

# NWCG LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING

## Meeting Minutes

May 2-4, 2023 • Boise, ID

**Agency Representatives Present:** Patrick Morgan, Chair (USFS); Mike Ellsworth Vice-Chair (FWS); LJ Brown (BLM); George Risko (NASF); TJ Gholson (BIA); Russ Babiak (NPS)

**Ad Hoc:** Pam McDonald (BLM); Ashleigh D'Antonio (USFS); Ted Adams (USFS); Justin Vernon (USFS); Joe Williams (USFS, Thursday); Monica Morrison (USFS, Tuesday/Wednesday); Brandon Selk (USFS), Justin Vernon (USFS); Travis Dotson (NPS, Tuesday/Wednesday)

**Advisors/Liaisons/Guests:** Sarah Lee (NWCG); Alexis Waldron (USFS, Wednesday); Kelly Woods (NPS, Tuesday/Wednesday)

### AGENDA/INTRODUCTIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Morgan)

- Welcome and introductions.
  - New agency representatives: TJ Gholson (BIA), Russ Babiak (NPS), and George Risko (NASF)
- Leader's intent and agenda review.

### LEADERSHIP CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

(Ellsworth)

- The LCMSC met in person on May 1, 2023.
- Overall agreement that pre-course work through the Wildland Fire Learning Portal and a change in design criteria are ways to expose students to [www.fireleadership.gov](http://www.fireleadership.gov) and website content.

### L-180 & L-280

(Ellsworth)

- L-180 and L-280 objectives are complete but need LC approval.  
**DECISION: LC approved the L-180 and L-280 objectives.**
- L-280 delay due to improper NWCG format; 50% complete; Beta version, estimate fall 2023.
- AAR tool portion of the website has not been updated to "debriefing."  
**ACTION: Task the LSMSC and AAR coordinators with updating the debriefing tool on the website by August 1, 2023. (Mike Ellsworth, Joe Williams, Matt Lynde)**
- Crew boss course revision:
  - NWCG contractor having difficulty removing leadership content and needs assistance.
  - Possible opportunity for L-280 requirement at the single resource boss level
- Discussion about L-180 delivery format (possibly blended, online with local and Spanish facilitation options).

### **Concerns:**

- Jeff Ennenga took a new job, unsure of future involvement.
- Day job priority conflicts for CMLs.
- Brandon and Ashleigh will be transitioning out as CMLs.

### **Work Group Plan of Action:**

- Submit L-180 and L-280 course revision request to NWCG. (Mike Ellsworth, Ashleigh D'Antonio, Brandon Selk, Sarah Lee)

**ACTION: Submit FY24 NWCG budget request for L-180 and L-280 course revision by January 2024. (Patrick Morgan, Mike Ellsworth, Sarah Lee)**

- L-180
  - 1-year: Transition to a new co-CMLs.
  - 1-year: Agency lead decision on delivery method.
  - 3-year: Updated with new content.
  - 5-year: Operation and maintenance.
- L-280
  - 1-year: Revised course available.
  - 1-year: Transition to new co-CMLs.
  - 3-year: Operation and maintenance.

**L-380**

*(Ellsworth for Williams)*

- Four new lead instructors added:
  - Lance EnHolm (MCS)
  - Tony DeMasters (MCS)
  - Kevin Harvell (ATO)
  - Shawn Baker (MCS)
- Researching how the Wildland Fire Learning Portal can complement course delivery (pre-course work, housing agency training materials, future course deliveries, etc.).
- **Concerns:**
  - Day job priority conflicts for CMLs.

**Work Group Plan of Action:**

- 1-year: Create a task team (Morrison, Williams, Lynde, D’Antonio, Akerberg, and Morgan) to define L-380 instructor requirement needs and how the portal can be used to assist delivery and house the agency package.
- 1-year: Examine the original intent of the pre-course work.
- 1-year: Resolve concerns about the cultural sensitivity within some simulations.
- 1-year: Formally advise providers of course changes.
- 1-year: Monitor new design criteria.
- 3-year: Evaluate barriers for course delivery sustainability.

**L-381**

*(Brown)*

- Vendors are not aware of course changes.
- Ashleigh D’Antonio monitored MCS’s delivery in Tucson.

**Concerns:**

- Cadre lacks diversity.
- Simulation contains culturally sensitive role playing.
- Unwinnable scenario is a turnoff for some participants.

