

**MINUTES FROM THE  
NWCG WILDLAND URBAN INTERFACE WORKING TEAM MEETING  
Quincy, MA  
October 4-6, 2005**

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**ATTENDANCE ROSTER**

**Working Team Members Present:**

*Sam Scranton*, (US DOI/Bureau of Indian Affairs) - Chair  
*Ginny Desautels* (FEMA Mitigation Division) – Vice-Chair  
*Wayne Ching*, (Hawaii Division of Forestry & Wildlife)  
*Alan Dozier* (Georgia Forestry Commission)  
*Kelly Hawk* (US DOI/Bureau of Land Management)  
*Olin Phillips* (Minnesota DNR Forestry)  
*Jim Smalley* (National Fire Protection Association)  
*Lew Southard* (USDA Forest Service)

*Pam Jakes*, USDA Forest Service

**Staff and Guests:**

*Mary K. Briand*, NFPA, Office of Internal Audit  
*David Kimball*, Chairman & COO, BK International Insurance Brokers, Ltd.  
*Barbara Maskell*, NFPA, Grants and Contracts Administration  
*Amy Schneider*, Fleishman-Hillard, Inc.  
*Rich Kvale*, USDA Forest Service, Fire & Aviation Management

**Facilitator:**

*Barbara Kennedy*, USDA Forest Service

**Working Team Members Not Present:**

*Frank Richardson*, US Fire Administration  
*Kim Zagaris*, National Emergency Management Association, California

**Recorder:**

*Michele Steinberg*, National Fire Protection Association

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**Opening:**

Chairman Sam Scranton called the meeting to order. Team members introduced themselves to guest Mary K. Briand from NFPA's office of internal audit. Sam provided a brief update on recent activities:

- The DOI Fuels Task Group has confirmed that DOI will fund the Program \$740,000 for 2006. The 2007 funding request is due by February 1, 2006. Sam asked that the Team work with him to develop the work proposal and decide on the amount to request.
- The NWCG Social Sciences Advisory Group asked for the WUI Working Team's input on a social science research agenda at a recent meeting. Jim Smalley provided Sam with several ideas. Dennis Dupuis represented the Team at the meeting on behalf of DOI. The Social Sciences Advisory Group should be getting back to the Team with more information. Jim Smalley will be at the NWCG meeting in late October and will find out more. This Task Group has also expressed interest in participating in the next WUI Working Team meeting (Jan 31-Feb 2 in Salt Lake City).
- The Chair of the NWCG requested that the WUI Working Team submit minutes, rosters and annual reports to Stephanie Becker regarding the lawsuit against NASF regarding the 30-Mile Fire deaths. Sam indicated that Jim Smalley, Michele Steinberg and NFPA counsel Dennis Berry put together the package of information and sent it to NWCG. Sam thanked NFPA for assisting in this task.
- The Firewise Communities/USA Recognition Program logo has been registered as a trademark. Jim Smalley noted that the original program logo, the word "Firewise" itself and now the Firewise Communities/USA logo are all now registered trademarks. The Team had been requested to trademark these logos and names by NWCG.

- The Team has received a Statement of Understanding letter from the Institute for Business & Home Safety (IBHS). Sam asked for the addition of “tribes” in this letter and the template for strategic relationship letters. This SOU will make IBHS a formal stakeholder with the Program.

### **Report on Forest Service Site Visit to NFPA**

Lew Southard explained the purpose of the site visit. Every three years, the Forest Service conducts reviews of all of its grants as part of federal requirements. The review includes financial, personnel, procurement and program issues. Lew said the team of six reviewers was well received at NFPA and found no issues that needed correction. The review team looked at such items as samples of procurements, personnel requirements (employee manual, nondiscrimination rules, drug-free workplace rules), and procurement procedures for large contracts and bid requirements. Mary K. Briand stated that because of the amount of federal funds that NFPA receives overall, NFPA has an annual audit from external auditors. Because the Firewise program is a large grant, it is part of that annual audit. The audit has shown no problems for the past nine years.

Lew noted that during the visit, he and Kelly Hawk met with Jim Smalley and Michele Steinberg to discuss the status of the Program, including the strategic plan and the five core areas of activity.

### **Report on FEMA Grant**

Sam Scranton asked NFPA staff to provide an overview of the separate FEMA funding to NFPA. Jim Smalley provided a brief history, noting that FEMA’s US Fire Administration had in the past transferred funding to the Forest Service as part of the program’s cooperative agreement. Since UFSA has not funded the cooperative agreement since 2002, the FEMA Mitigation Division began seeking ways to assist in funding. FEMA Mitigation asked NFPA to submit a proposal for a grant. NFPA has in the past submitted for this and kept it complementary to what the overall Program is doing. This year’s grant period is from August 1, 2005, to July 31, 2006, for the amount of \$150,000. This funding is outside the cooperative agreement between the USDA Forest Service and NFPA. Activities under the grant will include:

- design and production of new exhibit panels for Firewise displays
- an analysis of the progress and outcomes of the Firewise/ArcView Communities project and its applicability to other WUI communities
- an investigation of the use of the National Park Service “WHAM” data-gathering tool
- a test of the Colorado land use planning decision tool being developed at the University of Colorado
- printing of selected Firewise Communities publications.

Jim reviewed the specific activities and noted that NFPA must report separately to FEMA on grant progress. He offered to provide these reports to the Team. Alan Dozier said he would like reports; they will be included at the next Team meetings.

