



***National Wildfire
Coordinating Group (NWCWG)***

Budget Guidance FY 2010

Contents

Introduction	3
NWCG Guiding Principles.....	3
NWCG Strategic Goals.....	3
Roles and Responsibilities.....	5
Process	7
Overview	7
Time Period, Tasks, Responsible Party.....	7
Project Prioritization	10
Agency Budget Staff Contacts.....	11
NWCG Budget Staff Contacts.....	11

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide the NWCG organization and agency budget staffs with budget direction for FY 2010. Committees and non-committee NWCG sponsored programs and projects are required to submit a budget request for new and recurring activities/projects for the period FY 2010-2012 by **July 17, 2009**. The Executive Board, Branch Coordinators, and Budget Advisory Unit (BAU) will facilitate the selection and prioritization process to ensure that the proposed activities/projects are within the scope of NWCG while fulfilling the Executive Board's goals in a cost effective manner.

NWCG Guiding Principles

SAFETY: We believe safety is our core value, therefore, public and firefighter safety is the first priority in all wildland fire management activities.

COST EFFECTIVENESS: We believe the wise and efficient use of funds is a high priority, therefore, we will consider and evaluate the costs associated with implementing NWCG's objectives.

INTERAGENCY COMMUNICATION, COORDINATION & COOPERATION: We believe that interagency communication, coordination and cooperation are vital to the effective and efficient use of the nation's wildland fire management resources; therefore, we will base our actions on the collective needs and capabilities of the interagency community.

LEADERSHIP: We believe effective wildland fire management is the result of leadership at all levels; therefore we will provide and promote leadership throughout all NWCG activities.

TRUST & INTEGRITY: We believe trust and integrity are inherent to the success of the NWCG, therefore deliberations will be open and transparent and we will honor, respect, and support the decisions of the NWCG.

RESPECT: We believe in mutual respect for the differences in member organizations' responsibilities, missions, and capabilities, therefore, NWCG decisions represent a consensus and are supported by all.

EXCELLENCE: We believe in excellence throughout all NWCG activities; therefore, we are deliberative in our decision-making process and are accountable for our actions.

NWCG Strategic Goals

STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES: Wildland Fire organizations share common standards and guidelines, which are developed through collaborative interagency processes

QUALIFICATIONS: All Wildland Fire organizations share the same interagency competency-based certification processes

COMMUNICATIONS: All Wildland Fire organizations share a joint communications plan that is clearly articulated, and is an efficient and effective mechanism for transmitting policies, decisions, standards, and for reporting and receiving feedback

FIRE POLICY: All Wildland Fire organizations share a common interagency fire policy

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION: All Wildland Fire organizations share common interagency program development and implementation processes

INCIDENT OPERATIONS: The response to and management of wildland fire incidents is safe, seamless, cost-effective, timely, and efficient; above all, it is responsive to changing climates, demographics, budgets, and other factors

Roles and Responsibilities

Agency Budget Staff

- Based on NWCG Executive Board decisions, committees and non-committee NWCG sponsored programs and projects work with the agency that is allocated the project funds to determine cost coding structure
- Agency facilitating the funds distribution will prepare the NWCG Shared Costs Spreadsheet.

Branch Coordinators

- Develop/finalize guidance to committees and non-committee NWCG sponsored programs and projects
- Issue NWCG Budget Guidance to all requestors, including a budget template
- Prioritize projects submitted through committees
- Annually present the prioritized project list to the NWCG Executive Board with participation by the NWCG Program Manager and BAU
- Annually advise committees of approved projects
- Annually advise committees and non-committee NWCG sponsored programs and projects of NWCG budget amounts
- Recommend the use of NWCG contingency funding for ongoing projects
- Review results and make recommendations to NWCG Executive Board for any changes based on committee and non-committee reports at mid-year and third quarter
- Collaborate with the BAU and Executive Board on decisions regarding unexpended current year funds
- Prepare NWCG annual accomplishment report.

Budget Advisory Unit (BAU)

- Determine funding available for FY 2010 NWCG allocation
- Assist in development of standard template for NWCG project requests and execution tracking
- Assist Branch Coordinators with NWCG Budget Guidance
- Review prioritized project list and identify concerns/issues for Branch Coordinators
- Annually present the prioritized project list to the NWCG Executive Board with participation by the Branch Coordinators and NWCG Program Manager
- Advise all agencies budget personnel annually of NWCG budget allocations
- Approve the use of NWCG contingency funding for ongoing projects as described in the BAU standard operating procedures
- Assist in review of results and recommendations to NWCG Executive Board for any changes based on committee and non-committee reports at mid-year and third quarter
- Advise Executive Board of project funds not obligated by June 15th each fiscal year which may be rescinded or re-allocated

- Monitor expenditures monthly beginning in July each fiscal year
- Annually determine any NWCG carryover funds by agency
- Provide carryover amounts to NWCG Executive Board for decisions.

