

NWCG WUI Working Team Meeting Minutes

September 19-21, 2006

Action	Decision	Item
		1. Welcome and Introductions
		2. Agenda Review
	X	3. Previous Meeting Minutes Review and Approval
		4. Update on Meetings and Conferences Attended
	X	5. Review of Charter and Working Team Agreements
X	X	6. Task Group Reports
		7. Update – Firewise Article Archive and Firewise Library
X		8. Report on Progress – HIZ Course
X		9. Update - Firewise Communities/USA Program
X		10. Update – Backyards and Beyond Conference
		11. NFPA Standards
		12. Overview of Firewise Website Features
X	X	13. Firewise Leadership Awards
X	X	14. Review of Goals for 2007 Workplan
X	X	15. Stakeholder Strategy
		16. WUI 2007 IAFC Conference
X	X	17. Budget Information
X		18. Calendar and Other Meetings
		19. WUI Working Team Meeting Schedule
		20. Meeting Wrap-Up

NWCG WUI Working Team Meeting Minutes
September 19-21, 2006

The meeting of the NWCG Wildland/Urban Interface Fire Working Team was held in Quincy, Massachusetts on September 19-21, 2006.

Members Attending: Sam Scranton, US DOI/BIA (chair)
Alan Dozier, Georgia Forestry Commission (chair-elect)
Kelly Hawk, US DOI/BLM (vice-chair-elect)
Wayne Ching, Hawaii Division of Forestry
Jack Cohen, USDA Forest Service – Research
Rich Kvale, USDA Forest Service – Fire & Aviation
Will May, IAFC/Alachua County Fire Department
Frank Richardson, US Fire Administration
Jim Smalley, NFPA
Leslie Wiles, Maine Forest Protection Division

Guests Attending: Amy Schneider, Fleishman-Hillard
Michele Steinberg, NFPA
Ken Tremblay, NFPA
Drew McKenna, shotgunflat creative agency
Mike McKenna, shotgunflat creative agency

Not Present: Dr. Pamela Jakes – USDA Forest Service – Research
Kim Zagaris, NEMA/California FIRESCOPE

1. Welcome and Introductions (Sam Scranton)

Discussion: Sam welcomed the group and asked for introductions. Sam reminded the group this is his last meeting as chairman. Rich Kvale sat in for Lew Southard. New Team members are Chief Will May, Alachua County Fire Department, representing the International Association of Fire Chiefs, and Leslie Wiles with the Maine Forest Protection Division, representing the Northeast Area of the National Association of State Foresters.

2. Agenda: Review and Finalize (Sam Scranton)

Discussion: The group reviewed the agenda and added items including discussion of who on the Team would be attending the National WUI Fire Education Conference in November; approval of February minutes; and a presentation on the Southern States Risk Assessment.

3. February 2006 Meeting Minutes: Review and Approval (Sam Scranton)

Handout(s): WUI Working Team Meeting Minutes, February 2006

DECISION: The Working Team approved the February 2006 Meeting Minutes unanimously.

4. Update on Meetings and Conferences Attended (All)

Handout(s): Minutes from meeting at Wildfire Lessons Learned Center attended by Jim Smalley and Sam Scranton.

Discussion: Jim Smalley and Sam Scranton described their meeting with Paula Nasiatka at the Wildfire Lessons Learned Center in August. Paula will be visiting NFPA staff in early October. Jim and Sam see benefits in working with the Center to spread Firewise information as its website is an excellent clearinghouse for all kinds of fire information. Jim is following up with them regarding requests for information and publications.

In May, Alan Dozier and Jim Smalley attended the NWCG spring meeting. Jim represents NFPA as an Associate Member; Alan represented the WUI Working Team. Outcomes of the meeting included some limited assistance that Jim and Amy Schneider will provide to NWCG for wording of their new strategic plan, as well as more assistance provided by Fleishman-Hillard staff to the National Wildland Fire Enterprise Architecture or NWFEA group within NWCG with their strategic plan. NWFEA has contracted these limited services to Fleishman-Hillard via NFPA with some additional funding. NWFEA's mission is to coordinate activities among the NWCG teams.

Alan noted that NWCG is revising its mission to focus more on training and standards. This will likely result in organizational changes affecting some or all of the 19 NWCG working teams. A major focus is on crosswalks of training and certification.

Kelly Hawk reported briefly on the activities of the national crosswalk training initiative. An interagency group has been working on ways to get training to local and rural fire departments using competencies they already have from their structural training. The crosswalk would help them fill any gaps in skills or training. USFA is working on a system to crosswalk structural and NWCG training. The group is seeking to develop web-based training so departments can review their existing skills and find out what the needs are and what competencies they need to gain. There will be an EENET broadcast on the crosswalk initiative on October 4. As part of this discussion, Jim noted that the International Association of Arson Investigators is looking for certifications for WUI investigators.