**Work Group Plan of Action:**

- 1-year: Decide on the conversation surrounding culture sensitivity.
- 1-year: Send new design criteria to vendors.
- 3-year: Monitor the new design criteria.
- 5-year: Develop a CML succession plan.

**L-480**

*(Ellsworth/Morgan)*

- LCMSC continues to assess course intent, how the course fits into the curriculum, and if the course is at the proper level.
  - Booster believes it is a right fit.
- Steering committee oversight would benefit this course.
  - Look at delivery and course sustainability.
  - Consult with [Grey Towers](#) (USDA) for potential resources.
- Booster will continue as provider for the near future. Need alternatives.

**ACTION: Establish an L-480 steering committee by the Fall 2023 LC meeting. (Patrick Morgan, Mike Ellsworth, and Paul Cerda)**

**Concerns:**

- Shultz stepped down as CML.

**ACTION: Consult with Paul Cerda about operational flexibility to serve as L-480 CML. (Morgan, Ellsworth, and Babiak)**

**ACTION: Recruit and refer potential L-480 CML(s) to the LC chair and vice-chair by August 1, 2023. (All agency representatives)**

**Work Group Plan of Action:**

- 1-year: Reestablish an L-480 steering committee.
- 1-year: Develop a 3- to 5-year strategic plan for the course sustainability.
- 1-year: Evaluate the target audience and the title of the course.

**L-481**

*(Risko)*

- Course is static and stable.
- MCS is still the only vendor for the course. MCS/Risko approved Dayton Baraw new lead instructor.
  - Risko recommends the LC Chair send the approval letter to new lead instructors. McDonald developed letterhead for the approval and placed it in the LC Teams folder.
- The LC continued to discuss the benefits of hosting a leadership summit.

**Concerns:**

- L-481 needs two CMLs (co-lead and for succession planning), especially now that Risko is an agency representative.

**ACTION: Recruit and refer potential L-481 CMLs to the LC chair and vice-chair by August 1, 2023. (All agency representatives)**

- Risk management processes among agencies continues to be an issue for course delivery in an interagency environment; many processes result in subjective decision making.
  - As discussed in previous meetings, risk management is a leadership function and should be approached with objective decision making and expressed through leader's intent.

**ACTION: Convene a task group by July 1, 2023, to discuss risk management as a leadership function and the potential need for an NWCG standard; brief the LC by August 1, 2023; draft an Executive Board issue paper, if needed by October 1, 2023; and keep vendor updated. (Patrick Morgan, Mike Ellsworth, George Risko, Sarah Lee)**

### **Work Group Plan of Action:**

- 1-year: Explore additional vendor and agency instructor development possibilities.
- 1-year: Recruit one/two co-CMLs.
- 1-year: Discuss risk management differences and potential NWCG standard. Communicate plan of action to the vendor.
- 3-5 year: Support agency delivery development and delivery.

### **L-580**

**(Ellsworth)**

- Four deliveries in 2023: 2 – Gettysburg and 2 – Chickamauga/Chattanooga.
- A formal steering committee will be formed. Had an initial meeting with Patrick Morgan, Mike Ellsworth, Maeve Juarez, Zeph Cunningham, Tim Regan, Russ Babiak, and John Wood. Next meeting is set for late June 2023.
- Tim Regan, Brian Hicks, Zeph Cunningham, Ryan Dicks, and Patrick Morgan will evaluate OMNA’s Super Sandy Staff Ride as a possible L-580 event.
- Potential L-580 event: Thomas Fire mudslides.
- Russ Babiak will assume co-CML duties.

### **Concerns:**

- Intended audience and learning outcomes for L-580.
- Impacts of Complex Incident Management on training and qualification needs.

### **Work Group Plan of Action:**

- 1-year: Stand up an L-580 steering committee.
- 3-year: Validate the criteria/guiding principles (staff ride vs event vs course)
- 3- year: Better define the audience.
- 5-year: Create more events.

### **LEADING IN THE WILDLAND FIRE SERVICE**

- The publication needs a functional table of contents.
- LC discussed publication delivery options: hardcopy and/or electronic.
  - The publication is not available through the Publication Management System at this time; orders were suspended because of the pending revision.