There was some discussion about the National Park Service “WHAM” tool. Lew noted that the presentation by Park Service staff at the recent Mid-Atlantic Compact Firewise conference was more detailed than what the Team heard and saw at the June 2005 Team meeting. Sam agreed that while the “WHAM” tool was not part of the main plan of work for the program, pursuing some application of it could fit within the scope of the Strategic Plan. Lew and Alan both expressed the concern that the activities under the grant not diverge from or duplicate the main work of the Program. Jim agreed that reporting would help keep the Team up to date on activities and that the activities are complementary to the overall program.

## **Minutes of Last Meeting**

DECISION ITEM: Jim Smalley moved to approve the June 2005 WUI Working Team meeting minutes. Alan Dozier seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

## **Program Discussion and Presentations**

Jim Smalley gave an overview of the discussion format. The Team will review where we've been with 2005 activities, look at what is planned for 2006, and by the end of the meeting we should get to the 2006 workplan. Jim asked the group to look at what strategies and actions are we addressing, what are emerging issues, what we need to do better, what we need to do new, what we need to do no longer. He provided a quick review of the five-year Strategic Plan and its three major goals, as well as the five core program areas. He showed the budget distribution for activities for 2005.

## **Firewise Communities/USA as Core Program**

Michele Steinberg provided an overview of current activities and accomplishments. Forty states participate by having an assigned state liaison. There are currently 122 communities recognized in 29 states. Over 95,000 people are directly affected by Firewise Communities/USA activities. During 2003-2004, over \$4 million was invested by the communities in their Firewise projects. Investment by new communities recognized in 2005 is over \$629,000 to date. Program staff and consultants have worked closely with California to assist the new state liaison in responding to the many requests from residents to introduce the program in their communities. She noted that 2006 will mark the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of participation of the original 12 recognized communities. Jim reviewed the 2005 budget item for the Firewise Communities/USA program.

Size of Firewise Communities/USA sites: Lew Southard reported on his research on the issue of the size of communities that are recognized. He discussed the issue with Jack Cohen, Pat Durland and Judith Leraas Cook. He also talked to the people who had expressed concerns, and with Michele Steinberg. He sent his recommendations to the state forestry representatives on the Working Team. His recommendation is to not change the program. He felt that Program staff are monitoring for larger communities and dealing with each case individually. He noted that if there were a way for large communities to clearly demonstrate that the grassroots element and individual homeowner involvement was taking place, that size is not as important. He felt it was important to avoid granting recognition to counties because they had created plans, for example. Jim noted that the existence of a plan doesn't mean the activity is happening on the ground.

Barbara Kennedy noted that the group was focusing not so much on size as on the criteria to involve residents in a grassroots effort. She felt that our communications should be clearer on this because the perception is that a community of more than 500 residents is ineligible for recognition. Alan agreed that whatever measures or rules are in place should be clear and consistent for everyone. Lew noted that Team members all need to be able to understand and articulate the criteria consistently. He felt we need to communicate that the recognition is a PROCESS beginning with the individual taking action around their home. He said that we need to communicate that the process is not top-down from the states but bottom-up from residents, and a link must be maintained to homeowner action. Olin Phillips asked how we can be more effective with this program. Michele noted that we plan to do more with the state liaisons to support them, including special sessions at next year's conference, upcoming chat sessions, and other technical assistance.

State Liaison Role and State Participation: Lew asked about targeting support for states without any recognized communities. He also asked about whether there was any opportunity to approach the ten non-participating states. Olin felt we need to better define and communicate the role of state liaisons. He felt our Team goal should be to have all 50 states participating. If states are not willing, we can seek assistance from federal agency or other staff. The non-participating states currently include:

- Connecticut
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Iowa
- Maine
- Nebraska
- Nevada
- New York
- Rhode Island
- Vermont

Olin suggested that the Natural Resources Conservation Service might be one entity to serve as liaisons if state forestry agencies are unwilling. He felt we should not avoid promoting the program with these states. Wayne Ching noted that the Western Pacific islands have WUI fire problems and he would be willing to promote the liaison concept to them.

Michele asked if this discussion was outlining a desired strategy for the next few years for the Firewise Communities/USA program – to promote the idea of state liaisons in every state as well as improved communication on the liaison role, as well as assist the 11 states without communities to get some into the program. The 11 participating states currently without a recognized community include:

- Alaska
- Delaware
- Kansas
- Massachusetts
- Michigan
- Mississippi
- Missouri
- New Hampshire
- North Dakota
- Ohio
- Oklahoma

Jim reviewed the basic workplan for this core program area for 2006. Team members agreed that in addition to the noted items, there should be a focus on state liaison training and communications. Sam asked if the NASF Fire Committee can help the Team with the strategy to involve more states. Olin felt they would simply pass the duties back to the three state forestry WUI Working Team members. He felt that peer-pressure would work better to convince states to participate. Michele noted that when the communities are asking for the program, that helps convince state agencies to become involved. There was discussion about the goal of full participation by all 50 states in the program and getting recognized communities in each state.

DECISION ITEM: Jim Smalley moved that the goals for the Firewise Communities/USA program be expanded to include the goal of having at least one community in each of the 40 states currently participating, and the goal of having a state liaison in each of the 50 states by the end of 2009. Jim was asked to amend his motion to say that we would have full participation from all states by the end of 2007. He assented. Olin Phillips seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Firewise Communities/USA Recognition Program in Relation to CWPP Process: Rich Kvale noted that the new documents “Community Wildfire Protection Plan Leaders Guide” and “Community Wildfire Protection Plan Leaders Guide Supplement” by the International Association of Fire Chiefs, NASF and The Wilderness Society, are finalized and posted on the IAFC website. Sam Scranton asked how the Firewise Communities/USA planning requirements fit with the Community Wildfire Protection Plan requirements. Jim Smalley said he felt CWPP and the Firewise Communities/USA program are consistent and compatible. There was discussion about the compatibility of the CWPP legal requirements, with the main difference being the scale of the work required (CWPPs are typically county-wide). Olin Phillips pointed out that the CWPP plans provide eligibility for specific funding, and that they can be in place without on-the-ground accomplishments.

