

**Idaho State Fire Plan Working Group
Quarterly Meeting
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho
January 18-19, 2006**

Members in Attendance:

Brian Shiplett – Idaho Department of Lands
Dennis Seidman – US Fish & Wildlife Service
Eric Geisler – Coeur d'Alene Tribe
Ken Kiser – US Forest Service Region 4
Jim Caswell – Office of the Governor/Office of Species Conservation *(by phone)*
Leonard Wehking – Bureau of Land Management
Lynn Borders – Idaho Fire Chiefs Association
Mark Larson – Idaho State Fire Marshal
Robert Cope – Idaho Association of Counties
Russ Manwaring – Resource Conservation & Development Council Coordinator
Tim Droegmiller – Bureau of Indian Affairs/Nez Perce Tribe

Also In Attendance:

Barry Rose – Bureau of Land Management- Facilitator	Jason Svancara – Idaho Department of Lands
Arlo Slack – Idaho Department of Lands	Jeff Legg – Shoshone County HFT Manager
Bob Graham – Boundary County	Jim Macklin – Office of the State Fire Marshal
Breck Hudson – US Forest Service	Jonathan Oppenheimer – Idaho Conservation League
Brett Ingles – Boise State University – ESPRI Program	Kurt Naccarato – Idaho Department of Lands
Bruce Martinek – Bureau of Land Management	Laura Barrett – US Forest Service
Chris Lund – Idaho Department of Lands	Mark Grant – US Forest Service
Dale Anderson – Bureau of Land Management	Nelle Coler – Panhandle Area Council
Dan Brown – Idaho Department of Lands	Ranotta McNair – US Forest Service
Dave Bassler – US Forest Service	Roger Kechter – Idaho Department of Lands
Dave Summers – Idaho Department of Lands	Ron Smith – Boundary County
David Brummer – Plummer Forest Products	Susan Drumheller – Idaho Conservation League
Ed Robinson – Idaho Department of Lands	Suzanne Schedler – Idaho Department of Lands
Gary Darrington – Idaho Department of Lands	Tami Parkinson – Bureau of Land Management
Gary Phillips – US Forest Service	Vickie Ellickson – Idaho Department of Lands

Action Items:

- Prioritization list template
- Grant review process
- County Contacts (list) by March note lead agency by county
- CWPP compliance
- County Wildland Fire Interagency Group Membership list – June – July
- Technical Review Committee for Risk Assessment
- Develop Communication Plan
 - Cope III
 - Newsletter
- Revise Implementation Strategy
 - Draft by next meeting
 - Finalizing document acknowledgment
- Schedler gives current county list to Cope
- Cope takes list to IAC meeting 2/7-10, 2006
- Deadline for the ISFPWG Annual Report February 15 to Brett Ingles
- Need to ask Susan Terry to put a redirect from IDL web site to the new ISFPWG web site

- Naccarato, Skinner, Ellickson will work on setting up statewide WUI workshop. Will contact Chris Schnepf at University of Idaho.
-

Barry Rose – Facilitator

- Meeting is called to order at 8 a.m.
- Introductions

Brian Shiplett – Role of the Idaho State Fire Plan Working Group

- The purpose of this meeting is for the Idaho State Fire Plan Working Group (ISFPWG) to look at what we signed on to in 2002 and decide where we are going from there. Local government to be the basic building block for implementation of the National Fire Plan. Local solutions often work better than national. The formation of the County Wildland Fire Interagency Groups is one of the best things we can do to mitigate WUI in Idaho. Local cooperators in the same room discuss problems and seek solutions. Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA), Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP), etc., must mesh with each county's Wildland Fire Mitigation Plan. Focus should not be on funding. Most enduring should be about County Wildland Fire Interagency Groups getting together and working out solutions. ISFPWG has been successful urging counties to develop committees, disburse information, and help with resources to fund work. Some issues have barely been touched on, e.g. Ecosystem Restoration and increase to local capacity (except through Volunteer Fire Assistance [VFA] and Rural Fire Assistance [RFA]). One major achievement has been to develop the Idaho Risk Assessment. We need to decide what, as a group, we want to accomplish. Are we going to be a grant rating committee for rest of our existence? If so, we have little time.
-