Committee Chairs

- Develop project request and submit in budget template to Branch Coordinators
- Prioritize projects within committees
- Report to Branch Coordinators on accomplishments and budget status at mid-year, third quarter and end-of-year.

Non-Committee Project and Program Area Leads

- Serve as the agency point of contact to expend the funds
- Develop project request and submit in the budget template to the NWCG Budget Liaison
- Report to NWCG Budget Liaison on accomplishments and budget status at mid-year, third quarter, and end-of-year
- Make appropriate arrangements (contracts, agreements, job code, etc.) in order to execute requested project upon NWCG approval.

NWCG Budget Liaison

- Develop a budget template for NWCG project requests and execution tracking with assistance from the NWCG BAU and Branch Coordinators
- Assist Branch Coordinators with NWCG guidance
- Prepare project submissions package for review by Branch Coordinators
- Assist committees with questions on budget and direct to appropriate agency budget contact as needed
- Liaison to non-committee NWCG sponsored programs and projects for accomplishments and budget status at mid-year, third quarter, and end-of-year
- Review results and make recommendations to Branch Coordinators for any changes based on non-committee NWCG reports at mid-year and third quarter
- Apply project information to NWCG Shared Cost Worksheets
- Maintain all budget project files for the NWCG Staff.

NWCG Executive Board

- Annually approve the NWCG budget
- Make decisions on any requests surfaced through mid-year and third quarter reviews
- Make decisions for use of carryover funds for unfunded projects or reallocation to agencies.

NWCG Program Manager

- Annually review the prioritized project list in conjunction with the Branch Coordinators and make recommendations for any changes as needed

- Annually present the prioritized project list to the NWCG Executive Board with the BAU and the Branch Coordinators
- Prepare NWCG annual accomplishment report.

Process

Overview

The NWCG budget development process provides a framework to help guide funding the appropriate activities/projects to meet NWCG goals in a cost-effective manner. This process is intended to be used for FY 2010 and may be altered following analysis of user feedback and lessons learned.

An NWCG funding cap is determined during the regular federal wildland fire budget cycle. For example, the cap for NWCG spending for FY 2011 must be set initially in FY 2009. Adjustments to this number may occur based on current status of the wildland fire budget process. By the beginning of the fiscal year that the funds will be available, the amount will be estimated. NWCG funding is subject to increases or decreases in funding from any of the individual agencies.

The NWCG BAU will monitor NWCG expenditures on a quarterly basis. Funds that are not obligated or spent by June 15, 2010 may be rescinded and re-allocated to another project unless the project leader can provide ample justification that the funds will be successfully obligated by the end of the current fiscal year. Funds that are available for reallocation will be given to the next priority project for which there is sufficient funding.

Time Period, Tasks, Responsible Party

Time Period	Task	Responsible Party	Comments
June 2009	Determine funding available for FY 2010 NWCG allocation	Budget Advisory Unit (BAU)	Funding based on decisions from FY 2009
June 2009	Develop/finalize guidance to committees and non-committee projects and programs	BAU Branch Coordinators NWCG Program Manager	Priorities, rules, parameters, and agency contacts
June 2009	Issue NWCG guidance to all requestors, including budget template with due dates	Branch Coordinators NWCG Program Manager	Budget template will be an attachment to the guidance Issue guidance 30 days prior to budget request due date
July 2009	Develop budget request and submit to committee chair	Project Leads	Use best cost estimate; research procurement tools needed for execution
July 2009	Projects prioritized and submitted by each committee to NWCG Budget Liaison	Committee Chairs	Submit to NWCG Budget Liaison

Time Period	Task	Responsible Party	Comments
July 2009	Consolidate committee projects into a branch view	Branch Coordinators	Consolidate requests
July 2009	Non-committee projects and programs are submitted to the NWCG Budget Liaison	NWCG Budget Liaison	Consolidate requests
August 2009	Branch Coordinators and NWCG Program Manager review and prioritize projects within budget available	Branch Coordinators NWCG Program Manager	Review and prioritize projects recommended by Branch Coordinators and NWCG Program Manager
August 2009	BAU review prioritized project list, identify concerns/issues. Return to Branch Coordinators for review/adjustments	BAU	
September 2009	Branch Coordinators, BAU and NWCG Program Manager present prioritized list to NWCG Executive Board	BAU Branch Coordinators NWCG Program Manager	
September 2009	NWCG Executive Board make decisions on FY 2010 NWCG budget allocations	NWCG Executive Board	
September 2009	BAU advise all agencies of FY 2010 NWCG budget	BAU	
September 2009	Branch Coordinators advise committees of budget decisions	Branch Coordinators	
September 2009	NWCG Budget Liaison advise non-committee projects and programs of budget decisions	NWCG Budget Liaison	
September 2009	Apply project information to NWCG Shared Costs Worksheet	NWCG Budget Liaison	Internal documentation to BLM

