

Fire Equipment Working Team Meeting Notes

Spring Meeting April 18 – 20, 2006
National Interagency Prescribe Fire Training Center
Tallahassee, FL

Power point presentations are available upon request or available through the FEWT website.

Members in Attendance

J.P. Greene	Southern Area Coordination Center	Member
Jerry Orr	Bureau of Indian Affairs	Alternate
Carl Dorsey	Bureau of Land Management	Member (outgoing)
Dan Yturridndobeitia	Bureau of Land Management	Member (incoming)
Wesley Throop	Missoula T&D Center	Technical Advisor
Dan Lang	California Department of Forestry	Member
Bill Hicks	Government Services Administration	Member
Ralph Gonzales	San Dimas T&D Center	Technical Advisor
Kirk Bradley	Roscommon Equipment Center	Member
Steve Counts	Virginia Department of Forestry	Member
Michael Smith	Fish & Wildlife Service	Member (incoming)
Roger Spaulding	Fish & Wildlife Service	Member (outgoing)

Tuesday, April 18

Welcome & Introduction:

Mark Ruggiero, Acting Director of the National Interagency Prescribed Fire Training Center (NIPFTC).

- The mission of NIPFTC is to provide opportunities for federal, state, local and tribal government agencies to build skills and knowledge of prescribe fire, with an emphasis on field experience.
- Typically the training center is engaged in a great deal of prescribe burning, however, due to very dry conditions, most prescribe burning in Region 8 is prohibited. However, one prescribed fire module is about to be scheduled on military range land.
- The NIPFTC Director position will be advertised along with several instructor positions. More information on NIPFTC is available in this URL
<http://fire.fws.gov/pftc/>

Agency Updates

Bureau of Indian Affairs

Jerry Orr is representing BIA in place of Jacqueline Hawley.

- The Model 52 Development Program is getting close to the goal of standardizing the Type 6 Model 52 wildland fire engine. There are currently three Model 52 engine shops. The goal is to have standardization between the three shops.
- Maintenance for the engines is provided through mobile services. This works well.
- Water freezing within the engine has been a common complaint when working in colder climates. A fix to remedy this is being developed.

Bureau of Land Management

Dan Yturridndobeitia will be representing BLM in place of Carl Dorsey.

- BLM will be testing the Unimogs again.
- BLM has an off road driver training course for specialty engines. Specialty vehicles include the Unimog 500 engine and the American Truck Company (ATC), commonly known as the Tatra, engine.
- The water tank size was reduced in the Unimog and ATC to assure that the GVWR is not exceeded and to provide for additional storage.
- Model 14 interface engines are going into service in Great Basin area.
- The 1,500 gallon fuel tank truck on Boise District getting good reviews. A fuel trailer was also developed.
- BLM is working with GSA for vehicles orders and vehicle packages
- ATV drip torch being field tested. All operators must successfully complete an ATV program. A "train the trainer" program is also ready.
- The Hummer program getting rave reviews. The limiting factor with these vehicles is the GVWR.

Fish and Wildlife Service

Mike Smith is transitioning into Roger Spaulding FEWT membership position.

- FWS reports that last year was an average fire season despite the high fuel loads and prediction of extreme fire conditions.
- The prescribe fire goals were exceeded.
- The FWS budget is very limited; therefore new equipment can not be purchased. FWS is looking at a working capital fund (WCF) concept for vehicle replacement and maintenance.

State Presentations

California Department of Forestry

- Dan Lang reports that CDF is implementing an engine replacement program with the goal to replace all vehicles by fiscal year 2013. Most of the CDF engines have been due for replacement; however, due to funding limitations, this has not been done. CDF has replacement criteria to establish priorities for a more efficient change out of engines. 42 engines are scheduled for purchase.
- CDF is switching to water enhancers from long term retardant in aviation assets. The areas of protection that CDF is responsible for typically has good road access so access to the fire and to the water enhancer drop is not a problem. Result from the drop testing conducted by CDF last fall contributed to the decision. Long term retardant will still be available in some locations to accommodate federal agency policy or where good access is not available.