PANEL DISCUSSION

Jim Caswell – Office of the Governor/Office of Species Conservation/WFLC

- Wildland Fire Leadership Council (WFLC)-Revising the *10-Year Strategy*
 - How to have meaningful performance measures - key question
 - New plan by spring
 - A few updated elements
 - Focus on restoration
 - Retains focus on county level
 - Monitoring / Evaluation component
 - 4 Modules
 - Safety
 - Vegetation trends
 - Effects of fuel treatments and wildfire rehab
 - Collaboration
- Will resolve redundancies in current strategy
- WFLC met 2 weeks ago to assess status –
 - 2/3 of original tasks completed
 - - Soft Spots -
 - Restoration - needs more focus - Ecol. Restoration or just restore black.
 - Community assistance
 - Monitoring
 - Separate group working on collaboration
 - Revised *10-Year Strategy* by spring with clear, meaningful performance measures – pms - coordinated with monitoring measures

Jeff Legg – Shoshone County Hazardous Fuels Treatment Program Manager

- Shoshone County Mitigation Plan
- Fall 2004 Wildfire Mitigation Map adopted
- Implementation hindered by topography
- Good inter-agency collaboration
- Main concern - funding - especially to maintain project areas
- Successful - 80% of high/moderate risk areas will be completed
- FS and BLM need tools to expedite work in coordination with county

Chris Lund – Idaho Department of Lands Fire Warden

- Boundary County
- Struggling at county level
- 5 fire departments – all volunteer
- Performance standards could help
- More landscape-level projects needed
- Maintenance of project sites a concern
- County Wildland Fire Interagency Groups
 - All stakeholders/agencies should be represented

Jonathon Oppenheimer – Idaho Conservation League

- Much involvement in development of *10-Year Strategy* and other fire policy
- Collaboration has been good – but needs to be expanded in future
 - Include interested stakeholders at state and local level
 - Expand outreach to interest groups – this will facilitate greater understanding.
 - Broader participation will enhance implementation, attract greater support
- Projects identified in county plan should be those that have risen up through county planning process.
- A greater diversity of opinion should be represented.

Dave Brummer

- Plummer Forest Products
- Small diameter logs – 4 ½” minimum
- Needs – Treat more acres
 - Broader treatment areas
 - Involve more landowners
 - Take merchantable timber to mill – use to fund more treatment acres

Questions for Panel

- Who will be responsible for performance measures?
- Should State Working Group have a role in compiling / reporting performance measures?
- Don't forget ID state fire reporting system. Could be used for reporting on performance measures – has wildland fire component
- Don't replicate National Fire Plan Operations & Reporting System (NFPORS)
- **Ingles** – What concerns do you have about the way the county plans are being implemented in Idaho?
 - **Oppenheimer** – Lack of collaboration. How county plans relate to categorical exclusion of BLM and FS projects. For example, FS categorical exclusion projects from the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) have to be identified in a county plan in order to meet this exclusion. One concern is that some of these plans fall short of collaboration and project

hasn't been vetted through process. Some might argue that a listing of them in the plan is that they merely exist in a plan, but they should have risen up through the county planning process. Another concern is the diversity of opinion could be broader.