Other meetings that staff have attended since February include the American Planning Association national conference in San Antonio in April, where the new Firewise exhibit was used, and the ESRI User Conference in San Diego in August, where Jim Smalley presented the NFPA Firewise ArcView Report and where staff had an exhibit. More detail about staff participation in meetings, trade shows and conferences is available in the quarterly activity reports.

5. Review of Charter and Working Team Agreements (Sam Scranton)

Handout(s): 1. February 2006 Draft Working Team Agreement

Discussion: Sam worked with Jim, Wayne and Kelly to look at our current Working Agreements and Charter. After discussion that emerged from the spring NWCG meeting, Sam recommended we not make changes to the charter until we know more about NWCG's direction. Alan suggested that Vice Chair can take on some of duties of attending the many meetings that end up at NIFC and western locations. Sam noted the changes in the draft Working Agreements document from the previous (June 2003) edition. There has been an addition of information about budget items under section 10 due to differences in the budget request process through the US Department of the Interior. The Team must submit a written request to DOI in the fall for the next year's budget (fall of 2006 will be for calendar 2008 program funds). The USDA Forest Service funding process involves the National Association of State Foresters making recommendations on the funding level for the program. Alan suggested we put some key dates or deadlines into the agreements – for example, budget request must be submitted after fall meeting, etc. Minor edits were made for to clarify wording and formatting.

DECISION: Working Team Agreement document changes were approved with noted edits. Document is available on web-based file sharing site for Working Team members.

AGENDA ITEM FOR FUTURE MEETING: *Review Working Team Charter and make agreed-upon changes.*

6. Task Group Reports

Handout(s): 1. PowerPoint slide presentation by Fleishman-Hillard on Communications Plan update; 2. Draft of revised Wildland Fire Hazard Assessment Methodology (WHAM) Book and table insert

Discussion: Communications Task Group: Amy Schneider briefly reviewed the program Communications Plan and current accomplishments. The Communications Plan:

- Provides consistent messages
- Provides special attention to the communications needs of WT members
- Coordinates with NWCG Wildland Fire Education WT on complementary messages
- Covers Strategies 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 in the 2005-2009 Strategic Plan

2006 Accomplishments under the Communications Plan include:

- Introduction of new logo and style guide
- Development of new exhibit display panels
- Launch of Firewise Leadership Awards
- Submittal of byline articles - *Fire Chief, Wildland Firefighter, Emergency Preparedness, Governing, American City and County, NACo County News*
- Distribution of news releases for new products and activities
 - 2005 FCUSA sites, Firewise Learning Center, Community Solutions
- Supporting Backyards & Beyond
 - Presenting two sessions
 - Conducting media outreach

Wildland Fire Hazard Assessment Methodology book (WHAM) Update Task Group: Jim provided copies of a draft of the WHAM document and described the update process and changes. Sam explained that NASF had requested the WT to update the document since it is referenced in so many places. The document will be on the web and distributed through the catalog. There will be a press release about the product when it comes out. Kelly asked that information on the book be provided at the National Prevention Teams meeting in October in Phoenix.

Grassroots Pilot Task Group: Amy reported that Wisconsin finished its work two years ago; Alabama finished earlier this year; New Mexico is just getting started. When New Mexico has completed its pilot, Fleishman-Hillard will write up the findings. Amy noted that Alabama took a different approach by using the pilot funding to provide a monetary incentive for fire departments to be involved. Michele noted that Alabama had a new community enter this year and asked Amy to find out if it was related to the pilot project. Amy noted that the management of this program was difficult due to the funding structure. A lot of the states are doing grassroots work in their own way already. Our goal is to get a “how to” put together if states want to launch a grassroots project.

ACTION: Report on findings of pilot project.

Lead: Amy Schneider

Due Date: May 1, 2007

Stakeholders: Amy noted that NFPA staff are primarily responsible for building relationships and this is how the stakeholder activities have evolved. In the past, we developed formal letters of partnership but they were not particularly effective as a general approach to securing relationships. Michele reviewed the current list of stakeholders with the group. Sam indicated he would like to see outreach to HUD as it relates to tribal developments. There was discussion about the relative worth of reaching out to particular stakeholders. Michele asked that the group discuss this later in the meeting to provide some direction for 2007 in the workplan.

Shelter in Place: Discussion centered around the importance of defining how to deal with this problem – not as a specific set of recommendations but improved tools for decision-making around evacuation vs. shelter-in-place. Jim noted that during the NFPA Annual meeting in June, there was a 3-person panel presenting information on this topic. In November, the Backyards and Beyond conference will have a moderated panel discussion – Ethan Foote, Tom Cova, Jack Cohen and Keith Harrap presented to the full audience. Jim is also working on written material.