Virginia Department of Forestry

- Steve Counts reports that there have been approximately 1,000 fire responses and continued to have higher than normal initial attack/extended attack fires.
- The State is ATV training for all operators. Training is being provided through the ATV Safety Institute (ASI). ASI is a nationally recognized training program. More information on ASI is available in the following URL.
- A firefighter was killed in wildfire. It has been 30 years since the last fire fatality. State personnel are tried to learn from the event by providing more training and

stress PPE requirements for wildland firefighting. Steve briefed the group on the fatality on Thursday.

- Two command centers are being developed. A new radio system (high band trunk system) being installed.
- The State offers a training program with no cost to our firefighters.

Roscommon Equipment Center

- REC provides assistance and technical support to other state and local agencies that converts excess government property (e.g. -military equipment) for fire fighting. There were a couple of fatalities on converted equipment due to roll-overs in the past three years. Kirk Bradley is working with fire departments on the proper use of this older equipment. REC is also working with SDTDC on the evaluation of equipment operator protection systems.
- Many agencies use backpack blowers to produce a line in leaf litter. REC is starting a feasibility study on using compressed air to enhance this operation.

Government Services Administration

- GSA will be using new stronger repack boxes. The boxes have a full telescoping top.
- Large nomex shirts and pants will be carried soon.
- A small and large version of the "bath in a bag" will be carried.
- New large fire shelters are in stock but the large training shelter is waiting on an approved first article.

[Link to GSA presentation](#)

Southern Area Coordination Center.

J.P. Greene: gave a presentation on the 2005 hurricane season. The 2006 hurricane season is only about a month and half away. The south east is still recovering from last season.

[Link to the SACC presentation](#)

OTHER UPDATES

Cache Strategic Plan: To look at the National Interagency Support Caches and find methods to make a more efficient organization, standardized practices, take advantage of partnerships, work on how we do more with less.

ICBS-R: Presently setting up a demo cache using the Yantra 7.x software at the Rocky Mountain Cache. The Yantra software is a commercial of the self item which has be customized to meet the needs of the caches. The purpose of the demo cache is to evaluate Automated ID Technology (AIT) equipment (e.g. scan guns, printers), the Yantra 7.x software and processes. The system is based on a linear (1D bar code).

NFES: Cache has an updated new kit request/change request process available from the cache website. GSA, the T & D centers and the cache have a common Product Deficiency reporting process (including shipping performance issues) that uses the GSA eResolve reporting mechanism. The refurbishment committee will have the updated refurbishment guide available soon (available from the cache webpage). Fuel tags coming soon and will be testing some flagging for folks with colorblind vision.

Cache web page: <http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/cache/index.html>

Long Term Retardant and Lawsuit Status: A ruling against the Forest Service on a law suit filed by FSEEE. The Forest Service will have to conduct a NEPA to be completed in 18 months.

Fire Steering Committee: The Steering Committee met in January to prioritize projects for FY 07. Due to limited funding, fewer projects are being funded. The steering committee process needs to be re-evaluated and possibly look into evaluating proposal every two years instead of every year. The declining funds make it even more important to look at the whole lifecycle of a program.

Technology & Development Update (MTDC)

Aerial Ignition Projects: Helitorch prototype being tested, Northern Helitorch also being tested (made some suspension modifications). Aerial Sphere dropping devices, new products on the market being tested...uses smaller spheres, PFD evacuation procedures, Aerial Ignition Website. Batch Mixer evaluation.

Ground Ignition Projects: ATV helmet evaluation, Terra Torch, Sphere dispenser to ATV, Sphere hand launcher, ATV torch, Evaluating tech flares and alternative drip torch fuel.

Fuel Transport projects: Fuel transport guide estimated completion 1st quarter FY 06, safety can improvement and Fuel transport website.

Smokejumper Projects: FS-14 parachute improvements, emergency procedure training, smj helmet, wireless spotter helmet and spotter training.