- **Cope** – You just summed up every problem we've had. You need to review hazardous fuels treatment (HFT) and Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA), because you have confused the two. Conservation is welcomed, preservation is a challenge. Too many people saying "you didn't ask me" when they have not done their homework and have no clue about the situation. You need to come and see the situation for yourselves. Don't throw rocks from the outside without coming to area and working with the counties.
- **Oppenheimer** – Agree and feel strongly that conservationists at the table with counties will bring greater understanding when discussing Categorical Exclusion 10 Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) administrative rules.
- **Cope** – Three simple words of advice – Do your homework.
- **McNair** – Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) did not determine the level of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). All it says is that if we are working in WUI, meet the county line. Not exactly the bridge you are making, and is not a rubber stamp. Not in the actual manual piece of it. There are elements, but will provide this information.
- **Ingles** – A County Wildland Fire Interagency Group can be set up independent of the mitigation plan.
- **Legg** – The plan should be a broad brush stroke county wide. FS wrote a plan to hand pile and burn on 1,000 acres. County needs to revisit to be more cost effective. Focusing treatments to create mosaic effect. South Hill in Wallace prime example. Because of situation, only could remove ladder fuels. Plans can be revisited to tie in better with the federal agencies.
- **Cope** – Direct relationship seems to be when the commissioners are involved, the group works better. (All concur) How to get more involvement and motivation at the county commissioner level?
- **Anderson** – Lead agencies in proximity need to get involved and spur involvement. Prompting mechanism and division of workload will prompt involvement.
- **Legg** – Fire history is the motivator.
- **Larson** – After review of plans, Cope delivered message, then received phone calls in a small number. Judging by lack of response, there is a general indifference. Little motivation to participate. You can have the best plan and group, but often comes down to individual county personalities. How do you find those who will be actively involved?
- **Bob Graham** – Boundary County – Time and money are the issues. Volunteer counties. Almost all those you are looking for to do this kind of work are volunteer. Yours isn't the only plan. If you all knew the amount of paperwork, time, and effort involved in one project, it is tremendous. Dozens and dozens of plans arrive to be reviewed each week. Counties need time and money to accomplish all these tasks when you are talking about Volunteer Fire Departments, Volunteer EMTs, all volunteer. State money unavailable for planning, only a little from BLM. Be realistic when looking at what county resources are available.
- **Anderson** – This is where state and federal agencies need to assist with strengthening what they already have.
- **Graham** – One more point to make, if you broaden membership of these committees, try to get people on committee who know what they are talking about.
- **Larson** – Two biggest counties that do not participate are two with a lot of staff and funding. They just do not see benefit.
- **Naccarato** – Funds can be spent to hire project manager and look at counties best interests.
- **Cope** – Lemhi did not use BLM funds to create county plan so they could use funds for active hazardous fuels treatment (HFT). If you can get motivation among volunteers, it will keep forward motion. Emergency Management person in Lemhi County funded by BLM grant.

- **Bassler** – If North Idaho groups are getting back together, some of the five northern counties mapped WUI, some just provide definition. FS is working on new map based on the county definitions of WUI. Some have gone back to County Wildland Fire Interagency Group, and some haven't, but all are available.
- **Wehking** – Statewide hazard risk assessment discussion tomorrow will be on providing WUI maps to counties that counties can adopt into county plans.
- **Bassler** – Some concerns on initial maps.
- **Wehking** – Counties can come up with their own.
- **Ron Smith** – Boundary County Commissioner – Proud of accomplishments, but so often slapped in the face. Boundary County did call Larson to determine what is needed, and then went back to the table with plan originators (Inland Forest Management) to determine updates. Commissioners take a very active job in fire mitigation, but maybe if they are not on the right track, can sit down and meet to discuss how to get there.
- **Lund** – Need to meet as a group to discuss, so all are on the same page, tying in with federal requirements.
- **Anderson** – A lot of the requirements were not there in the beginning, so now we need to meet to strengthen what we have in place. From planning standpoint – another component is to have done legwork to make projects mesh together when asking for funding.
- **McNair** – Seeing struggles with maintaining county plans. Evolution from start. Oppenheimer is bringing up the point that all struggle with. How do you engage beyond the state group to bring other stakeholders into discussion for comment? Is this a public forum, or do you select attendees? Hard when you have people sitting removed from local situation making comment. Difficulty in determining who is responsible for notification. Is there a model?
- **Coler** – I have information on how Oregon handled this situation.
- **McNair** – The struggle is that every community is different.
- **Ingles** – Need to have some minimum standard as to who will sit on these committees, a core five or six people that have to be on the committee.
- **Cope** – Communication is core. Maybe commissioner needs to be at center of communication nexus. The public perception of role may be entirely different. Don't think that participation is there.
- **Smith** – Word is out to the public in Boundary County, media is involved, and Idaho Conservation League is involved. Project manager has done great job keeping out there.
- **Wehking** – Question for Jonathan Oppenheimer – You suggested more involvement with conservationists, will there be funding on conservationist end to help promote this increased involvement/diversity. Would private foundations be source of funding?
- **Oppenheimer** – There might be funding sources, private foundations, if collaborative request is made that shows benefit to community and environment.
- **Wehking** – Federal employees can not lobby, but some of these groups could be invited to table.