Defining the WUI: Jim provided some history about why we want to look into this issue – how does Firewise connect with other issues? The Task Group has not made much headway on this to date but now

with new members we can go to work on it. Jack stated we need to be clear and talk about what the problem actually is.

Task Group Assignments: Sam asked if Olin Phillips planned to stay involved in Task Groups. Leslie said it was her understanding that Olin is leaving the time altogether. Jim moved that we sunset the WHAM Task Group and that pending a final report that we sunset the Grassroots Task Group.

DECISION: Dissolve the WHAM Task Group; when final report is issued by Fleishman-Hillard, dissolve the Grassroots Pilot Task Group.

7. Update – Firewise Article Archive and Firewise Library

Handout(s): Web-link presentation of Firewise Article Archive and Firewise Library area

Discussion: Ken Tremblay of the NFPA Firewise staff provided an overview of two pending additions to the Firewise website. The Firewise Article Archive was developed to enable web users to search past issues of the *Firewise Newsletter* and *Wildfire News & Notes* to find individual articles. The newsletter articles had not been previously indexed, so staff was relying on memory or labor-intensive physical searches to find items. The new web area allows users to search by keyword or topic.

The Firewise Library has been reconstituted to become part of the new electronic catalog of NFPA's Charles Morgan Library, one of the largest fire science libraries in the world. More than 800 documents held by the Firewise program are now available as searchable items on the electronic catalog. Access through NFPA's library includes the possibility of interlibrary loans for most materials, a service that was not available to Firewise website users in the past.

Both web links are now live at www.firewise.org/library/index.htm.

8. Report on Progress – Course on Assessing Wildfire Hazards in the Home Ignition Zone

Handout(s): Draft student manual for "Assessing Wildfire Hazards in the Home Ignition Zone"; Instructor guide for course.

Discussion: Jim reviewed the origins of this project, which started as a revision of NWCG P-110 "Inspecting Fire Prone Property". The NWCG Training Working Team had accepted the Working Team's proposal to completely revise the course and advised it be offered outside the NWCG system. Jim explained that the course is strictly focused on home ignition zone characteristics. Students will be brought through the use of an assessment form but also trained to see the issues without having to use a checklist. The course will use a simulation rather than a live field visit. The Task Group for this project met recently in Missoula and provided useful feedback toward finishing the course materials.

Jim noted that there is currently no planned delivery system for the course. He pointed out the proposed delivery by NFPA/Firewise described in the February meeting minutes in Appendix E; there was no decision at that meeting about using this or any other delivery system. There was discussion about the need for this type of course, the desire to have it available for local fire departments and state agencies as well as federal agencies, and concerns about the level of quality instruction available to deliver the course. Jack said that during the Task Group review, it was clear that there were few people who understood the details and nuances of the home ignition zone issue and was concerned that we do not have a cadre of people available to teach the course. He felt that in order to be able to do an adequate assessment, a

student would have to be able to think through and understand how ignitions occur at the home level, so that when assessing a house you've never seen before, you can recognize vulnerabilities of that structure. He also felt that individuals conducting assessment needed not only wildland fire behavior knowledge and experience, but also some knowledge of building design and construction. There was a great deal of discussion over whether the course was entry level or far above that level, and whether the resources existed to provide appropriate training. Several WT members asserted that this training was very much needed in the field. Jack suggested that regional expertise be built and that agency level commitment was needed to make this improvement.

There was more discussion about developing an instructor cadre and some concerns about class size (original proposal says up to 50 in a class; others insist 10-12 should be maximum) and qualifications for instructors. Jim felt that Fire Protection Engineers with NFPA 1041 qualifications could teach. Will disagreed, as FPEs do not have firefighting experience. Jim felt that a good fire instructor should be able to use the materials and teach the course. Rich suggested opening it to states and letting them figure out how to offer it. Sam said he wanted to sponsor a train-the-trainer session. Kelly volunteered to pull together a list of criteria for a good instructor and start a list of names that could be considered for the cadre. She said BLM could offer some travel support for trainees. Jack felt building a cadre would be important as they would become the de facto core expertise for the nation – when they become trained they can not only train more trainers but also answer questions.

ACTION: Develop description of ideal instructor-trainer and develop short list of candidates for a core team of instructor-trainers.