Other projects include Hardhat temperature testing...Rappel website.... Helicopter Rappelling accessories...Harness testing...Entrapment Avoidance...Situational Awareness Firefighting Equipment...fire pant and glove study...Chap care tech tip...fireline pack improvements...tech tip on deet on nomex clothing...Helicopter support Equipment and procedures for BAER and the Incident sign guide.

[Link to MTDC presentation](#)

New Action Item: Vendor sources in obtaining incident signs (Incident Sign Guide). This action is complete.

Technology & Development Update (SDTDC)

There are several vacancies including project leader, electrical engineering technician position. It is difficult to recruit candidates due to cost of living in this area and private sector salaries for like jobs.

Two long term programs: spark arrester qualification and specifications/standards

Nine on-going steering committee projects: Fireline Production Rates, Fuels Collection Method Standardization, CAFS Evaluation, Fish Strainer for Helicopters & Engines, Fire Start Potential Of Black Powder Guns, Emergency Airway Protection, Wildland Respirator Evaluation And Crawler Protection Equipment Evaluation.

Tech Services Projects: Critical air line protection, noise canceling headsets, water-tender stability, "Firewatch" (product evaluation) and headset intercom evaluation.

Completed Publications: Interagency Airtanker Base Guide, Fireline Production Rates Equipment Evaluation, Fuels Collection Methods, Fuel Container Evaluation, Speed Rating On Tires, Shepherder Stove Fire Start Potential And Noxious Weed Washing System.

Potential new projects: Hydration System Study, Belt Weather Replacement Study and Hand Tool Study.

SDTDC is pursuing opportunities for funding support from other agencies (EPA and DOD) to supplement funding for Steering Committee projects.

[Link to SDTDC presentation](#)

Fire Shelter Advisory Board: The Advisor Board created a charter. The charter has not been approved. The group has moved forward on a fire shelter history presentation. They are looking at funding options to facilitate the transition from old to new. Other objectives are identifying methods to mitigate training issues and options for an efficient exchange program. Developing a life cycle program and determining parameters for the shelter (size, shape, cost, performance criteria, etc).

Narrowband Radio Issue: Matt Cnudde provided an update on what has been done by the task group. The group website is available at this URL <http://radios.nifc.gov/> Training for users on compatibility issues (Analog, Digital, Wideband, Narrowband and Multiband) being presented at fire-line refresher courses. Recommended modifications to IAP forms have been sent to IOS working team for consideration. The long term strategic planning task group is being formed to continue work on a comprehensive communication strategy into the future.

ACTION ITEM REVIEW

The **Potable Water Tank Standard** needs to be reviewed. A final opportunity to provide comments will be available during the May 3rd conference call.

Whirling Disease. Roger Spaulding provided information on the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control-point Planning (HACCP). HACCP is provides an online planning assistance for developing mitigation plans on environmental impact that can result from management actions.

New Action Item: Roger and Matt will come up with short explanation statement and request to have that and link to HACCP website (<http://haccp-nrm.org>) from FEWT website.

Foam Curriculum Update. Ralph Gonzales and Les Holsapple reviewed all six videos and three publications used in training. They have concluded that the all 6 videos and 3 publications need to be updated. Ralph provided two alternatives:

1. Update the videos and keep the current number of publications and videos. This task is projected to have a duration of 389 days.
2. Consolidate the videos into one video using a DVD format and consolidate the publications into one. This will reduce redundancies in the videos and publication. This task is estimated to have a duration of 230 days.

The second alternative is recommended. FEWT concurs. Link to Gantt Charts.

Vendor Solicitation. Ralph Gonzales presented two proposed forms to standardize the evaluation of the vendor solicitation. The first form is for vendors to provide a description of the product or idea. This form can be sent to a central database. The second form is a quick evaluation of the product or idea. Form 1 Form 2

New Action Item: All - Send vendor forms comments to Ralph by May 31st.