Jim noted that an explanation of these differences and emphases would be a key piece for the Program. It should show how the CWPP addresses structural ignitability. Olin said that CWPPs aren't popular in the Northeast and that states with limited federal lands don't have motivation to pursue them. He is concerned about how CWPP requirements will affect State Fire Assistance (SFA) dollars from the Forest Service. Rich noted that the completion of CWPPs will make states more competitive for SFA fuels mitigation dollars. Barbara Kennedy restated that the Team wants to show that there is not a conflict between CWPPs and the Firewise Communities/USA program requirements, and that the Firewise Communities/USA plans complement CWPP and implement actions at a smaller scale. Sam felt that this information should be communicated to state liaisons at our conference in 2006 and elsewhere. Alan Dozier agreed that it would help the Program to have an official answer on how they fit together in a one-page brief or similar document. Rich Kvale offered to draft such a statement. Olin noted that the document should accent the fact that the Firewise Communities/USA process can lead to a CWPP, but that it doesn't have to. Amy Schneider offered to help pull information together as "Frequently Asked Questions" on the Firewise home page and in other materials. Rich agreed to have a draft complete by Christmas to send to the state forestry Working Team representatives and the rest of the CWPP Task Group for review.

Renewal Incentives for Communities: The Team discussed the upcoming five-year mark in 2006 for the original 12 communities, as well as the input of some state liaisons (David Samuel in Arkansas in particular) looking for help encouraging and facilitating renewals of communities' recognition status. Alan Dozier suggested having renewals once every five years. Other suggestions included media push to cover renewal activities. Amy Schneider suggested the idea of a milestone incentive (5-year, 10-year) that would be highlighted annually. Jim Smalley noted that the Arkansas state and community folks were very positive about the planned Firewise award items that state liaisons could purchase and provide to local hospitals, nurseries, Scout groups, etc. Another suggestion was to talk to/survey the state liaisons for their input. Newsletters and proposed "how to" guides can help keep momentum among liaisons and communities.

DECISION ITEM: Wayne Ching moved to have the Firewise Communities/USA Recognition Program Task Group look at milestone awards and what they might look like. Olin Phillips seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Barbara Kennedy asked whether the communications to liaisons and others needed to be formalized as a task for 2006. Olin felt the Program should focus on communicating with state liaisons. Alan suggested a specific tactic of ensuring that state liaisons received a direct invitation to the 2006 conference – so that their supervisors will know it is important for them to attend.

Jim reviewed the proposed budget for 2006 for the Firewise Communities/USA recognition program. The direct costs will increase by 1% from 2005. Jim suggested creation of a version of the Firewise Communications Guide for the state liaisons. Amy Schneider said that would be workable, with a budget item in the Communications Plan.

### **Firewise Website as Core Program**

Jim provided an overview of the current status of the Firewise website. Staff have streamlined the catalog. The Program has transitioned web technicians from Absolut Imaging to a Massachusetts company, shotgunflat. Ideas for activities in 2006 include re-formatting and redesign of the website. He showed the group a new element that is ready to launch – a conference mini-website. In 2006, the plan is that the user interface and other materials will have a new, consistent look. The website will comply with Section 508 rules and will have a full Spanish translation.

Part of the redesign will be a useability survey. There will also be new content and improvements in tracking of website usage. In terms of budget, the new vendor will cost the Program less for the same level of work. Staff are planning a design meeting with Judith Leraas Cook, staff from shotgunflat, Fleishman-Hillard and Consolidated Marketing Services (distribution house). The proposed 2006 budget is very similar to last year's.

Sam Scranton asked about tracking of usage. Jim noted this will cover how long individuals visit different parts of the site, which elements they use and don't use, etc. Jim added that the changes to the site will also allow for staff to do more day-to-day updates.

Olin asked about the status of Firewise University. Jim noted that the Fire Fighter Safety course and the Landscaping course are ready and that the Hazard Assessment course piece nearly complete. Olin also asked about the Firewise Kiosks. Jim noted the kiosks were still where they had been placed but that we needed to retrieve the data and track down one or two kiosks that had not been placed. NFPA staff has continued to request this information from Absolut Imaging and is working through NFPA legal counsel to get responses.

### **Communications Plan**

Amy Schneider reviewed the current communications plan and accomplishments to date, pointing out that communications is part of all strategies in the Strategic Plan matrix. Recent activities have included the design and launch of the Firewise Alliance Outreach Database, coordination of Firewise messaging in media, within agencies and to communities. Fleishman-Hillard continues to provide weekly news summaries and have found this year that Firewise is mentioned by name in about 20 percent of mainstream news articles on wildfire preparation.

Firewise Leadership Awards: Plans for 2006 include implementing the Firewise Leadership Awards. The Team will need to decide when to announce awards and then be consistent with whatever we do in 2006. There was extensive discussion about timing and who would select finalists and winners.

Wayne Ching moved that awards be presented at the 2006 National WUI Fire Education Conference at all award levels (up to 3 local, 3 state, and 2 regional awards) to be awarded by a Congressional delegate or his/her designate, and henceforth to be awarded every other year at appropriate venues; the Task Group will select finalists and winners; Fleishman-Hillard and staff will help publicize the award. Ginny Desautels seconded the motion. Jim Smalley moved to amend the motion to accept the edited version of the Leadership Award guidance and eligibility criteria as agreed by the Task Group (an entity can receive more than one award, but the project would have to be different or accelerate in scope). Amendment seconded. Amendment carried. Original motion carried.

