

Meeting Notes
Idaho State Fire Plan Working Group (ISFPWG)
January 13-14, 2010
Stanley, Idaho

Attendees:

Steve Kimball, Idaho National Fire Plan Coordinator	skimball@idl.idaho.gov
Gary Brown, Payette National Forest	gbrown@fs.fed.us
Laura Barrett, Clearwater/Nez Perce National Forests	lbarrett@fs.fed.us
Tim Droegmiller, Nez Perce Tribe	timd@nezperce.org
Len Diaz, Bureau of Indian Affairs	leonard.diaz@bia.gov
Tom Pakootas, Coeur d'Alene Tribe	tapakootas@cdatribe-nsn.gov
Heidi Novich, Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security	hnovich@bhs.idaho.gov
Harry Steele, Idaho Department of Lands	hsteele@idl.idaho.gov
Jeff Handel, Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation	jhandel@idpr.idaho.gov
Loren Walker, Forest Service Region 4	ldwalker@fs.fed.us
Karin Drnjevic, Lemhi County	kdwui.lemhicounty@centurytel.net
Robert Cope, Lemhi County Commissioner	cowdoc25@hotmail.com
Craig Glazier, Idaho Panhandle National Forests	cglazier@fs.fed.us
Brett Ingles, Boise State University	bingles@boisestate.edu
Tod Johnson, National Park Service	tod_johnson@nps.gov
Kurt Naccarato, Idaho Department of Lands	knaccarato@idl.idaho.gov
Doug Hammond, Custer County (1/13 only)	ccds@custertel.net
Mesia Nyman, Forest Service Region 4 (1/13 only)	mnyman@fs.fed.us
Michelle Erdie, Sawtooth National Forest (1/13 only)	merdie@fs.fed.us
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Jim Rineholt, Sawtooth National Forest (1/13 only)	jrineholt@fs.fed.us

1/13/10

Introductions (Kimball)

Welcomed new members and thanked departing participants and members for their service (Paula Jones, Three Rivers RC&D; Bob Hatfield, BonFIRE; Julie Thomas, Mid-Snake RC&D (now with Sawtooth NF))

Meeting Objectives:

- Check in on the progress of our committees
- Check in on the progress of county fire working groups (in this area)
- Review the Draft Annual Report for 2009
- Plan for the 2010 Idaho Wildland Fire Conference in October
- Take an introspective look at the past year's accomplishments and where we're headed in 2010

Follow-up From October Meeting (Kimball)

- Made visits to all of the counties that we planned to (Bonner, Shoshone, Valley, Oneida)
- Steele—put on a "Living With Fire" presentation in Oneida County

2009 Annual Report (Ingles) and 2010 Goals (Kimball)

Presented a preliminary report that included funding amounts by agency. The final report will be available in a few months.

Loren Walker noted that overall HFT costs/acre are expensive, and the Forest Service Regional Office would like to make a push to reduce these costs. Karen Drnjevic noted that costs could be reduced if private and adjacent federal lands would have combined projects with common treatments. Walker agreed and noted that this could be done by utilizing the same contractor. For example, the Manti-LaSalle NF allowed burning on private lands to be performed by the Forest Service. Drnjevic commented that this will work only if the Forest Service already has NEPA completed timely for the combined ownership project implementation.

The following 2010 goals were discussed (for the ISFPWG):

- Goal: Support county interagency working groups in updating and implementing County Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs).
 - Drnjevic—would like to see local fire departments note the number of county working group meetings that they've attended, particularly in reference to updating a CWPP.
 - Cope—goal needs to involve more activities that strengthen county working groups. How do we compel them to attend?
- Goal: Inform and align Idaho's wildfire community. Lead the ISFPWG in mission to provide statewide oversight and support for the National Fire Plan program.
 - Steele—fire education training sessions are underutilized, and we could do a lot more of them.
 - Novich—LEPC is a key contact for getting these trainings set up.
 - Kimball—some of our county groups could be more consistently proactive. We need to stress the need for incremental progress, even in years where fires do not pose substantial threats.
- Goal: Complete and begin using new "Idaho Firewise" Statewide Education Program.
 - Diaz—It is important to discuss how we are going to maintain current Firewise Communities.
 - Kimball—there needs to be greater emphasis/discussion on how we utilize the Firewise communities program; informal as well as formal approaches to Firewise Communities.
- Goal: Support large-scale treatments and utilization of woody biomass in Idaho.
 - Brown—mentioned the ongoing efforts of the Payette Coalition in West Central Idaho.