• ***Idaho Statewide Implementation Strategy for the National Fire Plan (2002) Review***

Rose – What we are here to do is chart our future path. We will gather ideas on revising the Implementation Strategy, keeping in mind that we will be waiting until the National *10-Year Strategy* revision is in place to finalize this document.

I. History

- Incorporate Revisions to National *10-Year Comprehensive Strategy Implementation Plan*
- Add FEMA elements
- Add Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) elements
- Summarize progress of last few years

- County Wildland Fire Mitigation Plans
- Larson Report
- Grant Process
- Brief Summary

II. Overview

- Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA)
 - Became more of a working partnership between Federal/State/Local
 - Added federal level
 - Revise Risk Assessment
- Keep plan dynamic and alive – encourage implementation
- To meet Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) component of HFRA - Language to reflect HFRA
- Need to update all county plan components to reflect growth and development in county and completed work.
- Strengthen information dissemination and feedback loops for agencies and partners.
- Partnership between State Working Group
- Add “and assistance”

III. County Wildland Fire Interagency Groups

- Wehking distributes BLM review of county plans compiled by Jon Skinner (BLM) using Larson Report and HFRA. Update CWPPs to make HFRA compliant, if Federal money desired
- Update contact lists
- Criteria for HFRA:
 - Project priorities
 - Formal approval
 - Treatment of structure ignitability
- Annual update of project priorities
 - Consolidated cost for all land ownerships
 - Organize list by category
 - Capability
 - Hazardous fuels
 - Restoration
 - Community assistance
- Establish technical review committee for map, review and reporting processes
- Need easy process for updating and reporting
- Address implementation in the state strategy
 - Separate section, or incorporate in section 2 and 3?
- Place more emphasis on restoration
- Encourage / recommend county mitigation plans to become HFRA / FEMA Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 compliant
 - Factor in project ranking for funding
- Understand relationship of FEMA-approved County All-Hazard Mitigation Plans.
- VFA, RFA Funding...
 - Priorities should be in CWPP
- CWPP – Important role to establish priorities for all categories of projects – good representation on County Wildland Fire Interagency Group vital.
- Participants in County Wildland Fire Interagency Group. Use Language, “suggested Participants”, “Amount of collaboration at local, state, regional, and tribal levels needs to be consistent with complexity of land ownership, resource issues, and number of interested stakeholders”.
- Minimum suggested membership on County Wildland Fire Interagency Group

- Phrase as – minimum requirements to be Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) compliant to be eligible for Federal Funding
- Minimum Recommended County Wildland Fire Interagency Group Members
 1. Appropriate Federal Fire Management Representative
 2. Local/County Fire Protection Representative ideally associated with Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC)
 3. Designated County Representative
 4. State Forester Representative
 5. Tribal Representative, as appropriate
- Edit out older language that refers to plan development
- RC&Ds – Edit all but leave in “If requested by....to”
- Relation of County Wildland Fire Interagency Groups to State Working Group –
 - Need one designated contact / liaison on each county group.
 - Need one contact on State Working Group for County Wildland Fire Interagency Groups – National Fire Plan Coordinator, Chair
 - Recommend that County Wildland Fire Interagency Groups meet often enough to update project priorities each year and to apply for grants.
 - Phase in need to prioritize all projects. Place related questions on RFA/VFA grant for a year before requiring prioritization in 2007-2008
 - 06 – explain need for changes
 - 07 – bonus points in grant process
 - 08 – require prioritization
 - Clearly explain why projects need to be prioritized. Why current RFA grant process should change. Also, explain how projects are prioritized; what the factors are.