Increased Cooperation with Agency Communications Staff: Amy indicated we want to have better cooperation with agencies to get more Firewise information into the media. Would like to meet with agency communications staff at NIFC who are already dealing with reporters and other media to provide them with tools, information, to help carry the Firewise message. We are doing well with getting media attention on local stories; need to work more on national-level stories. We don't want to pitch stories directly to national media while going around agency PIOs. We also want to make sure Congressional staffs are getting our message and understand how Firewise affects their constituents; have them join us in carrying the Firewise message. Sam will coordinate with the Wildland Fire Education Working Team on getting agency communications staff more involved. Amy also suggested that results of the Social Science Research Advisory Group be tapped for stories about how Firewise issues are being applied. Amy asked if there were other kinds of outreach the Team wanted. Alan noted that having Fleishman-Hillard visit the regional forestry groups and talk to the state communications people would be effective.

Jim noted that for the 2006 Budget, the direct charges for the Communications Plan are about 25% of the full budget; slightly less than 2005.

Community Organizer Pilot: – This pilot has not yet started in New Mexico. Wisconsin is nearly complete; Fleishman-Hillard will work with Jolene Ackerman and the contractor about a summary of learnings. Alabama is getting ready to start. Alan Dozier asked how long the money was still available. Amy said that September 1 of this year was Alabama's deadline to commit the funds and they have met it. She will check on the situation in New Mexico. Amy described the pilot as a learning curve for Fleishman-Hillard, as the way it was funded meant the management of the project was really out of their control. Michele Steinberg suggested that a report out from Wisconsin that could be used as a best practices document.

Stakeholder Outreach: –Amy noted that program staff have been having success with getting stakeholders signing on to “strategic relationship letters”, including the Institute for Business & Home Safety (IBHS). Michele mentioned her upcoming presentation to the annual conference of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) and said we will be working on getting a dialogue going, with the goal to work more closely with ASLA on landscaping and design information for consumers. We have also started building a dialogue with the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) – they are interested in incorporating Firewise information into their materials. Amy noted that Firewise representation at the recent White House Conference on Cooperative Conservation in St. Louis was very worthwhile in meeting stakeholders. She noted that the agency logos on our exhibit attracted interest from a variety of agency staff attending the meeting. Michele asked Team to communicate with staff and among themselves about particular entities they would like to see us work with or engage during 2006.

Standards Task Group: This new Task Group met in Boise in June 2005. The group came up with ideas for revisions to NFPA standards on wildfire and WUI issues. Jim presented the ideas to NFPA staff liaisons Carl Peterson and rewrote NFPA 1144 for presentation to the NFPA Forest & Rural Committee this week in Missoula. NFPA 1141 is also up for revision. It will become the infrastructure standard for small communities; NFPA 1144 will focus on structure ignition. Jim indicated that his job at NFPA has changed so that he has the additional responsibility of serving as staff liaison for the Forest & Rural Committee. He asked if anyone had suggestions for new members of the Committee, which meets twice a year for three days each. Sam indicated he would work on getting a tribal representative on the Committee. The Committee will finish work on the standards in March 2006; new proposals will be published in June 2006; comments will open on September 1, 2006.

Shelter in Place: Jim reminded the group that at the June meeting, we agreed that we would develop a presentation or packet of materials on evacuation centers or shelters. Jim distributed three items to the group: the NFPA Wildfire Management Section's proposed session list for the NFPA Annual Conference in Orlando in 2006; a paper by Tom Cova on occupancy maximums in WUI communities; and a chapter on transportation hazards from a book for transportation engineers written by Cova and another author. He described some other items he has read and gathered on hazards evacuation, infrastructure issues, and planning and subdivision design. He has found some interested individuals including Roger Kennedy, former head of the National Park Service and the American History Museum at the Smithsonian. Michele asked who will be creating the presentation and whether we need a task group. Sam asked for Jim's recommendations on such as task group and what the target date was for completion of the presentation. Jim mentioned Tom Cova, Roger Kennedy, Ethan Foote, some NFPA engineering staff, someone from NFPA's Forest & Rural Committee. Barbara suggested having the presentation ready by June to use or roll out at the November 2006 WUI conference.

Lew moved to have Jim form a task group on the shelter-in-place presentation and issue paper, with the product to be completed by NFPA staff. Alan seconded the motion. Discussion included who would be on

the task group. Jim indicated he would like to have as many people as possible on the group. The group suggested Pam Jakes, Brian Johnson and Kim Zagaris. Other names included Ann Cooke from the Jemez community in New Mexico. NFPA staff will need to send this group a specific invitation with time parameters. Sam asked about having travel covered for a task group meeting and asked about time frame to get the meeting together. Jim suggested a meeting be held at the NFPA offices. More ideas were suggested about involving research from the National Association of Home Builders, HUD, etc. The idea would be to have a presentation that will introduce concepts and provide options around the evacuation issue.

Jim added that he has been talking to and reading articles by Mike Collins of the California Independent Living Council. Lew wanted to know more about research or data on what people actually do after an evacuation order is issued – who leaves immediately, who waits for whatever reason. Ginny said that FEMA has noticed that evacuation has become much more top of mind; the federal agencies are talking about ordering mandatory evacuations once a hurricane reaches a certain category. But experience is showing there are a slew of variables to deal with, such as running out of gas at stations. The hierarchy is that usually people who stay are lower income and do not have transportation. In Texas during Hurricane Rita, evacuations worked better now that people can bring pets. People with the means can treat it like a vacation. There is also the issue of mandatory evacuations and the fact that some states can have martial law. Ginny added that the timeline issue is really a big deal – the issue of people waiting to long to leave. Jim noted that Tom Cova has an animated timeline showing the 2003 California fires, evacuation orders, and actual occurrence of evacuations. Michele mentioned that the Wellington, Florida wildfire plan addresses evacuation.