**ACTION: Formulate a task group that has monthly check-ins to revise *Leading in the Wildland Fire Service* and report at the fall 2023 LC meeting. (Monica Morrison-lead, Mike Ellsworth, TJ Gholson)**

### **Work Group Plan of Action:**

- 1-year: Define (written statement) the intent of “*Leading in the Wildland Fire Service*.”
- 1-year: Finalize potential changes to the Wildland Fire Values and Principles and seek LC approval.
- 1-year: Finish LC recommendations for *Leading in the Wildland Fire Service* and incorporate potential changes to the values and principles and seek LC approval.
- 1-3-year: Maintenance.
- 5-year: Renew and refresh.

### **LEADERSHIP SELF-STUDY PROGRAM (BOOSTER SHOTS)**

**(Adams)**

- Thirteen lessons for five levels.
- Soft launch was effective, getting good involvement for levels 1 & 2.
- Ted Adams is an Editing Trainer withing the Wildland Fire Learning Portal and will assume responsibility. Pam McDonald, and Eric Pelletier will assist as needed.
- Need to finalize a name for the initiative.

**ACTION: Develop a marketing campaign for the “booster shot” tool, including a blog for both the WFLDP and LLC and a formal name for the initiative by August 1, 2023. (Ted Adams)**

**ACTION: Incorporate the “booster shot” initiative into course designs and criteria and advise providers. (All CMLs)**

**ACTION: Develop discussion guides for books included in the leadership level self-studies on the Portal by November 1, 2023. (Ted Adams and Justin Vernon)**

**Work Group Plan of Action:**

- 1-year: Finalize name of the “booster shot” initiative.
- 1-year: Create discussion guides for books within the “booster shot” levels.
- 3-year: Increase the lessons for the upper levels.
- 5-year: Maintenance and renewal.

**AUTHENTICITY PROJECT**

**(McDonald)**

- Project delayed due to poor audio and lack of diversity; will refilm this fall.

**Work Group Plan of Action:**

- 1-year: Refilm videos.
- 1-year: Incorporate into the “Leaders We Would Like to Meet” initiative.
- 1-year: Launch the initiative through WFLDP social media and NWCG e-newsletter.

**LEADERS WE WOULD LIKE TO MEET**

**(Morrison)**

- Monica Morrison and Maeve Juarez have podcast equipment but need assistance on the “how-to” and editing/housing of content.
  - Kelly Woods offered for the LLC to partner with the WFLDP on the podcast effort.

**ACTION: Discuss the path forward and plan for a podcast partnership between the LLC and the WFLDP and present at fall 2023 LC meeting. (Monica Morrison, lead; TJ Gholson; Kelly Woods; and Travis Dotson)**

**STAFF RIDES AND EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING**

- Plans are underway for hosting a national staff ride workshop.
  - Maintenance of the workshop has been an issue; need to tie in with the GATRs.
  - Would like to incorporate diversity.
  - Blue Ribbon staff ride is a go in the SE.
- DOD is conducting a Mann Gulch staff ride. Risko, Morgan, and Dan Cottrell are assisting.
- The Staff Ride Guide delayed due to poor picture quality.

**ACTION: Work with NWCG on pictures for the Staff Ridge Guide and finalize product for field release by August 1, 2023. (Pam McDonald, George Risko, Sarah Lee)**

**Concerns:**

- Inconsistency exists regarding the issuance of certificates for staff rides.
- Need guidance and assistance for experiential learning.

**DECISION: Stand up an Experiential Learning Subcommittee (working title) by the fall LC meeting. Identify coordinator, subcommittee structure, responsibilities, etc. (Patrick Morgan, Mike Ellsworth, Ryan Sharpe, George Risko, Sarah Lee)**

### **Work Group Plan of Action:**

- 1-year: Stand up the Experiential Learning Subcommittee.
- 1-year: Recruit and fill Experiential Learning Subcommittee.
- 1-year: Host the national staff ride development workshops.
- 1- to 3-year: Host a conference group leader development workshop.
- 1- to 3-year: Update maps on the WFLDP website.
- 1- to 3-year: Tie in with GATRs.
- 1- to 3-year: Tie in with other committees (e.g., Risk Management Committee, Training Development Committee).
- 1- to 3-year: Load content into the Wildland Fire Learning Portal.
- 1- to 3-year: Tie in with Complex Incident Management effort.
- 1- to 3-year: Tie in with workforce development efforts.
- 1- to 3-year: Expand case study/site visit content.
- 1- to 3-year: Build an electronic library of study guides for books associated with staff rides.
- 1- to 3-year: Conduct futuring exercise with partners/stakeholders.
- 1- to 3-year: Partner with the LLC for TDG/STEX library creation and dissemination.
- 5-year: Research the feasibility of virtual staff ride development.

