aware, want to make sure NWS is aware, documentation would help (e.g. "FEMS is new authoritative dataset")

Robert: Done well as a state at messaging, help through. Noticing if a RAWS misses a transmit, data does not get re-populated once transmit occurs. Not in FEMS, any solutions to this? Travis: manual process right now if transmissions missed from Wx weather. On our radar. Outside of POR, gaps, need systematic way to fill those in to maintain continuity. Nick: Budget for FEMS development precarious for more dev beyond this year. States please push needs up through leadership. What is in there at Christmas will be there for a while. SPC is working with FEMS (forecast data feed of fire danger) to improve, precip duration issues, artifact of how data made, sometimes 3-hrly, 6-hrly. Disaggregating to hourly means lower indices since over estimates precip duration...eek. Don't want artificially low fire danger values, seven day issue as well due to 20Z cutoff since cuts off peak temp/min RH/convective precip esp in west.

- **FBFRG Update:** Nick checking that everyone working on their pieces? Deadline Nov 15 back to FW subcommittee, back to NWCG Dec 1. Darren: huge lift from fire weather standpoint to make changes, but to go through vetting will be tough. Haven't met in past two months due to fire season, found some big issues with current version wrt wx section. Will be scrapping a ton out of it, but not sure about vetting. [Action item: Nick, Chris, Darren meet on this in few weeks? Nick Nauslar - NOAA Federal will schedule this]

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- **NWCG Restructuring:** Nick: lots still in the air with upcoming wildland fire service changes at agency level. Questions? Dave's common questions he's heard: It is the plan, final version is moving forward. February is target date. Wes comment: FENC will go down to three subcommittees total, roles limited with so few folks? Dave: plan identifies membership/roles that will track/maintain on websites and rosters, who voting members are. Still flexibility to have alternates, establish subgroups beneath subcommittees. Trying to be more informal to allow them to form, do work, disband (managed by subcommittees). Smoke noted as an example of flexibility given range of agencies and interests in smoke/aq. Nick: Lots will change come February!

- **Round Robin:**
 - Chris fire behavior: meeting in person in prescott, finish re-write of FBFRG
 - Wes fire env/cont edu: ad hoc meetings given fire season, focus now on updating section for handbook, making sure it is in by nov 15. Go through process of documentation during winter for whoever takes over the work.
 - Darren fire weather: met last week about NWCG restructure, percentiles in ERC/BI outputs in new FEMS, sliding scale? What time window to look at and display? Convo about adding IMET quals into 310-1, looking at it from meteorologist quals view, IMET is tech specialist, parent agency can determine if you're an imet or not. Draw baseline by having GS1340? Quals are (math, physics, etc).
 - Travis fire danger: informational discussions when meeting, no specific action items.
 - Robert states: no additions.
 - Billy PSOG: met last week to go over secretary's letter. Annual meeting 2nd week of january.
 - Pete smoke: met a few weeks ago, will be looking at re-organization. FBFRG thoughts: when collab'd on IRPG to cover smoke indicators a few years ago, may be utility there to look at overlap in transport/dispersion mentioned in IRPG? Chris isn't sure if smoke in existing version of FBFRG.
 - Tim research: GSL fire potential index in RRFS? Robyn: It's very new, Tim will send paper around.
 - Cheryl: no additions
 - Robyn: no additions