

Fire Prevention Education Team (FPET) Subcommittee

Meeting Minutes: 1/23/2025

Attendees:

Subcommittee:

- (x) Mark Thibideau – Forest Service – Chairperson
- () Zach Ellinger – Bureau of Land Management – Primary Member / Program Manager
- (x) Jeff Moyer – Bureau of Indian Affairs – Primary Member
- (x) Amanda Scott – Forest Service – CEPC Liaison
- (x) Stacey Grimes – Forest Service – Co-Chairperson
- (x) Andy Nesmith – National Association of State Foresters – Primary Member
- (x) Todd Chlanda – Alternate for Andy Nesmith
- () Kate Roesch – National Park Service – Primary Member
- (x) Gwen Beavans – AD Employee – Associate Member
- () Katy O’Hara – Bureau of Land Management – NWCG Coordinator
- () Nick Terrell – Bureau of Land Management – Admin. Support

Regional Coordinators:

Great Basin – Dennis Fiore, Sierra Hellstrom, Jennifer Hansen, Josh Warden
Eastern – Raymond Parrish
Northern Rockies – Not present
Northwest and Alaska – Jacob Gear, Stacey Long
California – Joseph Labak
Rocky Mountain – Samuel Strain
Southwest – Matthew Engbring, Francisco Salazar
Southern Area – EJ Bunzendahl, Tiffany Rook, Sean O’Neal

Regional Coordinators After Action Review (AAR) 2024

Introduction:

- Mark welcomed everyone, made introductions, and reviewed 2024 FPET statistics:
 - Recap of the 2024 deployments.
 - 10 National Teams deployed.
 - Five different Team Leads.
 - Deployments spanned March through September.
 - 1 Team Lead was available only remotely.
- Mandy Scott will be filling behind Zach Ellinger as the National Coordinator. Stacey will remain the alternate.
- Stacey Grimes will be filling behind Mark Thibideau as the NWCG Subcommittee Chair. This transition will occur in April 2025 as well as a new individual will be identified to fill the Co-Chair role behind Stacey.
- Floor open to the Regional Coordinators.

Geographical AAR of Season:

Great Basin – Dennis Fiore

National team deployed to the Sawtooth National Forest for a two-week assignment

- Excited that the Fire Management Officer (FMO) ordered a team!
- Efficient ordering process. Zach did a great job coordinating the request.
- 100% Florida team.
- Overall, everyone was pleased with the results.
- Question: is it possible to mix up the team make-up?
 - To prevent group think dynamic – only one perspective.
 - No identification of Forest Service – patch or forestry trucks – shows local/regional acceptance/support which is important.
- Team made decision to operate out of the hotel instead of forest office. Lots of effort spent to find space in the office for the team.
 - This was confusing: lost communication opportunities/representation.
 - Team has more visibility with leadership if located in the office. Easier to sell them in the future.
- Uniforms and vehicles – Team shirts look good but no identification as a firefighting agency. Rental vehicles with no badging.
- Important to have local people part of the team.

Great Basin – Sierra Hellstrom

- Shared the same thoughts.
- Team did a great job but needed diversity – political viewpoint from a single state team.
- Focus on “Smokey swag party” lacks the educational aspect of FPET mission.
- Also had issues with team working out of a hotel – regular discussions and updates not as convenient.
- Teams should try and accommodate the host requests.
- Some teams are using Google Drive. Feds cannot access that platform. All FPET files should be stored on FireNet – others agreed.
- Prioritize trainees from local area.
- Working toward in Geographic Area Coordination Center (GACC) team long term.

Great Basin – Jennifer Hansen

- More local personnel integrated into the team.

Discussion from Group

- Lay out the schedule and where the team will operate out of in the Delegation of Authority (DOA).
- Discuss during the in-brief.
- Southwest region adds the request of local personnel in their DOA’s.
- Todd – Geographic concerns of state folks not getting on computer system, rented hot-spots, hotel work due to internet problems.

Eastern Area – Raymond Parrish

- Team activated on the Shawnee National Forest for the eclipse.
- Good experience. Team well received with no issues.

California – Joe Labak

- Two teams activated for California
 - Six Rivers National Forest – Forest built the team with a Prevention Education Team Leader (PETL) trainee and had a qualified PETL come in to assist and sign off the trainee's task book. Local unit and trainee were very happy.
 - Klamath National Forest
 - Forest orders two to three teams annually.
 - Conducted community outreach.
 - Worst year for human-caused fires.
- Be light on needs as much as possible – self-sufficient.
- Two new qualified PETLs signed off.

Rocky Mountain – Sam Strain

- Grateful for the communications from Mark and Zach about ordering teams and ensuring team had necessary experience and skills for the assignment.
- Paid media services are extremely effective and hits users before they step foot on the local unit.
 - Mark Thibideau – grants could work for buying media.
- With technology advancements is it possible to have virtual FPETs?
 - Work more with technology.
 - Websites – stating restrictions, education, etc.
 - Google searches.
 - Not so much of a Smokey swag party.

SW Region – Matthew Engbring

- Two teams mobilizations.
 - White Mountain Zone – Brought in for fire restrictions.
 - Central West Zone – Vehicle and equipment caused fires.
- Focused on quality and quantity – summarized return on investment from FPETs to sell to leadership.
- FPETs cost accountability is scrutinized more than other fire teams. Who do we need to report to this level of detail? Dennis Fiore responded – It shows accountability and responsibility looking at deliverables, outcomes, etc. Just get questions on return of investment from FPETs. Numbers help to respond. Suggests Community Mitigation Assistance Team (CMAT) and FPET should merge for maximum flexibility.