DECISION ITEM: Discussion was closed and Sam called for a vote on the motion. The motion (to have Jim form a task group on the shelter-in-place presentation and issue paper, with the product to be completed by NFPA staff) carried unanimously.

Sam noted that we will want to discuss this issue with the Social Sciences group when we meet in Salt Lake City in February.

### **Information Resources**

Jim reviewed the current work in this core program area regarding publications and videos. Specific projects include the P110 revision (now “Assessing Wildfire Hazards in the Home Ignition Zone”) – in progress. The Task Group and staff are currently working on an instructor guide and the audiovisual piece. The final product will be completed by end of year or shortly thereafter. We should be able to present the final version of course to the group by the February meeting in Salt Lake City.

The proposed budget for 2006 for Information Resources is about 28% of the total budget and covers continuation of fulfillment services; some improvements to web-based ordering; increased advertising to make people aware of availability of products. It will also cover the revision of the Wildland/Urban Interface Fire Hazard Assessment Methodology Guide; revision of “Operation Water;” a “train the trainer” for the new P110 or Assessing the Home Ignition Zone; a paper on defining the WUI problem; and a style guide for Firewise materials and products.

The group reviewed information Jim provided on reprinting current publications or audiovisual items. The workshop materials are still popular so we need to reprint them. There was discussion about whether changes to NFPA 1144 would require changes to workshop materials. Alan recommended upgrade of workshop materials, as the workshops are still very popular and are being conducted. Jim suggested we add a complete upgrade to those materials to the plan for 2007.

Jim reviewed specific products that are coming up for reproduction or updating. We have recently replenished the VHS version of "Making Your Home Firewise." The "Operation Water" VHS is still being used, but this will need to be updated. Jim suggests revising it this year (2006) to become a companion piece with "Using Water Effectively." He noted that "Communities Compatible With Nature" has already been reprinted and is very popular. Even though the Wildland/Urban Interface Fire Hazard Assessment Methodology booklet will be revised in 2006, we still need to reprint the existing version to keep up with demand (about 7,500 per year) until the new version is ready. Jim feels the revision to this document will help to address issues about assessment that the revisions to the NFPA standards will not cover.

There was some discussion about converting existing VHS to DVD format. For 2007, we can consider revising the Firewise Landscaping series to incorporate more technical information for professionals. Sam suggested a review of converting these items to Spanish. Jim noted that we would need to consider a second audio line for Spanish on audiovisual materials.

Jim described the proposed Train the Trainer session for the new course "Assessing Wildfire Hazards in the Home Ignition Zone." This would be a limited attendance with invited participants. There was discussion on how to deliver the course beyond the train-the-trainer. Sam asked about how we will determine who is qualified to teach the course. He would like to see it as a required course for National Prevention Team leaders. Jim said the course would be ready for everyone to see as a final product by the February meeting. Sam would like to see it presented at the meeting so that the Wildland Fire Education Working Team could see it. Sam asked about plans for creating another level to this course. Jim asked that before we consider creating a next level, review this one first – it is more comprehensive than the P110 piece. Alan asked about the format of the instructor materials. Jim said there will be four PowerPoints, some videos, some class exercises and a number of handouts. The Powerpoints will be issued in PDF format so they cannot be changed. The course package will be available on the Firewise catalog and in the national Cache in the publications area. Jim noted that the final course will have a section that specifically ties the content to the first step (assessment) in becoming a Firewise Communities/USA site.

The paper on "Defining the WUI Problem" was Jack Cohen's idea from the June meeting. It will be in the format of a white paper or pamphlet and/or a Powerpoint. The Working Team will review it before it is finalized.

The Style Guide for Firewise materials and products will help the program maintain a consistent look and feel to products and will be developed by Fleishman-Hillard with input from staff.

There was discussion about developing materials for special needs populations. Jim said he would like to see the expert panel on evacuation start to identify these populations after dealing with their primary charge. Jim wants to know if Working Team wants to consider such an approach to developing products for target audiences. Amy noted that one way to start reaching beyond our current audience would be to make key pieces available in the more popular languages. Jim made a motion that all project materials in print will be in English; all video will be English; all Internet information will be in English, Spanish and Section 508-compliant. The motion was seconded. Discussion: Olin felt that general education print pieces should be in Spanish. Amy suggested that the Firewise Around Your Home brochure, Communities Compatible With Nature piece, and the landscape/construction checklist could be translated into Spanish and put in PDF and print files available for download or print on demand by customers. Olin amended the motion to add: translate selected homeowner-audience print materials into Spanish to produce PDFs and printer files available for download or print on demand by consumers. There was discussion about costs and future products being translated into Spanish. Sam asked about a survey to determine if particular materials are useful in Spanish. Barbara suggested that the group allow the staff

and Fleishman-Hillard to set a budget and direction for next year given their understanding of consumer demand and the group's broad general direction on this topic. Others felt there needs to first be a sense of how much time, effort and cost would be needed to do this. Alan suggested the staff start with one of the most popular items and report back on the effort and cost. The Communities with Compatible with Nature piece and the Landscape/Construction Checklist were recommended as the items to start with. Lew asked for an amendment to the motion to say, as the opportunity presents itself and staff sees the need to have product in Spanish, we should go forward; if demand exceeds budget, staff should bring the proposal back for the next year's budget.

**DECISION ITEM:** A further amendment was forwarded: as budget allows and staff determines, translate the homeowner-oriented publications that are highest in demand into Spanish to produce PDFs and printer files available for download or print on demand by consumers, with the priorities for 2006 being the Communities Compatible With Nature and the Landscape & Construction Checklist. Olin seconded the amended motion, which carried unanimously.