Lead: Kelly Hawk

Due Date: December 15, 2006

9. Firewise Communities/USA Update

Handout: List of communities to date;" How To" newsletters Vols. 1-3

Discussion: Michele provided an update on the numbers of communities involved – to date, 173 in 33 states. We have commitments from 41 of the 50 states with liaisons. The 9 states without liaisons include:

Connecticut

Illinois

Indiana

Iowa

Maine (*During the meeting, Leslie Wiles indicated she has been designated the state liaison – which moves Maine from this list to the list below*)

Nebraska

Nevada

Rhode Island

Vermont

The 8 states that have liaisons but no participating communities yet include:

Delaware

Michigan

Mississippi

Missouri

New Hampshire

New York

North Dakota

Oklahoma

Kelly noted that Ruta Glinski is the BLM lead in Nevada and works extensively in Fire Safe Councils; she may be someone to talk to about Firewise involvement. Michele noted that not having a liaison with the state means we have no official way of communicating with the state on the program. Amy felt there has been a misconception about what we are trying to do with the Firewise Communities/USA recognition program. We see it as a tool that states and communities can use, not as a competitive program with existing activities in any given state. The goal that the Team set last year was for participation by every state by the end of 2007. Some discussion occurred regarding outreach opportunities. Wayne will be meeting in Nevada soon; and the program has been invited to make a half-day presentation at the Pacific Northwest Prevention/Mitigation Conference in Salishan, Oregon, in February 2007. During the Backyards and Beyond conference, there will be a half-day session for liaisons and their staffs, along with a new State Liaison guide document coming out at that time.

ACTION: Follow up with leads on getting Northeast states more involved in the Firewise Communities/USA program.

Lead: Leslie Wiles, Michele Steinberg

Due Date: February 1, 2007

10. Backyards and Beyond Conference

Handout(s): Conference registration form

Discussion: Jim asked that any of the Working Team members planning to attend register immediately and provide a commitment to limited assignments as session monitors during the conference. Jim said we are anticipating about 500 people for the main conference and about 70-100 for the pre-conference sessions. There will be a reception for the Firewise state and tribal liaisons on Wednesday night, November 1, and we would like as much WT participation as possible for that event and a presence at the Thursday morning opening session. Alan, Wayne, Kelly, Rich, and Will all noted that they plan to attend. Tim Melchert from USFS/NIFC will also attend. Wayne is holding a meeting with Western state forestry staff at the same hotel on Wednesday, November 1.

ACTION: WT members planning to attend will register as soon as possible and communicate with Cheryl Blake on session monitor assignments.

Lead: All

Due Date: October 10, 2006

11. NFPA Standards

Discussion: Jim noted that a former Task Group assisted in revising NFPA Standards 1144 and 1141. He briefly described NFPA's process for proposals and comments. The Forest & Rural Technical Committee that coordinates these documents will meet October 11-13 in Boise. Guests may sit in and observe. Jim noted that researcher Tom Cova will be a guest at the meeting. A Report on Comments will go out in early 2007 and be available until June 1, 2007 for review. The revised standards will go to vote at the NFPA Annual Meeting and become effective at the end of 2007.

12. Overview of Firewise Website Features

Handout(s): Spreadsheet of information on web hits and other user data; visual demo of live website area.

Discussion: Mike and Drew McKenna of the shotgunflat creative agency presented features of the Firewise website, including the Forum area with a “blog” and chat room; the Firewise Article Archive; the Firewise Communities/USA area; and other key features. A full Google search feature for the site and partial Spanish translation will be complete by the end of 2006. The live links for the Firewise Article Archive and the new Library area will be available in the next few days. By the end of the year they will also add a new course to the Firewise Learning Center (Conducting Community Assessments). They noted there has been a fair amount of activity on the Firewise Learning Center with the two existing courses (Fire Fighter Safety in the WUI and Firewise Landscaping). They noted several planned upgrades for 2007, including:

- Full certified Spanish translation of the site
- Upgrade/rebuild of existing two Firewise Learning Center courses with new design
- New photo library area
- Upgrade of Firewise Catalog for more functionality and an “Amazon” type design
- Firewise glossary update to a “Wikipedia” style format

The Team reviewed the spreadsheet showing activity on the site comparing 2005 to 2006. In terms of monthly unique visitors to the site, for many months there was an increase on the order of 200% from 2005 to 2006. In the first 8 months of 2006, there were 62,145 more unique visitors than in all of 2005. On average this year, users visiting the site visited 7 different pages. And there were 7,455 subscribers to the email list the program uses to send Firewise Alerts and other information. In number of hits alone, May 2006 exceeded 1 million hits in a month.

13. Firewise Leadership Awards

Handout(s): Task Group Recommendations for award winners; Diagram of award item design.

Discussion: Amy Schneider described the process we used to make the decisions and revisited the criteria for the award nominations. We had 31 nominations from 14 states. The Regional Award recommendations (up to 2) are Arkansas Forestry Commission and Jim Harrell (Florida Division of Forestry). The State Award recommendations are Arizona Firewise and Bobby Young (Texas Forest Service). Local Award recommendations are Marc Titus with Washington Division of Natural Resources; Linda Ford with the Taos Pines Ranch Fire Community in New Mexico; and the Anchorage (Alaska) Fire Department.