Committee Reports

Restoration Committee (Kimball)

The purpose of the committee is to track restoration progress throughout the state. Updates were provided on the following groups: Clearwater Basin Collaborative, Salmon River Valley Collaborative, Payette Coalition, and Idaho Panhandle Collaborative.

- Cope—County Working Group is the starting point for developing a collaborative effort as required under HFRA-Stewardship Contracting.
- Kimball—talking to the Clearwater group about using Working Group's guide for a focused discussion of the role of fire in a large-scale restoration project.

- The Westwide Fire Risk Assessment is currently being developed (2011 target for completing)—should help counties prioritize where they want to do work (both fuels work and others).
- Idaho State Assessment of Forest Resources—led by IDL, and focused on threats and benefits to *forest* lands. Will identify Priority Areas; the most important places in Idaho to focus our resources and investments.
- Forest Landscape Restoration Act (FLRA)—provides funding for restoration projects of 50,000 acres or larger. Authorizes up to \$40 million/year for 10 years. Only \$10 million was been made available in FY2009.
- University of Idaho is offering a Forest & Landscape Restoration course during this spring semester. Committee members may participate.
- 2010 Goals: Continue tracking collaboratives, FLRA, and the State Assessment of Forest Resources.

WUI Development Committee (Kimball)

- Lemhi County has recently adopted a new building ordinance.
- Could consider a panel at the conference on how counties are developing building ordinances.

Home Evaluation Cadre (Kimball)

- New protocol, guides, and forms for home evaluations are available on the website.
- Steele—the Central Foothills HOA would be interested in participating in a home evaluation field trip.
- We will have a day-long training on home evaluations the day before our conference.
- 2010 Goal: We would like to see these guidelines utilized by an IC team during fire season.

Communications Committee (Kimball)

- A news release was developed last year detailing the amount of WUI acres treated in Idaho during the last several years.
- A news release was developed regarding the award won for the *Are We Safe from Fire* video. More than 3,000 copies of the video have been distributed.
- 2010 Goals: provide news releases on the 2009 Annual Report, 1910 Fire Commemoration, Idaho Firewise website, IWF Conference, and publicize any large-scale fuels treatments.

Education Committee (Steele)

- Richard Caldwell has been hired as an Americorps Educator for Idaho Firewise. He will be on board in late January.
- Youth Camps are scheduled for reservation lands in Idaho as well as a few other locations around the state. Pakootas noted the CDA Tribe has a “Rockin the Rez” program, and it may be possible to tie in with this.
- Idaho Firewise had a booth at the Legislative Forestry Day on January 12.
- WEBSITE—The new idahofirewise.org site will be up and running by April 1. Drake Cooper has also developed a fundraising plan to develop membership.
- IDAHO FIREWISE DIRECTOR—Outreach for the position has closed, and a hire is expected by early February.
 - Will serve as the leader of a non-profit and will report to a Board of Directors
 - Will oversee newsletter, website development
 - Will represent Idaho Firewise on the ISFPWG

County Updates

Custer County—Hammond

- A burning ordinance was recently passed in north Custer County.
- The Pahsimeroi Fire Department is interested in developing a Firewise Community (using the FD boundary).
- Idaho State University is slated to develop a fire risk map for Custer this summer.
- A power line burial project has been funded for Stanley from BHS PDM funds (to reduce fire risk).
- A new CWPP update is underway.
- The county is not able to take on some of the projects that it would like to because it does not have the resources for a WUI Coordinator.

Boise County—Ravenscroft (via e-mail)

- Has moved towards shaded fuel breaks and away from treating individual homes.
- Wilderness Ranch is a significant threat, but the cost to treat in that area is so high that the focus has been on education rather than HFT—4 miles of road have been treated.
- Work continues on portions of the Castle Mountain and Terrace Lakes subdivisions.
- Valley of the Pines received stimulus funds for HFT (managed by the solid waste department).

Future visits to counties should be scheduled for:

- Bear Lake
- Blaine
- Clearwater
- Caribou
- Shoshone

Sawtooth NF Update (Rineholt/Filbert)

- There have been several fuels reductions and timber sales in the Stanley area during the past several years to deal with the beetle kill problem that:
 - Included private and adjacent FS land.
 - Treated approximately 4000 acres during this time.
 - Significant Roadless and Wilderness areas limit the treatments that can be performed so the current focus is on maintenance of current HFTs.
- Douglas Fir Beetle problem has hit the Sun Valley area and the residents are becoming very concerned.
- There is a need to reconnect with the Blaine County Fire Working Group. They have not been as active since losing their contracted WUI coordinator.