### **PROFESSIONAL READING PROGRAM**

**(Vernon)**

- Switch to the new NWCG webmaster went well.
- E-newsletter provided great exposure to the program.

### **Concerns:**

- More people needed to support the program and for succession planning.

### **Work Group Plan of Action:**

- 1-year: Roll out the 2024 list (4 to 6 titles; 1 to 2, mental health and/or mindfulness)
- 1-year: Build discussion guide for Young Men and Fire to support Mann Gulch Ranger staff ride and add to the 2024 list as a bonus item.
- 1-year: Build discussion guides for self-study program books that lack them; market as bonus items for 2024 list.
- 1-year: Link leadership levels in discussion guides to the self-study booster shots on the portal.
- 1-year: Tie in with Eric on 2024 campaign; try to get a book and discussion guide as part of the 2024 PRP list and campaign.
- 1-year: Continue with advertisement of the program via social media, emails, etc.
- 1-year: Get website data from NWCG to evaluate/assess engagement on current lists/titles to inform 2024 and onward.
- 3-year: Continue with annual list and discussion guides for 4-6 titles per year, trying to keep a variety of topics and book types.
  - For 2024 onward start using website visitation data from NWCG to gauge engagement, potentially validate/inform title selection in the future.
  - 2024 onward link leadership levels section to self-study plans in portal.
- 3-year: Continue to work closely with social media/campaign on opportunities for collaboration.
- 3-year: Keep up with getting the yearly announcement on the NWCG mailing list.
- 3-year: Evaluate ways to work within the Wildand Fire Learning Portal to expand the reach of the PRP, coordinate with folks developing leadership toolboxes (e.g., self-study tools, staff ride workshops, etc.), and provide new options for lifelong learners.

- 3-year: Bring in others to assist with development of discussion guides, start identifying folks that could become new PRP lead.
- 3-year: Engage with staff ride/experiential learning groups to develop discussion guides as appropriate to support new staff rides/learning opportunities.
- 5-year: Continue with relevant recurring 1- and 3-year tasks/goals, updating/altering as appropriate.
- 5-year: Evaluate opportunities for leveraging technology (e.g., opportunities for digital libraries)
- Continue to use available tools to evaluate engagement and title effectiveness in meeting current needs of leadership students/users.
  - Continue evaluation of title selection to ensure toolbox is providing tools needed as culture and operating environment shifts.
- Hand off PRP “lead” role to a new person.

### **LEAD BY EXAMPLE AWARD UPDATE**

**(Ellsworth for Cerda)**

- Three selections for the 2022 award have been proposed.  
**ACTION: Notify agency representatives and the Executive Board of 2022 LBE selection and notify Pam McDonald of final approval for award processing by May 31, 2022. (Paul Cerda and Mike Ellsworth)**

### **Concerns:**

- Nominations are down.
- Ethics waiver for award winners from Executive Board is needed.
- Need a permanent solution to procuring boots.
  - The State of Florida will procure boots; however, a permanent solution is needed.
- Pam McDonald is stepping down as coordinator for award production/delivery, writing of the citation letters, and selection panel thank you notes.

**ACTION: Develop a plan for LBE award management and present at the fall 2023 LC meeting. (Patrick Morgan, Paul Cerda, Pam McDonald, John Wood, and Mike Ellsworth)**

### **Work Group Plan of Action:**

- 1-year: Produce, present, and publish the 2022 awards.
- 1-year: Convene a task group to revise the LBE Operations Plan.
- 1-year: Update and modernize the nomination process, including working with the NWCG webmaster on a web application process.
- 1-year: Work with NWCG webmaster/Pam McDonald to market the LBE on a quarterly basis through the NWCG e-newsletter notification system.
- 1-year: Work through Florida Forest Service to order 10 more boots.
- 1-year: Secure an ethics award waiver from the NWCG Executive Board.