### **WUI Program Support**

Jim described the 2005 accomplishments to date in the areas of program representation, program coordination and project support.

Sam asked where the ArcView Communities were going and what the plans were. Michele described the history of the activity and the current direct technical assistance to the communities. Jim explained that we are planning a final report for early in 2006 that uses the communities as case studies and makes recommendations to this Team and others about getting communities involved in mapping. We are concluding the technical assistance focus in early 2006. Alan felt the program needed to stay abreast of the information about use of GIS and technology since that is where planners are working.

The group reviewed the proposed activities under Program Support for 2006. The activity of developing the Firewise Leadership Awards should be part of this category. In regard to presence at national, regional and state meetings, Ginny asked for a tracking of all conferences and meetings that Working Team members and staff were participating in. NFPA staff will create a calendar in PDF to distribute to the Working Team. Kelly added that this could help identify opportunities for federal staff to assist so that the program does not incur all the expenses of representation. Michele asked about assistance with the upcoming FLASH winter meeting in November in Atlanta; Alan Dozier volunteered to present.

Jim provided a brief update on the plans for the 2006 National WUI Fire Education Conference. The dates (November 2-4, 2006) have been locked in for the Doubletree in Denver. Conference flyers were created and mailed and a Call for Presentations have been mailed out. There will be online registration for the conference this year. The budget is about \$212,000, approximately 12% of the total proposed budget. We are reviewing for a keynote speaker now and have secured the Forest Service "Blues Rangers" from Mississippi as entertainment.

Ginny asked whether there is some kind of representation from the Working Team for conference planning. She would like to ensure the Working Team members are kept updated during the process so that they can answer questions about the conference if asked and to help promote it. Michele suggested a monthly email update to the Working Team on this event as well as other activities. Sam added that this should also apply to 2008 conference planning.

### **2008 Conference Planning**

Jim noted that the Working Team agreed in June to start planning for a 2008 conference and had directed staff to look at hotels. He distributed data for review about the 33 hotels that were researched in 12 states. Michele pointed out that the criteria we had to consider included adequate space in the meeting areas; the

availability during our time frame (October and November) and reasonable room rates. The group reviewed and discussed the options, focusing on seven or eight options that met the three criteria of adequate space, availability, and room cost.

Alan commented that the Tampa Hyatt is a nice venue. Reno was discussed and the dates (week before Thanksgiving) were not desirable. The group preferred to get the week of October 26. The group voted on first/second choices of location as follows:

St. Louis – Renaissance Grand 4  
Portland OR – 2  
Tampa 1  
Orlando – 0  
Snowbird – 0

Olin moved to have the 2008 conference during the week of October 26, 2008 at the St Louis Renaissance Grand. Wayne seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Jim requested a second alternative. The group gave the Portland location five votes. Kelly moved to have the alternative site for the 2008 conference at the Portland Doubletree the week of Oct 26, 2008. Olin seconded the motion which carried unanimously. The Tampa Hyatt became the unofficial third alternative.

### **New Proposals**

Michele distributed a proposal from the National Institute for Building Sciences for a wildland/urban interface fire module for the national HAZUS loss estimation program. Olin moved to thank the proponent but let them know we cannot entertain the proposal at this time. Wayne seconded the motion. The group discussed that while such a project would help reaching one of our strategy items, it is not as high in priority as other items. The motion carried unanimously.

DECISION ITEM: NFPA staff will write a letter for Sam's signature that lets the proponent know that the issue is important but the proposal is not within our capabilities. Kelly asked that the letter include a note that we will forward the proposal to the Joint Fire Sciences group to look at it; Kelly will provide Michele with the name of the head of the Joint Fire Sciences group.

Sam noted that the NASF Fire Committee Meeting and CMS Meeting is planned for January 10-12, 2006 in Orlando, Florida. He will not be able to attend, and a Working Team presentation was requested. Sam would like another WT member, preferably not a state person, to attend and present in his place. Ginny said she would check her schedule and get back to Sam. Kelly offered to be a back-up.

Sam let the group know that he received a letter from the DOI Fuels Group confirming funding for 2006 and asking the Working Team to submit a request for funding for 2007. Sam would like resolution from the Team on how much funding to request as well as an actual performance plan. He indicated he wanted the Team's input on the request for 2007. The past levels have been about \$740,000-\$750,000 for the past four or five years. Kelly recommended that the request should come in for a similar amount. Sam would like to have this pulled together by June.

There was discussion about how the DOI Fuels Group is working on measuring success and making funding decisions. It was agreed that the June meeting discussion clearly directed the Working Team to come up with measurements of success. These would be used to help in annual reporting. Jim moved that we discuss how to come up with appropriate benchmarks or measures. The group discussed the concept of measuring acres and asked about ways to "weight" acres in term of value of wildland/urban interface

acres. Some felt the measure DOI was looking for is “what difference did you make?” Sam wanted to look at how to illustrate how much communities have invested into Firewise projects.

Alan suggested developing a “how to” on measuring success in the wildland/urban interface. Olin wrote down three things to discuss:

- 1) How do we document USFS/DOI Firewise/WUI Grant Success?
- 2) How do we document land managers’ success in WUI project implementation?
- 3) How should we demonstrate application and success of Firewise principles?