Amy reviewed the recommendations in detail with the group. She described the process once the decision is made. We will contact all of the nominators and nominees of their status. We will specifically determine whether winners will be able to attend the November Backyards and Beyond conference. Alan suggested we notify state foresters for state winners. We will also let winners know that we are holding press communications until we make our national announcement in November. We can work with them on any local announcements to come out following the national event. Amy provided the Team with an image of the award design. The base of the award will have the information on a metal plaque. Jim noted that it was valuable to receive 31 nominations because it’s information about what people are doing that we otherwise wouldn’t have known. Jack moved to accept recommendations and design. Kelly seconded.

DECISION: Working Team accepted the Task Groups recommendations for winners and accepted the award design.

ACTION: Letters of notification to be sent to all nominators and nominees. Letters to winners will include coordination information for the conference award ceremony and information on how we are handling media announcements.

Lead: Amy Schneider
Due Date: October 2, 2006

ACTION: Award design to be produced into physical awards to be presented at November conference.

Lead: Amy Schneider
Due Date: October 27, 2006

ACTION: National Media Release on awards

Lead: Amy Schneider
Due Date: November 1, 2006

ACTION: Information on winners and nominees to be posted to Firewise website

Lead: Amy Schneider, Michele Steinberg
Due Date: November 6, 2006

AGENDA ITEM FOR FUTURE MEETING: Decide location and date for 2007 Award Announcement/Ceremony.

14. Review of Goals for 2007 Workplan

Handout: Program Strategic Approach Fact Sheet

Discussion: Jim reminded Team members about the program's three goals and five working areas or core programs as outlined in the 2005-9 Strategic Plan. He led discussion on ideas for activities in these five areas during 2007.

Firewise Communities/USA: Planned activities will focus on ways to help the Firewise state and tribal liaisons be more effective. Activities will include more interactive mapping on the Firewise website and the creation of tools to help communities and states. Jim noted that in November we are going to recognize 11 of the original 12 pilot communities for 5 years of participation in FCUSA during the Opening General Session of the conference. He pointed out that each year, we will have a growing number of 5-year communities, assuming we maintain high retention (29 in 2007, 42 in 2008, 49 in 2010). We are exploring what kinds of recognition to provide, such as updated signage and a postage stamp with the Firewise Communities/USA logo.

Jim described the need to mirror the successful strategies of states like Arkansas and Arizona to get more communities involved. The program staff are exploring ways to get local fire departments empowered to be more involved and get them doing assessments. This can help relieve the time and effort burden on state liaisons. This kind of expansion would not change the role of the state/tribal liaison. Staff think if we can do this that we will greatly increase community participation in the program, seeing results by late 2007 and into 2008. Staff are now working on a web-based course for Conducting Community Assessments, with the goal of expanding the knowledge base about the program and home ignition zone concepts.

Sam asked if fire department is responsible to provide the information on taking the course. Jim said that program staff can communicate to state liaisons about who in their state has completed the web course. Alan noted that since the assessment comes in with the application to the state liaison, he wouldn't worry

about who did the assessment, he could just look at the assessment document to see if it is done properly. Jim added that the FCUSA program is voluntary, not a legal or administrative requirement. Michele noted that there is a good system of checks and balances via the state liaisons and the staff itself in making sure the applications meet what they are supposed to and maintain the integrity of the program. Sam and Alan commented on the value of having what amounts to a larger workforce in the field. Jack said this approach would utilize resources that already exist, and that it will help the community become more involved rather than end up with the fire department telling people what to do. Alan asked whether we can verify that a fire department staffer conducting the assessment has taken the course. We can verify for individuals taking the course – there is not a formal certification, so it would not apply to a whole department. Jack said the reality is that the web is going to be the principal training method, rather than live training because of limitations. The classroom course will serve to train people at the regional level and the web course will be the way to disseminate the basic information. Frank Richardson agreed that the web course is the way to meet the need, and that any planning for training should be focused on the web as the primary delivery mechanism. Jim asked the Team to approve the approach of expanding information and training to fire departments and others to enable more assessments to take place to help communities become recognized Firewise Communities/USA areas. Jack moved to approve this approach. Rich Kvale seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

DECISION: Firewise program staff will adopt an approach of expanding education about Firewise Communities/USA and how to conduct community assessments.

ACTION: Staff will use this new approach as part of the information in an upcoming state liaison guide and course that is being given in November.

Lead: Michele Steinberg, Judith Leraas Cook, Jack Cohen

Due Date: November 1, 2006

ACTION: The web course on Conducting a Community Assessment will go on the website by December 31, 2006.

