



November 20, 2025 | [Fire Weather Subcommittee](#) Meeting

### **Members/Invited Attendees:**

Darren Clabo (NASF/SD State, Chair), Jim Wallmann (USFS, Vice Chair), Dennis Burns (NASF), Larry Van Bussum (NWS), Drew Daily (NASF/OK Forestry Services), Kari Fleegel (NWS), Colby Neuman (NWS), Brian Potter (USFS), Paul Sopko (USFS), David Schultz (NWCG Coordinator/BLM), Nick Nauslar (NWS), Tom St. Clair (BIA), Eamon Engber (NPS), Robert Field (NASA/Columbia)

**Actual Attendees:** Thomas St. Clair, Darren Clabo, Nick Nauslar, Kari Fleegel, Robert Field, Drew Daily

**\*\*These and past notes are also available internally in our [Google Drive folder](#).**

### **Agenda**

1. **Fire Environment Committee Update** (Darren Clabo/Nick Nauslar)
2. **Fire Behaviour Field Reference Guide Update** (Darren Clabo)
3. **Fire Weather Handbook** (Darren Clabo)
4. **Round Robin** (all)

1. **Fire Environment Committee Update** (Darren Clabo/Nick Nauslar)  
The NWCG reorganization is currently on pause until July 2026 (was originally expected to be in February).

There was a Fire Environment Committee meeting on November 19th. An update of the S-x90 series was given. S-390 and S-490 are under final reviews. S-490 had a test run in Tucson in October and it went pretty well. California is expected to implement an S-490 course in the future.

Nick Nauslar reminded folks to give SMEs (subject matter experts)/instructors plenty of time to prepare before teaching the courses, as there is a lot of new scientific information. He also noted that while half of the Geographic Area Training Representatives (GATRs) are pleased that S-290 is now in person only. The other half is less excited.

An interim chair for FENC is requested to replace Nick Nauslar. Cheryl Bright is unavailable due to time constraints. Wes Hall is a maybe. Anyone interested should contact Nick.

2. **Fire Behaviour Field Reference Guide Update** (Darren Clabo)

[Fire Behavior Field Reference Guide, PMS 437 | NWCCG,   
https://www.nwccg.gov/publications/pms437/fire-behavior-field-reference-guide-pms-437](https://www.nwccg.gov/publications/pms437/fire-behavior-field-reference-guide-pms-437)

This document was reviewed by several members, with adjustments [on our shared drive here](#). Given our limited time for the initial review, we asked that any mention of the Haines Index of Lightning Activity Level be removed. An annual review of this product is expected to be conducted. See the previous 2 meetings of notes for additional details.

3. **Fire Weather Handbook** (Darren Clabo)

The text of the Fire Weather Handbook has been written and is going through a final internal review before being shared with the subcommittee. The accompanying videos (also used for portions of S-290 and S-390) have already been created and paid for. Additional artwork will be created by a student at South Dakota Mines, who is willing to sign his rights to the art over to NWCCG.

4. **Round Robin** (all)

Thomas St. Clair - Looking to the future on how the fire community will be adjusting over the next 1-2 years.

Brian Potter - Brought up the use of AI chat models and compared different options based on a testing and a visiting presentation from the Alan Institute (research institute). Brian said that Claude AI assistant is based on development, where the input can be better quality checked. He also spoke about the Air Resource Advisor (ARA) position training and that there is currently 1 required class.

Brian shared details from a recently published paper, Evaluating Fire Indices for Fire Ignition and Spread Risk in the Western United States (DOI: 10.22541/essoar.176296827.76595361/v1) which noted Haines Index, along with several other parameters like saturation vapor pressure, the Hot Dry Windy Index, the Fosberg fire weather index, and more.

Nick Nauslar/Brian Potter - a fire session will be a part of the American Meteorological Society conference this year, but will then be every other year.

**Next meeting December 18, 2025 at 11 am MT** \*\*typically the 3rd Thursday of each month\*\*