One problem with establishing measurements for reporting is that they keep changing from federal agencies and states, such as new reporting requirements for National Fire Plan dollars. Sam suggested looking at the population affected or protected. Barbara and Alan noted that the DOI group is looking at ways to report on success of fuels group activities. Kelly suggested using a quantitative format as much as possible to meet the needs of the DOI fuels group – put data in a spreadsheet format or similar. Olin felt the Working Team should find ways to communicate how the program is helping the DOI group deliver their jobs better. Lew felt we should look at the protection of communities in overlap of federal acres and private lands becoming Firewise. There should be a focus on the home ignition zone, as the protection of that area has economic value up into forest/land management side. Jim asked about using FEMA’s cost/benefit model on mitigation. Michele noted that one important measure is the time element - continuity of effort is critical to keeping communities off the “at-risk” list.

An idea was proposed to develop the economic value of the home ignition zone. Need to assign value to the protection of this area. It was suggested that we look at developing an request for proposals to universities for something like this; perhaps funded by FEMA Mitigation.

Lew suggested that for the short-term need, we put data together in a table for the DOI fuels group as has been suggested. For the long-term idea of an economic model, develop an RFP in 2006 with the idea of conducting the study in 2007. A proposal to FEMA should be written up as soon as possible. Sam felt a task group should be formed to develop the RFP. Could look at sharing costs with Joint Fire Science Program.

Olin suggested that the following items be the kinds of measurements we look at: the number of fuels projects identified; the number of fuels acres implemented; the number of acres proposed; the number of federal or state land holdings that have reached all adjoining communities. In terms of education, count the number of communities contacted; the number of communities assessed; the number of Firewise Communities/USA sites; the number of CWPPs completed. We could also look at measuring infrastructure improvements such as dry hydrants; fire engines; PPE; and cooperative agreements. Olin suggested we also try to document the “trickle-down effect” of Firewise in the states. Suggestions include surveying states and asking registered web users to include a zip code.

Barbara felt this list was the “big picture” measurement – some of these items are not being measured currently. Kelly felt we should focus on measures related to tangible products being produced right now, at least for the short term and for the DOI Fuels Group request. Lew countered that if the ultimate goal is community protection then we need to measure all the things being done to protect communities; but agreed that in the short term we need to give DOI basic data on current projects. He felt the Working Team should also move forward with the long-term project.

**DECISION ITEM:** Lew moved that the Working Team designate Sam Scranton to continue to be our liaison to the DOI Fuels Group; that the request for 2006 does not exceed \$750,00 in request; and that Sam and Kelly put together a performance matrix for this year with measures. Kelly seconded the motion,

which carried unanimously. Sam stated he will ensure all Working Team members on progress. Sam also asked for advice on 2005 reporting as part of the 2006 request. Kelly suggested that NFPA staff provide, in addition to regular quarterly reports, that they provide some data to plug into a spreadsheet. Sam agreed; will check if DOI group also wants a year-end summary.

Sam asked the group to now discuss and come to a decision on the idea of an economic valuation model proposed earlier. Olin asked more about how the 2007 request for funding is made and how to make sure that we have the information from USFS, DOI and FEMA all put together. Ginny noted the FEMA funding is not dependent on the same timeline. Barbara noted that the group can use the strategic plan framework to look at estimates for 2007 funding. Jim noted that the direction is the most important thing to get from the Working Team, not specific budget numbers. Lew asked the group to think about the prototype economic model as an item for the 2007 budget. He stated we will need a task group to work on this with the time and energy needed. Sam felt we would need to find out about some things ahead of time, including Jack Cohen's availability and willingness to be involved, and advice about the availability of economists and researchers in government we could tap to help flesh out a proposal. Lew suggested a task group could start with Sam, Jack, Jim and himself. Alan suggested Fred Allen from the Southern Research Station as an addition; Jim asked about Dave Cleaves or his replacement.

Sam asked for a motion. Jim moved to have the staff put together, with consultation, what this economic model project might look like, including a hypothesis, a review of the hypothesis and a timeline, to then send to the task group (Sam, Jim, Olin, Lew, Fred Allen, Jack) as an item to be considered for funding in 2007. The motion was seconded. Discussion included ideas of what to call this study. Suggestions included "How to Measure Success Working in the WUI"; "Community Values of the WUI"; "WUI Value Meal." Alan asked Rich and Lew for assistance in getting Fred Allen's help on the task group. Jim suggested we call some people together, prior to the end of December, to start getting task group together. Sam called for a vote and the motion carried unanimously.

### **Insurance Presentation**

David Kimball presented on insurance and wildfire with a focus on how insurance works. See Appendix A for full discussion.

**Presentation – White House Conference on Cooperative Conservation** – Jim noted the events of the conference; about 1000 people there. Passed around book with Firewise writeup. Tape 8, Side B. Nice recognition of our long-term, collaborative efforts.

**Discussion of next meeting places and dates:** The next meeting will take place in Salt Lake City, Utah, from January 31 to February 2, 2006. A half day will include the Wildland Fire Education Working Team in a joint meeting. Sam would also like someone from the Social Sciences Working Team to attend.

There was discussion about the next two meetings, including having a May meeting in Boise. Alan suggested that because the Working Team is being asked to attend the November 2006 conference, perhaps we could get by with just two formal meetings in 2006.

**DECISION ITEM:** Kelly moved to take the May meeting in Boise off the schedule and to have only two WUI Working Team meetings in 2006, with the second taking place September 19-21, 2006, in Quincy, MA, for three full days. Jim seconded the motion.

The group also proposed only two WUI Working Team meetings in 2007, tentatively May 1-3, 2007 and in late September.

Sam reminded the group that the February 2006 meeting will include elections of chair and vice-chair. He asked whether the agenda format worked for everyone. Several commented that the meeting flowed more smoothly than usual.