Lead: Judith Leraas Cook, Michele Steinberg, Jack Cohen

Due Date: December 31, 2006

Sam asked whether the program staff had considered some kind of evaluation of progress, such as a survey, for communities as they reach the 5-year participation milestone. Michele noted that another evaluation idea had been raised at the last meeting by Pam Jakes – an “exit interview” for any communities that did not renew status. There was discussion about the best way to obtain this information and what specific indicators we would look for. Amy added that we could look at indicators that were meaningful for the program as well as for more official reporting to Congress and agencies. Alan said we could compare results from this kind of evaluation to the new Southern states’ list of communities at risk.

DECISION: Program staff will provide the Working Team with a proposed set of indicators and a suggested strategy to evaluate the five-year progress of communities.

ACTION: Develop a set of indicators and a strategy for evaluation of Firewise Communities/USA progress on a five-year interval.

Lead: Michele Steinberg, Amy Schneider, Judith Leraas Cook

Due Date: April 15, 2007

AGENDA ITEM FOR NEXT MEETING: *Present information about five-year progress idea for Firewise Communities/USA.*

Firewise Website: Jim noted that Mike and Drew McKenna had outlined most of the new ideas for website changes. Jim is also interested in using podcasts and expanding the photo library. We also want to ensure more of the homeowner-based information is in HTML format to simplify access for users without high-speed internet connections. Jim indicated that all possible items would be included specifically in the contract with shotgunflat creative agency. The 2007 budget for the website is just under \$200,000.

Communications Strategy and Plan: Amy reviewed the ideas for 2007. Under Community Support and Media Relations, the focus will be on getting information to PIOs in agencies and states. Community support for Firewise sites can include a survey of communities that are in the program and compare to those not in the program. This could build in some of the issues/questions noted by Sam when asking about evaluation of five-year progress.

Amy described the strong demand that the program has had from major media outlets for footage of WUI activities. We have very little to provide currently, so a B-roll of footage would be very useful. In addition, the program has no current Public Service Announcements (PSAs) – another item for which we receive many requests, particularly from state agencies. The Team felt that if they had to choose between two “optional” items (community survey vs. PSA) that the PSAs would be most important to do this year.

The communications plan for 2007 also includes more byline articles and targeted media pitching and press releases for any new products or activities. Fleishman-Hillard will continue to conduct the news monitor service that has shown the great coverage of Firewise in the media nationally. They will also continue to provide limited agency support for information and outreach as well as WUI Working Team support.

Amy described a planned “Springboard Workshop”, a program developed by Fleishman-Hillard, that would be conducted in spring 2007 with a mix of NFPA staff, contractors, Leadership Awards winners, tribal members, Firewise state liaisons, WUI Working Team members, and representatives of other NWCG working teams. It is designed to focus on the Firewise Communities/USA program and to help creatively brainstorm and plan next steps as the program matures.

As mentioned earlier, NFPA staff will be taking the lead on working with stakeholders (see later discussion). This will allow Fleishman-Hillard to focus more on working with news media, Firewise Communities/USA, Leadership Awards, and community support.

WUI Information Resources: Jim reviewed a number of ideas for 2007 as follows:

- 1. Model ordinances and CCNRS* - Jim proposed that staff develop a model Firewise-friendly landscape ordinance or CCNR document, drawing on concepts outlined in the IBHS “Community Land Use Evaluation” survey done in 2001. Such a document could be used by communities to look at how they compare to others in terms of good Firewise practices and plans. The document could be a “best practices” manual and/or an evaluation tool for homeowners regarding CCNRs.
- 2. Model project for 4-H Clubs* – Jim proposed developing a package or tools for 4-H Clubs to use for mapping or other activities around Firewise. We need to learn more about how 4-H works and how to get to them with this kind of package. Will May noted that 4-H does have books established and we might want to see how our information would fit in as they are revised.
- 3. Revision of Operation Water* – This video and booklet were originally created in 1992. The *Using Water Effectively* DVD was done in 2004 as a companion piece that focused on specific strategies. Jim proposed updating *Operation Water* for use as a web course and a new booklet. Jack asked about how the course will reinforce the message of “what might occur” during an extreme situation, since the original

context is more focused on rural firefighting. He would like to see a theme of making fire services more effective.

4. ISO Rating System for WUI – Jim proposed that we explore the possibility of an Insurance Services Office rating scheme for WUI risks. This project would begin with a literature search on existing classification systems regarding WUI building characteristics and result in a summary and recommendations for how to inventory such characteristics across communities. There was extensive discussion of how ISO might use this, what ISO will bring to the table in such a project, and whether it would be utilized by insurance companies. Jim said there is a need for uniform, consistent weighting of risk factors across the board. ISO has a rekindled interest in this kind of rating as the federal government pushes to get better information about disaster risks. Several Working Team members indicated discomfort with moving forward on a proposal without knowing more about the benefits to the program and its ultimate use by the insurance industry.