TASK GROUP UPDATES

Interagency Ground Ignition Task Group

Wes Throop is the acting chair. The Task Group will be looking at all fire starting devices and products to develop a Ground Ignition Guide that covers standards, safety, training, etc. The Task Group will be looking at all fire starting devices and products to develop a Ground Ignition Guide that covers standards, safety, training, etc.

Additional member from the States are needed. Wes presented the Task Group Charter. Clarification is need on the following issued:

- What is the correct name of the group?
- Does the chair person need to be a member of FEWT?
- Is a FEWT liaison needed?

This portion of the update was given on Thursday, April 20th. The notes are place in this section to preserve continuity.

Wes revised the Charter to reflect suggestion made on Tuesday. FEWT recommended that term "Task Groups" be used to refer to special groups created by FEWT to perform specific tasks. The term "Sub-Groups" is used to refer to special groups created by the Task Groups.

Dan Yturridndobeitia was selected to be the FEWT Liaison to the task group.

New Action Item: Steve Counts will solicit membership to the Task Group from other states.

New Action Item: Wes will send out the latest version of the Charter for the Group to review on the next conference call May 3rd.

Wednesday, April 19, 2006

The field trip highlighted equipment used in the State of Florida and the use of prescribe fires. The group looked at equipment and fire programs at the following location: DOF Aviation ramp, Wakulla Ranger District, St. Marks NWR and Tate's Hell State Forest.

Thursday, April 20, 2006

State of Virginia Fatality Report

Steve Counts provided a briefing on the fatality. They plan to take advantage of lessons learned from this incident in future training.

Conference Call with Tory Henderson and Jon Skeels.

The Jon provided information on the equipment typing used in ROSS which is different from the equipment typing used in EaTIS. EaTIS standards is an application that the Forest Service developed for procurement, it is intended for interagency use. EaTIS has a value added vendor list. It should be consistent with the NIMS standards for

typing equipment Jon will provide this typing so it can be compared to the equipment typing developed by FEWT and forwarded to EaTIS.

NWCG strategic planning: The feeling at this point is for NWCG to focus on standards, some working teams may be going away, some new ones being created, some may be shifted. A fire leadership group would deal with policy and funding implications. The role of NWCG in an "All Hazard" environment needs to be defined. Team charters will need to be revisited in mission statements and authorities/reporting entities.

New Action Item: Carl Dorsey and Roger Spaulding will send Tory an official correspondence identifying their replacement in the committee.

Mobile Fire Equipment Task Group Update

Kirk Bradley gave the presentation on the task group charter. The draft charter was reviewed by the group. The group discussed whether the chairperson needs to be a member of FEWT. The group agreed that the Chair of the Task Group does not need to be a FEWT chair. The chair persons of the Logistics and Ground Ignition are not FEWT members. David Haston is the chairperson of the committee. Suggested changes to the charter were focused on having consistency between each task groups.

New Action Item: A new draft charter will be sent out for review and discussion for the May 3rd conference call.

Kirk also presented the proposed engine typing and Normal Unit Strength (NUS) equipment compliment. The proposed typing introduced a new category of engines; interface engine. Several changes were proposed to the tank capacity and NUS equipment on type 6 engine. The group will send the document out for review along with a white paper providing the rationale for the changes. Link to equipment typing. Comments on NFPA 1906 standards "2006" editions were presented.

New Action Item: Ralph will task Dave Haston to develop a position paper to support changes to the equipment typing and NUS equipment compliment.

Additional members are needed for the Task Group, specifically state representatives.

New Action Item: Steve Counts will solicit membership from his contacts from other states.

A conference call is scheduled for May 3rd at 10 AM Mountain time. The following items will be discussed:

- Ground Ignition and Mobile Fire Equipment Task Group charters.
- Vendor solicitation forms.

Ralph will run next conference call and send out a reminder to the group. Send any additional agenda items for discussion to Ralph before conference call. Call number is 1-877-939-6816, password is 814774#.

The Fall Meeting will be held in Boise, Idaho on October 16th. – 19th.