### **LESSONS LEARNED CENTER UPDATE**

**(Woods/Dotson)**

- The LLC website is in transition; unavailable due to contracting issue.
  - Phased rollout planned; IRDB first.
  - New URL: [www.lessons.wildfire.gov](http://www.lessons.wildfire.gov)
  - Using the blog and e-newsletter until the website is functional.

### **LEADERSHIP MEDIA**

**(Ellsworth)**

- Travis Touchette took a new job.
- Tool hasn't been updated.  
**ACTION: Add LLC podcasts, interviews, blogs, etc., that relate to wildland fire leaders to the WFLDP website during the website review/update. (**

## WFLDP WEBSITE

- Members discussed the need for a website review to identify issues and incorporate efficiencies.  
**ACTION: Work with the NWCG webmaster to gather analytics on the various tools. (DD: August 2023. Ashleigh D’Antonio, Justin Vernon)**  
**ACTION: Create a task group to create a WFLDP website revision plan and report to the LC at the fall 2023 meeting. (Ashleigh D’Antonio, Justin Vernon, Eric Pelletier, Pam McDonald, Sarah Lee)**

## COMPLEX INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

(Ellsworth)

- Ellsworth updated the LC on the transition to CIM.
- Ellsworth discussed the need for a leadership liaison on the IMT Subcommittee.  
**DECISION: Monica Morrison will represent the Leadership Committee on the IMT Subcommittee.**

## FEDERAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

(Ellsworth)

- National Training Officers continue to work with OPM on competency analyses of the entire wildland fire series.
- Leadership should be looked at holistically: personally, and professionally.
- Agencies will be hiring personnel for this effort soon.

## SOCIAL MEDIA/CAMPAGIN

(McDonald)

- Facebook and the blog continue to be the go-to means of communication.
- Pam suggests meeting with NWCG communications manager to discuss paths forward with NWCG committees and social media. Is the BLM option the best?  
**ACTION: Meet with the NWCG Communications Manager regarding social media strategy and report out at the fall 2023 LC meeting. (Pam McDonald, Eric Pelletier, and Sarah Lee)**
- Eric Pelletier has agreed to shadow Pam until she retires. Eric will move the effort forward upon Pam’s retirement. Additional assistance is needed to support social media efforts.
- The 2023 campaign is going well. The Wildland Fire Learning Portal allows for retention and continued use.
- Eric Pelletier will coordinate the 2024 campaign.
  - 2024 campaign theme: Followership.

### **Work Group Plan of Action:**

- 1-year: Develop a yearly outreach timeline for leadership topic e-newsletter distribution through NWCG.
- 1-year: Work with NWCG on a long-range social media/communication strategy.
- 1-year: Wrap up the 2023 campaign.
- 1-year: Work with Justin Vernon to select a book on followership for the 2024 Professional Reading Program.
- 1-year: Launch the 2024 campaign.
- 1-3 year: Assess the effectiveness of the campaign and if efforts are worth the investment.

## MISCELLANEOUS

(All)

- Patrick Morgan suggested the LC develop SOPs.  
**ACTION: Review the LC charter and develop committee SOPs and report progress at the fall 2023 meeting. (Patrick Morgan, Mike Ellsworth, Pam McDonald)**
- The LC discussed attaching LC liaisons to task groups.
- Due to a lack of operational flexibility, the LC needs to take a hard look at priorities and new ways of accomplishing our mission. Patrick Morgan and Mike Ellsworth, with the support of John Wood and Pam McDonald, will begin the revisioning process and determine best paths forward for future meetings and discussions.
- George Risko is working on filling NASF ad hoc member vacancies (Southern and West Regions).
- John Hill does not have the capacity/expertise to assume the role of the logistics coordinator for the LC. John will take notes until a logistics coordinator is found.
- Randy Jacks is the new GATR representative liaison to the LC.
- LC lacks a Department of Defense (DoD) agency representative.  
**ACTION: Work with the DoD Executive Board member to identify a representative to the LC by the fall 2023 LC meeting. (Patrick Morgan and Mike Ellsworth)**

## MEETING SCHEDULE

- The LC will move to two face-to-face meetings and two virtual meetings per year.
  - Summer virtual meeting: June 22, 2023, 1000 MDT.
  - Fall face-to-face meeting: December 4-8, 2023; location TBD.