WUI Support: Jim indicated that staff support of the Working Team and other activities would continue as in the past. In addition, he described the following ideas for 2007:

1. Delivery of Course “Assessing Wildfire Risks in the Home Ignition Zone” (AKA “The HIZ Course”) – Jim made a motion to discuss the idea of having the program deliver this course. Motion was seconded. Jim proposed to put the course materials on the Firewise catalog, and to conduct four training sessions per year. He felt that this will help us move the project along, increase the knowledge base, and increase competency. He indicated the materials provided via the catalog would be developed to minimize or eliminate the possibility of anyone changing them or skipping them when giving a course. He pointed out the February notes including a proposal for a four-session per year training schedule. The cost structure as proposed would mean that each student would pay about \$160 for a two day course. Jim, Jack and Kelly noted there are at least 5-6 people they know now that could teach the course. Jim added that the course has been designed so that a good instructor should be able to pick up the materials and be able to teach. Jack felt the approach of doing the training would help carve a niche for regional experts and that this course could help establish an institutional need where none exists now. Jim’s proposal is to have the four sessions organized by the program staff; any agency-sponsored trainings would be in addition to this proposal. Both Sam and Kelly indicated interest in sponsoring a training. Jim noted it would be well into 2nd quarter of 2007 before we could start the trainings. Alan asked whether Interactive Training Media, Inc. (ITM) might take this on at some point. Jim said that would be a positive development, but it would take at least two years for ITM to recreate it to suit their business model. Alan moved that the group move forward on the proposal and identify instructors, plan four courses for calendar 2007, and create a final package for distribution on the web catalog. Motion was seconded; passed unanimously.

DECISION: Program staff will work with WT to launch the HIZ Course by identifying instructors, planning four course sessions for calendar 2007, and creating a final package for distribution on the web catalog.

2. Economic Model to Measure Success in WUI – There was extensive discussion about this issue, which was a major topic at the February meeting of the WUI Working Team. There is a strong need to measure success of our programs in a quantitative way, both to answer agency needs and maintain funding, as well as to demonstrate to others that the work we are doing with private landowners helps them to accomplish their goals on public lands, whether it be agencies, environmental groups, etc. Jack said that staff at the Missoula Fire Lab are doing some of this analysis on a project in the Bitterroot Valley, to show the impact on the larger landscape of working around homes to reduce ignition potential. He indicated that further research in this area should be funded by the Joint Fire Sciences Program. There is not a current model that looks at wildfire costs and benefits for land management. Rich offered to develop a proposal for the Joint Fire Sciences Program that had an emphasis on links to cost-containment.

ACTION: Discuss the economic model idea with Lew Southard to determine how to proceed.
Lead: Rich Kvale, Jack Cohen, Kelly Hawk
Due Date: October 31, 2006

AGENDA ITEM FOR FUTURE MEETING: Review status of economic model proposal.

3. *Defining the Problem* – Jim noted this is an important question set to answer -- what connection does Firewise and preventing WUI disasters have to various other issues (fish and wildlife habitat, air quality, water quality, economic value, quality of life, etc.). Defining these relationships can help us connect with those outside the fire world and identify appropriate stakeholders with whom to work. Jack added that it is important to spell out the connections to those interested in ecosystem health and restoration. Will suggested that this definition document be put on the front page of the website and shared aggressively with potential allies. Alan suggested that simple illustrations would be helpful in a document. Michele said it sounded like the final product would be a communication document something like Communities Compatible with Nature. Amy agreed that visuals would be important and that we should keep an end goal in mind for a product. Kelly offered to start with a concept paper.

ACTION: Draft a concept paper on “defining the problem”
Lead: Kelly Hawk
Due Date: January 15, 2007

AGENDA ITEM FOR FUTURE MEETING: Review draft concept paper on “defining the problem” and assign next steps for producing document/messages/web piece.

15. Stakeholder Strategy

Discussion: Amy provided a brief overview of stakeholder issues. We started working with stakeholders as part of the Firewise Workshop series. We want to approach specific stakeholders to work with them in areas where they can help us further the Firewise mission. We also want to be able to respond to groups who want to use our message to make sure it is not misused. The strategy employed last year of using partnership letters to solidify the relationship was found not to be useful when there was not a specific project being accomplished. Such a letter could be used for specific reasons as relationships are formalized. Amy suggested we think about a web area as a resource for users that would provide information about various stakeholder organizations.

Discussion included thinking about relationships we want to instigate or enhance. Much of the focus was on groups working in environmental or ecology related areas such as The Nature Conservancy, the Wilderness Society, the Sierra Club and others. These are the groups that would be most receptive to the issues we discussed in “defining the problem” and understanding the link between reducing WUI disasters and improving environmental health. There should be some method or criteria the WT can use to determine if we have a common goal with a given group (such as ecosystem sustainability). Amy noted we have good contacts with The Nature Conservancy. Jack said he would work on building a relationship with the Wilderness Society, and through them the Sierra Club.