Time Period	Task	Responsible Party	Comments
October 2009	Based on NWCG Executive Board decisions, committees work with the agency that is allocated the project funds to determine cost coding structure	Agency Budget Staff (see list)	
January 2010	NWCG Executive Board annually update NWCG Guiding Principles and Strategic Goals	NWCG Executive Board	Accomplish annually at the January meeting
Mid-Year			
April 2010	Committees and non-committee projects and programs report to the NWCG Budget Liaison on mid-year accomplishments and funds expended. Identify savings and/or additional funds requests	Committee Chairs Non-committee Project and Program Leads	NWCG Program Manager send reply due letter in March to committees with budget template
April 2010	Branch Coordinator's and BAU review results and make recommendations to NWCG Executive Board for any changes based on mid-year feedback	Branch Coordinators BAU	Recommendations include use of contingency funds
April 2010	NWCG Executive Board make decisions on any requests surfaced through mid-year process	NWCG Executive Board	
Third Quarter			

Time Period	Task	Responsible Party	Comments
July 2010	Committees and non-committee projects and programs report to the NWCG Budget Liaison on third quarter accomplishments and funds expended. Identify savings and/or additional funds requests. Committees include expected end-of-year accomplishments	Committee chairs Non-committee Project and Program Leads	NWCG Program Manager send reply due letter in June to committees with budget template
July 2010	Branch Coordinator's and BAU review results and make recommendations to NWCG Executive Board for any changes based on third quarter feedback	Branch Coordinators BAU	Recommendations include use of contingency funds
July 2010	NWCG Executive Board make decisions on any requests surfaced through third quarter process	NWCG Executive Board	
End-of-Year			
October 2010	Committees and non-committee projects and programs report to the NWCG Budget Liaison on FY 2010 accomplishments and funds expended	Committee Chairs Non-committee Project and Program Leads	

Project Prioritization

The following criteria will be used by the NWCG Program Manager and the Branch Coordinators to assist in the determination of how activities/projects will be prioritized. This criterion is not considered to be all-inclusive.

1. Determination of activities/projects that must be considered for funding. These are items that have been obligated on contracts exceeding the current fiscal year, personnel and other items that cannot be dropped without undergoing adverse actions.
2. Determine those items that should be considered for funding to meet NWCG priorities.

- a. Past performance
 - b. State travel
 - c. On-going projects that the Executive Board has committed to in prior years and still have value to NWCG
 - d. Operations and Maintenance
 - i. Information technology (IT) systems - Operations and maintenance in this context is defined by OMB Circular No., A-11, Part 7 as those IT investments considered to be 'steady state'. Steady state (operational) means an asset or a part of an asset with a delivered component performing the mission
 - ii. Publications - Updates to publications that support NWCG goals and objectives
 - iii. Training - Maintenance of training that supports NWCG goals and objectives
 - e. Meeting support
3. Determine discretionary items
- a) New Projects
 - b) New Investments
 - c) New Training

Agency Budget Staff Contacts

Agency	Budget Contact for NWCG Projects
Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)	Maggie Moran (208) 387-5932
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)	Grant Beebe (208) 387-5568 Lisa McDevitt (208) 387-5540
Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)	Kathy Perez (505) 248-6812
Forest Service (FS) (Includes State Travel)	Bobbe Bilyeu (208) 387-5678 Cheryl Molis (208) 387-5608
National Park Service (NPS)	Jeff Scott (208) 387-5210
NWCG Budget Advisory Unit Chair (BLM)	Denise Schmitz (208) 387-5161

NWCG Budget Staff Contacts

NWCG Position	Name, Phone Number
NWCG Program Manager	Bonnie Wood (208) 387-5265
Equipment & Technology Branch Coordinator	Paul Schlobohm (208) 387-5269
Preparedness Branch Coordinator	Tim Blake (208) 387-5262
Policy, Planning & Management Branch Coordinator	Elaine Waterbury (208) 387-5276
NWCG Budget Liaison	Penny Barrowcliff (208) 387-5267