



December 18, 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 (NWCWG Coordinator/BLM), Nick Nauslar (NWS), Tom St. Clair (BIA), Eamon Engber (NPS), Robert Field (NASA/Columbia)

**Actual Attendees:** Eamon Engber, Robert Field, Kari Fleegel, Brian Potter, Dennis Burns, Thomas St. Clair, Darren Clabo, Jim Wallmann

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

### **Agenda**

1. **Reorganization Update on Forest Service Research** (Brian Potter)
2. **Fire Environment Committee Update** (Darren Clabo)
3. **Round Robin** (all)

1. **Reorganization Update on Forest Service Research** (Brian Potter)

There is nothing concrete yet. However, a proposal for the USDA FS reorganization would do away with the name research stations. It is unknown if physical reporting stations will change. There will be a focus on the Five Pillars of Research. Fire, Fuels and Smoke is one of the pillars.

A few different folks were mentioned that could help lead different levels in the new reorganization. One of the ideas is that there will be 3 regional subheads under the main person, one for the western area, 1 for the Rocky Mountain, and 1 for the eastern U.S. How people are tasked is not known at this time.

The Hot-Dry-Windy Index (HDWI) page is not displaying forecasts at this time: <https://hdwindex.fs2c.usda.gov/>. This just started December 18th, and Jay Charney has been tasked to contact the correct folks to have it working again. There are new gates on any new agreements or contracts. Anything called data analysis or analytics must be approved by the CIO.

2. **Fire Environment Committee Update** (Darren Clabo)

There was a Fire Environment Committee meeting on December 17th. The NWCG reorganization is being pushed back until June 2026, with membership assignments coming out soon from the primary member and associate member groups. It was reassured that the NWS would still have a presence in the reorganized group, as an associate member.

An interim chair for FENC is requested to replace Nick Nauslar. Cheryl Bright and Wes Hall are unavailable. Anyone interested should contact Nick.

3. **Round Robin** (all)

Thomas St. Clair - We will continue to look into the future of how the fire community will be adjusting over the next one to 2 years. The Alaska GACC is in the final stages of hiring a meteorologist.

Eamon Engber - Changes within the DOI are expected in early February.

Jim Wallmann - Predictive services changes at NIFC in Boise will likely mean a name change and additional changes to a National Fire Intelligence Center. It will no longer be GACC based. Expect a director and deputy director, along with 2 meteorologists. Questions remain on how the National Fire Intelligence Center will interact with private, public, and university partners.

Dennis Burns - The October test for S-490 went really well, with representatives from NWCG being impressed. The NWS Meteorologist out of Tucson presented the weather sections. Geospatial modelling (FlamMap) and the Canadian Forest Fire Weather Index (FWI) are now a part of S-490. There are now several optional slides that can be used for this training. All of the students passed the course. The S-490 course is now in the hands of NWCG for 508 compliance, which is expected to be completed by early January, and then fully available at the end of January at the earliest. We need to get more Meteorologists to go through S-590, with the next one being in 2028. Kari Fleegel will send Julie Malinowski an email regarding the 2028 course, and Jim Wallmann will be coordinating at the GACC level to bolster interest.

Kari Fleegel - Fire weather no longer has an official season, particularly in the Northern Plains, where limited snow on the ground with above normal temperatures and strong winds can lead to fires with large growth. For the NWS Aberdeen, SD office we create and issue fire weather products through the entire year. After coordinating with their local customers, some NWS offices stop creating and sending their fire weather products during the winter months.

**Next meeting January 15, 2025 at 11 am MT** \*\*typically the 3rd Thursday of each month\*\*