Regarding organizations that seek out a relationship with Firewise, Amy noted we would have to look at these on a case-by-case basis. Part of this is an ongoing management issue for program staff – how much time and energy to devote on meeting with or partnering with a given group. Jim noted we have existing relationships with several organizations focused on planning and development, mitigation and emergency management. Alan suggested that in any analysis of whether to work with partners, to first find out “what your stakeholder can do for you.” Will agreed and suggested we focus on obtaining fewer partners in

favor of the quality of the relationship.

DECISION: Re-form the Stakeholder Task Group to include Amy Schneider, Sam Scranton, Jim Smalley, Leslie Wiles, Alan Dozier and Will May.

ACTION: Begin stakeholder conversations with Greg Aplet at the Wilderness Society

Lead: Jack Cohen

Due Date: May 1, 2007

ACTION: With Stakeholder Task Group, develop a list of stakeholders including information about their issues, goals and common activities, along with notes about what the program might get out of a relationship with that stakeholder.

Lead: Michele Steinberg

Due Date: December 1, 2006

ACTION: Stakeholder Task Group to review the list provided by staff to develop priorities and next steps for outreach (by conference call meeting)

Lead: Amy Schneider, Michele Steinberg

Due Date: March 15, 2007

AGENDA ITEM FOR NEXT MEETING: *Report from Task Group on Stakeholder Strategy and priorities. Report from Jack on conversations with Wilderness Society and other groups.*

16. "Wildland/Urban Interface 2007" IAFC Conference

Discussion: Wayne Ching was on the committee for planning this conference and has participated in some conference calls. He is concerned about duplication of information between the November conference and this one slated for March 2007. Will May indicated that the IAFC conference targets fire department personnel primarily, but that state, federal and local participation was also desired. The audience is mainly fire service, so will be a different audience than for the Backyards & Beyond conference. Will expects this conference to have good attendance. Program staff have not submitted a specific proposal but Will encouraged us to submit something on the Firewise Communities/USA program. Michele felt it would be a good venue for us to present updates about the program.

AGENDA ITEM FOR NEXT MEETING: *Report on November 2006 and March 2007 conferences.*

17. Budget Information

Discussion: Sam noted that the program's 2007 contribution from DOI will be \$500,000 and possibly decreasing in 2008. Rich said that the Office of Management and Budget is predicting 5% decreases annually in budgets across the board. Rich noted that the USFS does not take funds from the hazardous fuels budget for this program, but that DOI does, which makes it more difficult for DOI to justify. In addition, DOI does not have a statutory relationship with the states as USFS does. USFS has more choices on assigning program dollars because of the way it is organized. As long as the states continue to support the program, USFS can use dollars from the State Fire Assistance for the program. He foresees staying with level funding. Alan noted that because states are more and more dependent on State Fire Assistance dollars, any cuts would mean that state foresters will not be willing to provide as much Firewise funding. Leslie added that this dependence on State Fire Assistance funds is also happening more in the Northeast states. In light of these trends, the Team agreed that the budget and 2007 workplan priorities be reviewed

again at the May meeting. Jim provided handouts on the planned budget allocations in the form of a pie chart for the Team's reference.

DECISION: Revisit strategic plan and strategize on budget "what-ifs" at May meeting.

ACTION: Get strategic plan matrix to team for benchmarking suggestions.

Lead: Michele Steinberg, Jim Smalley

Due Date: February 1, 2007

AGENDA ITEM FOR NEXT MEETING: Review of budget and priorities at the midpoint of strategic plan and create some "what if" scenarios.

18. Calendar and other meetings

Discussion: Jim noted upcoming meetings that staff and WT would be involved in.

ACTION: 2007 Calendar for WT posted on ftp site

Lead: Michele Steinberg

Due Date: December 1, 2007

19. WUI Working Team Meeting Schedule

Discussion: Below is the meeting schedule agreed upon:

<i>Meeting / Dates</i>	<i>Host State/Region</i>	<i>Location</i>
Spring 2007 May 1-3, 2007	Georgia	Atlanta, Georgia
Fall 2007 September 18-20, 2007	Maine	Portland, Maine
Spring 2008 May 2008 TBD	Tampa? Boise?	TBD

20. Meeting Wrap-Up

Alan thanked Sam for his service as WT Chairman for 2004-2006. He said he is looking forward to getting to work as Chairman of the group and welcomed Leslie Wiles and Will May. Leslie said she would welcome the Team's help in getting up to speed. She announced she will be the Maine liaison for the Firewise Communities/USA program. Sam adjourned the meeting at 11 a.m. on Thursday, September 21, 2006.