Lew moved to adjourn. Jim seconded. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

## APPENDIX A

### Insurance Presentation

Dave Kimball described how the insurance industry itself is run by “the law of large numbers.” Actuaries determine statistics on the 30 million homes in the US and find that, statistically speaking, ½ of 1% of them will burn down each year and there will be \$3 million in fire losses annually. They then adjust premiums accordingly and follow the statistics. The issue or problem with getting insurance involved in mitigation or prevention is that it is a reactive rather than a proactive industry. You build and ask for insurance, they take it from there. It’s only recently that engineering loss control has come into the industry. Florida is a good example – losses in billions rather than millions from hurricanes get actuaries’ attention. Solutions are either to raise deductibles or to deny coverage. If someone has shutters and a good roof, the deductible is only \$5,000; if they don’t, it can be \$10,000 and up. If you’re too close to water, you may not get coverage. Some places (Fire Island NY) can’t get coverage at all because of known risk. The issue of forest fire is economy of scale. There are not significant losses in any single case to get insurers’ attention; fires are not predictable the way hurricanes are based on location.

There was extensive discussion in a question-answer period. Olin noted that the insurance industry has a strong response to wood stoves because they cause fires; why do they not similarly respond to the issue of fireprone structures in wildland?. Dave said that the stove issue comes from the loss control engineers; the fire insurance piece is only a small proportion of homeowner coverage. The best place to get insurers interested in this is with engineering/loss control. While they don’t have effect on actuaries and charging for insurance, there are indirect effects. Some of the problems that the national WUI Fire program is experiencing includes that we have a lot of data and no one in the insurance industry is using it. This is the one place you can get their attention to a certain degree. But it comes back to dollars and numbers and how many properties are affected. A good example is Pasadena, California. There are rules on roofing, clearing brush, residential sprinklers and penalties for noncompliance. The sprinkler cost for a new building is about \$4,000-5,000. Fire insurance coverage is only about \$300. A retrofit for home sprinklers is about \$15,000. So how do we motivate people to retrofit? Lew asked what a typical insurance credit might be for a sprinkler retrofit. Dave said it would be very small – even a 10% discount is only \$30. The fluctuations in insurance discounts and rates have more to do with industry earnings - whether it is a “hard market” or “soft market,” and very little to do with mitigation. Fire insurance doesn’t fluctuate that much because it is a small proportion. Homeowners insurance coverage is way beyond fire now to include liability and all kinds of other things.

Dave felt the question is how do you motivate homeowners to do the right thing? He was not sure you can motivate them via insurance because it is not that big of a pot of money. In the case of car seats in cars, he said we know what the right thing is to do, but if the federal government and states did not mandate their use, more than half the people driving would not use them. Jim noted that program staff hear residents talk about why insurers don’t adjust rates for mitigation; and also some talk about having a national wildfire insurance program, like the National Flood Insurance Program. Dave said the issue with flood is that the policyholders are self-selected; therefore there is not a large enough pool of people paying in to cover claims. The federal government stepped in to help floodplain residents – it becomes a problem of social issues vs. economic issues. Sam said people will assume a certain level of risk themselves; but they don’t always know what the risk really is. Dave felt that a lot of people don’t even put that much thought into it. He added that the insurance industry as a whole is not interested in fixing the problem. They need to see the trends first, as with hurricane damages in Florida. And often their “fix” does not involve engineering or loss control.

Lew asked if there is a role in this for the mortgage lender, using the example of how lenders escrow flood insurance. Dave said that the mortgage lender is only interested in getting their money back from the borrower. They don't care if the house is there or not. But because their money is tied up in one asset (your house) – they need you to take care of it so you can't walk away from it.

Dave suggested some ways that the agencies and program staff can get the data they have to those who might use it. He suggested that marketing and sales would be the way to motivate individuals. Private industry can market to John Q Public that fire mitigation is important and something you have to do. He felt that discounts are not why people do these things. It's getting people convinced by advertising.

Kelly noted that the insurers don't distinguish among fire losses regarding the type of fire, whether it was internal or external. Dave concurred and noted that insurance date on claims for wildfire only really shows up in an event of over \$25 million in losses. Alan asked whether insurers differentiate among, say, 10 houses in one neighborhood that they are covering regarding their fire resistance or safety characteristics. Dave said no, the insurance companies don't have the manpower to go out and inspect every house they insure. Kelly asked why agents tell people that certain properties are not insurable. Dave said that sometimes an agent will say things they shouldn't on behalf of insurer. The insurance industry is very highly regulated. About 36 months ahead, if an insurer wants to change rates, they must get approval from the state insurance commission. They are not in a position to change rates for a single house. They don't have flexibility around charging based on conditions. But they do have flexibility to not insure if they don't want to. Even then, they have to be careful not to get into "redlining". Jim mentioned State Farm's program in which they have issued letters to policy holders to tell them to mitigate for wildfire and asked if that was redlining. Dave said no, this is a situation where the loss control engineers have the attention of the actuaries and are pointing out new data. The actuaries say, we can't adjust rates because these losses will be "one off," not a catastrophe trend. The engineers come back and look at new strategies of communicating with insureds about what they need to do to have affordable and available insurance. They give insureds the choice – either do the mitigation thing or find insurance somewhere else. This keeps the insurance company from having to suffer when there is the multi-billion dollar loss and lets them continue doing business in the state.

Jim asked for advice about how to talk to people about the issue of defensible space and come up with a way of talking about the role of insurance to help people understand this. David advised focusing on getting the attention of the loss control engineers in insurance companies (like the State Farm example). In the best case scenario, such as the FM Global company, loss control can help keep customers' prices lower and companies lose less and can stay in business. Dave was happy to hear that State Farm is doing the wildfire mitigation effort because not many others are promoting this information and educating homeowners. He reiterated the need for marketing and sales of the idea of mitigation.