Comments:

- Concerned that grants would need to go through county. What if county doesn't have high interest level?
- Others – phasing-in project prioritization a good idea. Support concept.
- Different grant deadlines add to confusion. State Working Group needs to consolidate and streamline – provide one-stop shopping to greatest possible extent.
- Should *Idaho Strategy* assess who has responsibility for implementation?

IV. Role of State Working Group

- How hard should the State Working Group push for consolidating grant cycle and establish one-stop shopping for counties?
- Add – “encourage participation of counties in state implementation of National Fire Plan.”
- Membership list should reflect current members.
- Change BIA Representative to BIA/Tribal Representative.
- Add other organizational representative as appropriate or as needed.

V. Communication and Outreach

- Website – Link to other sites
- Idaho State Fire Plan Working Group representative at County Commissioner Meetings
 - Fire Chiefs

- Fire Prevention Offices
 - Newsletters tied to grant cycle and other meetings
 - Workshops
 - Public Outreach – Keep Idaho Green Committee
 - Task – Keep database up to date
-

Day 2 – January 19, 2006

- **Dale Anderson** review of Bureau of Land Management Rural Fire Assistance (RFA) process. RFA has been an assistance agreement process that begins at the field level. Because of the number of fire departments/districts it can't be done at the State level. It is ranked every year. One ranking level is local, and then it is ranked at the BLM state level with all districts coming together with their priorities and fit them in to the state priorities below:
 - Training
 - Safety – Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), Communications, Department of Transportation (DOT) requirements
 - Then all other equipment
 - Then all are based on level of significance to BLM
 - Some exceptions are socio/political – Because letter sent to higher ups to remove “dagger from throat” they moved up in significance. Another is a fire district that just came on board as meeting their eligibility requirements, because they were unable to meet these in past, they have moved up in priority.
- In north end of the state, only 2% of land is BLM, but Bruce identified high level of significance to BLM field office. But because of direction and authorities now in program.
- This information is shared with the fire departments and districts so they are informed. Many who are high significance to BLM do not submit applications. BLM folks go out and visit with departments and districts to help facilitate the process.
- Counties involvement is critical as one component showing prioritization in CWPP.
- Another critical component is cost-share.

Comment:

- How does this tie in to statewide group?
- **Wehking** – Program has changed dynamically. Now competition on statewide basis so level of need in Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) is important to show funding needs in national competition. Just this fall, dollars were going to be rescinded because of Katrina, but funds were put back on the table. RFA/VFA programs have been very important to States. RFA was taken out of fire budget, and then again it was off the table, DOI working group said it was going to be a competitive grant process, but now put off until 2007. They have designed a draft DOI application that is generic and can be used as long as you have a process to integrate. Also, the rescission may be in part to due possible redundancy with FEMA grants. Funding equipment is redundant with FEMA. However, when a new department starts up and they have no equipment and are forced to go to FEMA for funding. Both programs are looking at drops in funding. BLM RFA funding is determined by prioritized list submitted to National Office. Checks and balances and cross checks with VFA and FEMA funding. The local constituents from local areas bring a lot of information to the table that assists in making the prioritization decisions.
- **Anderson** – A portion of this process is not going to go away, and now needs to integrate into the CWPPs that are just now coming on line. What was found looking at some of the CWPPs, since counties do not have fire protection responsibilities, they overlooked capability when prioritizing.

- **Martinek** – Information on process at local level.
 - Hard copy letter of solicitation with application package and due dates.
 - When information comes in, prepare for presentation at local/geographic level.
 - Invitations also extended to other federal and state agencies, and to fire chiefs.
 - Benefit because it sends folks out in the community who have an understanding of process.
 - Set a tentative award. Roll all this up for presentation to statewide panel.
 - Repeat the process based on the BLM level of significance and where the departments fall based on this.
 - An acre of BLM land in north Idaho is of equal importance to BLM land in the rest of the state.
 - Required to do wildland only, but also have a duality of purpose, protection of structures. Decided on case-by-case basis.