Southern Area – EJ Bunzendahl

- Not many requests for a team in the Southern Area. Surprised they didn't have more.
- Across the board notion that they must have severity to order a FPET. Group responded that FPETs should be ordered before engines need to be ordered.
- Southern Area is filling the NFPET's like an Incident Management Team (IMT) request – order a full FPET.
 - PETL rosters a team prior to being on the schedule.
 - Roster goes to the GACC.
 - Order is placed for a FPET through the GACC.

- GACC sends out the orders.
- PETLs should make sure all team members are show qualified in the Incident Resource Ordering Capacity (IROC) and are ready to go.
- Interagency mix on team is important.
- Southern Area uses the priority training list to fill FPET spots first if available.
- There needs to be a list of FPET people and qualifications available to pull from.
- At the regional level push the inclusion of FPET's as the Preparedness Level (PL) increases.
- In the *NWCG Fire Prevention Education Team Host Unit Guide PMS 464* include:
 - Cause and location of fires data
 - Specific causes in the area
 - Maps of fire occurrence
 - Pre-identify Government Printing Office (GPO) policy and locations
- FPET organizations should expand or shrink with the complexity of the assignment just like an IMT does.

Pacific Northwest – Jacob Gear

- No teams used in 2024.
- Supports the use of FireNet for file storage.
 - Need to clean up/organize FireNet.
 - Perhaps organized by the GACC?
- Integrate other agencies/ areas on teams.
- Agencies have different Artificial Intelligence (AI) policies – need to be consistent.
- Review messages before releasing them to the public (i.e. check spelling and grammar).
- How do we get more people to participate on FPETS?

January FPET Subcommittee Meeting

Old Business

- Review and update the National Fire Prevention and Education Team Program Plan and 2025 Rotation Schedule – Stacey had drafted a 2025 rotation schedule and will work with Zach to send out to the field for input. Mark, Zach, and Mandy will work on the FPET Program Plan for 2025. Zach intends to transition the National FPET Coordinator role with Mandy Scott. A date has not been yet selected for this transition.
- Public Information Officer qualification requirement for National FPET teams –
 - **Decision:** The FPETSC decided unanimously to require Public Information Officer Type 3 (PIO3) as the minimum mobilization standard for a National FPET Team.
 - Further discussion of this agenda item led to a pending Incident Business Committee (IBC) memo regarding updates to *NWCG Standards for Interagency Incident Business Management*, PMS 902 regarding incident ordering based on complexity, not individual highest qualification level.
- Fire Prevention Team 2024 Season After Action Review (AAR) and Annual Webinar –
 - Members discussed scheduling dates for the FPET end of year AAR with the regional FPET coordinators. Stacey will send a meeting invite for January 23rd. AAR meeting will coincide with the regularly scheduled FPETSC meeting.
 - The Annual FPET Webinar will be scheduled for February 27th from 10-12 Pacific time. Stacey will send a “save the date” calendar invite to PETLs and trainees, Prevention

Education Team Members (PETM) and trainees, Public Information Officers, Regional FPET Coordinators, and the FPETSC.

- Date for Learning Environment Webinar – Cultural Burning Feb 19 or 21 9-2:30 PST.

New Business

- Succession Planning –
 - Mandy Scott has assumed the duties of National FPET Coordinator. Much gratitude and thanks to Zach for his many years of service in this position. Stacey will continue to serve as alternate.
 - Need new FPETSC Co-Chair starting in April 2025. Stacey will assume Mark's duties as FPETSC Chair.
- Lists of PETL/PETL trainees and PETM/PTEM trainees should be shared with PETLs to help fill rosters and put ink in task books.
- Communication Education and Prevention Committee (CEPC)/FPET Program and Schedule – Revision of language regarding PETL needing to serve as a qualified PETL in geographic area prior to being listed on the National Schedule. Not all GACCs have FPETs making it difficult for newly qualified PETLs to gain that experience.
 - Stacey Grimes – Suggests newly qualified PETLs should be brought on national assignments as soon as they are qualified to gain national experience. Newly qualified PETLs should have a qualified PETL with national experience on their first national assignment to help guide them.
 - Tiffany Rook (serves as a PETM) – When qualified, aren't they qualified? If they don't want to go out, are we signing them off too soon?
 - Sierra Hellstrom – Engine boss is like a PETM, the national leader is a more complex level.
 - Jeff Moyer – Encourage through the classes to get out. Need more diversity in teams. Personnel need to get out of comfort zone. Too many of one position (PIOs).
 - Todd Chlanda – In favor of having support for newly qualified PETLs on national FPETs. Can't be afraid to fail. Think we are progressing if this is what we are talking about.
- Webinar for March – Katy or Mandy
- Incident Performance and Training Modernization (IPTM) position review –
 - Need more subject matter experts (SME).
 - Incident business management requirement for PETLs. What other needs might there be?
 - **Action Item:** Need to confirm that Katy was notified by December if an Aug/Sept. 2025 IPTM review would be possible for PETL and PETM positions? Is this a reasonable time to conduct the reviews?

Other Business

- CEPC update – In person meeting in last October. Angie Lange is now Chair for the CEPC. Lots of PIO stuff going on, updates coming soon.
- NWCG Update – No update this meeting.

Next Call & Agenda Items

2/21/2025 – Cultural burning Webinar, 9-10 PT

2/27/2025 – Annual FPET Webinar, 10-12 PT