Interagency Risk Assessment

Tamara Parkinson – Idaho Bureau of Land Management PowerPoint Presentation on Idaho Interagency Risk Assessment

- Where do we go from here?
- Who will be final approving official and be responsible, who will disburse, be in charge of, disburse, and make sure document/map gets to the ground, and what is the timeline?
- Questions being asked already from people on the ground as to when the information will be available for use.
- Took Jeff Jones data assessment at state level and applied to county level. Is this something the State Working Group feels would be made available to the counties? If so, the data will be made available to the Counties at no cost to them. Won't take away from going out on the ground and making assessments, just a tool that would need to be fine-tuned. If so, need to make sure contacts are determined. Who will make available to counties, and know who will the contractor be and how to tie in. If not, a group needs to be set up to make sure there is continuity and consistency across counties. Don't want discrepancy in data.
- Another future role for technical committee is to review WUI definitions. Do you want group to stay established, who would you like to participate? Assess the status of communities at risk, when do they reach a point in time that they are lower or no risk? Or in some cases, add them on.

Comments:

- **Shiplett** – Nationally, communities at risk probably not going to be a performance measure. Hearing through National Association of State Foresters (NASF) and US Forest Service State and Private Forestry (S&PF) that it is off the table as a performance measure.
- **Ingles** – One of concern is the comparison between Risk Assessment and counties' WUI won't match up.
- **Parkinson** – Make sure to detail why there are differences. On the ground recon has no replacement.
- **Wehking** – Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) says that counties define WUI or we go with HFRA default. We may not want to weigh in on this or open up to challenge.
- **Cope** – great starting point. Then can fine tune. Lemhi County did this.
- **Geisler** – Were tribes involved at all?
- **Parkinson** – Invitations were sent out, but no response.

- **Geisler** – Are you available to work on this with the County Wildland Fire Interagency Group?
- **Parkinson** – Yes
- **Grant** – Be careful how this information is used. National Risk Assessment defined. Data set, where and at what scale did this come from. Pixels in Kilometers as opposed to 30-pixels. What do counties use? Satellite vegetation data is poor. This information is valuable only if it is used right. The best way to look at a 30-meter pixel map is to put the map on the wall and stand back 30 meters.
- **Cope** – Scale is a big part of it. Bad for counties to adopt this, but great to use as a starting point. Anything done at the state level should be superseded by the local level.
- **Manwaring** – Counties need to use as starting point and then add their local information to refine.
- **Cope** – Information needs to go out to each and every county, but want to make sure we have a county contact in place.
- The counties with the least private lands have the most assistance from federal agencies to map WUI.
- **Ingles** – Do we want to put the map on the web?
 - Signature Page – Who to sign?
 - Acknowledged by ISFPWG rather than approved by.
 - Don't want counties to think this is a blanket approval and these maps must be used.
 - Voting members of ISFPWG
 - Comments need to be back for edit within 2 weeks.
- Should technical committee continue to function?
 - Yes, and to provide assistance to County Wildland Fire Interagency Groups
 - Don't disband until we tell them to.
 - Populate with Ad Hoc members – CDA tribe has good GIS analysts for North Idaho
 - Technical committee now ad hoc committee that will vary membership
 - Agencies need to make commitment to supply members
- Commissioners and clerks meeting would be good venue to present the information and disclaimer
- Need to put it on Web?

Agency Updates

Wehking – BLM – Fund recision because of Hurricane Katrina. Bureau – BLM wide – Now there is an argument of how carry-over dollars are going to be distributed across the states, when Idaho is the 4th largest BLM state. Other states are asking for reevaluation across the board to look at the next five years Program of Work. Another national look at treating states more fairly, so funding may level out over the next few years. Will fight hard to keep BLM dollars in Idaho. This even extends to RFA. Ready Reserve program – could go away next year after the pilot program. Fire program management – blurring boundaries, cost-effective treatment. All federal budgets due 1st of March. Dynamic times.

Cope – IAC – Will know a whole lot better how “Roadless” is going in the next couple months. In the next six weeks the FS recommendations should be in to the Governor’s office.

Geisler – Coeur d’Alene Tribe – Stable base funding budget so far, but funds given back and forth to WUI and Hazardous Fuels Reduction (HFR). Down about 60% this year from last. Down 10-12% in readiness budget. CDA Tribe is working on huge collaboration between industrial, federal agencies, two counties to come up with fuels layer for the entire area. Collaborate to come up with on the ground priority list to do work on the ground, watershed, wildlife, cultural habitat. Undocumented communities an issue; huge lakeshore communities not recognized in the federal register. Two largest towns on reservation are looking at implementing fireworks use ban. Tribe and Kootenai

County are entering into a research agreement as to how to maintain the HAZARDOUS FUELS TREATMENT (HFT) projects and joint fire science program. Hoping to get funding. Tribe did host, in conjunction with county, the WUI workshop. University of Idaho extension would be interested in hosting the workshop.

Borders – Idaho Fire Chiefs Association – Feb 7-9 Fire Prevention Seminar. State chiefs' conference is first week in May in Garden City. Biggest issue to deal with internally statewide and on larger basis is statewide mutual aid agreement. IFCA put many \$ in to putting this together, but very little signing. Fire Departments want their attorney to review prior to signing. Would be great benefit to share resources. Mutual Aid meeting in Reno, effort by International Association of Fire Chiefs (western chiefs) looking at a National State-to-State agreement.

Shiplett/Naccarato – Idaho Department of Lands – Review of Hazardous Fuels Treatment Program to date. Western States Fire Managers (WSFM) Grants recommendation made to Washington Office. Funding is held up in the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and has yet to be released. Most significant news from Fire is Peg Polichio is on detail as Deputy Director for S&PF for Regions 1 and 4, and then will be acting Southern Ops Chief for IDL. In the interim, Kurt Naccarato is the Acting National Fire Plan Coordinator. Preparedness funding is grim and will be getting grimmer. Looking at fairly significant amount of role back in amount of services we will be able to provide. Fire Protection Assessment has been without increase since 1993, and that, in combination with other things are the reasons.

Ellickson – Keep Idaho Green – Statewide Poster Contest, Working on media with BLM.

Seidman – US Fish & Wildlife Service – As a DOI agency, much of what Wehking said applies. Katrina and the war are taking their 10% off the top. Competition with other states that feel they have been shortchanged in the past. Most of energy has been absorbed by separation from California and Nevada.

Manwaring – Resource Conservation & Development Councils – Budget under heavy cut with elimination of ½ of RC&Ds nationwide, but constituents' response has forced budget to remain level. Taken budget, and given equal amount to each RC&D. Idaho will take a cut, but it will be a gradual fade in. Some RC&Ds, Three Rivers, Mid Snake, and WCH have contracted with individuals and have fire education coordinators out working in counties, including helping counties with revision of Wildland Fire Mitigation Plans.

Kiser – US Forest Service Region 4 – State Fire Assistance and VFA funds are pretty flat. Fuels budget is up a bit from last year, but dealing with recision like every other federal agency. With all hurricane activity being funded through '06 suppression funds, any funding not nailed down may go to fire suppression. Need to obligate funding so it won't be used to fund suppression. Working this year to redo Coop fire protection agreement. Above Base Funding, and Community Fire Protection ("Stevens") funding are still in place this year. Regional Forester likes collaboration. Federal Excess Personal Property (FEPP) will require a rewrite of agreement. Better access to available equipment.

Larson – Idaho State Fire Marshal – Agency is trying to amend the current fireworks law. Right now if you sign form saying that you are taking fireworks out of state you can buy them. Any chance in getting tribes to deal with issue? Will continue, along with deputies, to encourage cooperation with ISFPWG and County Wildland Fire Interagency Groups.

Droegmiller – Nez Perce Tribe/BIA Representative – Looking at Student Conservation Association (SCA) data and working with Summers and rurals to get RedZone software up and running to pre-plan prior to fire event and use among different fire districts. Hoping to make work across county lines. Folks at RedZone are advising to hold off until mid February '06 as a new version is coming out.

Next Meeting:

- "Above Base", VFA, Community Fire Protection topics for next meeting. Tentatively set for June 7 and 8 in Twin Falls.

Meeting adjourns.