The group asked for a Success Story write up on the Stanley Basin beetle kill problem.

Agency Updates

Idaho Parks and Recreation

- Working on HFT projects with Clearwater County, Winchester SP, Ponderosa SP, and Farragut SP.
- Efforts are focused on educating the agency and visitors on what an HFT is and why it is important.

Forest Service Region 4

- Suppression budget appears to be about the same as last year.
- Greater emphasis on aviation safety.
- Region was given \$9 million for beetle-kill restoration work.
- \$1.2 million available region-wide for CPP funds.
- Each state is scheduled to receive an extra \$500,000 to work on high-priority projects after they complete their State Assessment of Forest Resources.

Forest Service Region 1

- Region was given \$4 million for beetle kill restoration work.
- 1910 Fires Commemoration is starting to move forward. A budget has been approved.
- Randy Doman has been hired as the new WUI Coordinator for Idaho County.

National Park Service

- The agency does not have a fuels budget yet.
- No units in Idaho requested funds for HFT work.
- Would like to set up a field trip to look at the fuels issues in one of the parks (particularly if there is any adjacent private land where work could be done).

Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security

- Waiting for a new appointment of an Adjutant General.
- 2010 grant cycle is underway, but some 2009 grants have yet to be awarded.
- Will conduct a review of the Idaho State Hazard Mitigation Plan at the next meeting.

Coeur d'Alene Tribe

- The Cherry Creek Fuel Break above St. Maries is currently underway.

Nez Perce Tribe

- The Tribe has finished their portion of the Soldiers Meadows project. Projects also completed in Lewis County next to Winchester SP and in Clearwater County with the Sunnyside FD.
- Currently revising Wildland Fire Prevention Plan.

Bureau of Indian Affairs

- Fuels budget is \$1.5 million to tribes (\$1 million WUI).
- Fort Hall received funding for an ARRA project.

Idaho Department of Lands

- Ready to start CPP grants in the spring.
- Numerous retirements have affected the county working groups.
- National Fire Managers are looking for three communities in Idaho to participate in the Ready-Set-Go program this year. More info will be available at the next meeting.

Coordinating/Aligning Grants

This discussion has been tabled until the next meeting because some key participants were not present.

Discussion of Risk/Vulnerability in Idaho (ALL)

Kimball called for an open discussion on how the group is structured and how it operates. Do we need to make any changes/adjustments?

- Cope—would like to see a discussion about how the group started for the benefit of the newer members (could be put on by Brian Shiplett).
- Walker—“Show and Tells” and Success Stories are the biggest thing that I get out of these meetings.
- Steele—more time and funding needs to be spent on education.
- Cope—Title III can be used specifically for Firewise. This needs to be addressed at the next Clerks and Treasurers Conference.
- Brown—the big advantage of this group is that it is interagency. This is the only statewide effort that takes a strategic look at these things.
- Hammond—in many cases, the county commissioners do not know what is going on with this group.
- Droegmiller—in our area, we are getting much better at developing community-based projects. Having county WUI coordinators are the key towards making this happen.

1/14/10

Conference Planning

- Wildland Fire Conference October 6-7, 2010, at Doubletree Riverside in Boise.
- Pre-conference sessions on Tues, Oct 5th.
- “Save the Date” card going out soon. Need to work on the design on the card.
- Agenda Development today.
- Brett Ingles: Coordinator.
- Communications Group will market the conference this summer: Julie Thomas, Jessica Gardetto, and Andy Brunelle.
- Speakers and speaker’s needs: Harry, Steve, Dave S, Gary Brown, and others.
- Craig Glazier: vendor-trade show.
- Gary Brown- logistics, day of conference.
- Suzanne Schedler: guest check in and information booth.
- Themes: Where we’re going next in Wildland Fire Preparation in Idaho.
- Target audience: those in county wildfire working groups.
- Theme Ideas:
 - Making Idaho Fire safe.
 - Preparing Idaho for Wildfires.
 - Collaborating for a Fire Safe Idaho.
 - Coming Together for a Fire Safe Idaho.
 - Creating a Firewise culture in Idaho.
- When we began in 2001, county approach was chosen and it has been successful.
- Goals of Opening Speaker:
 - **Need a Draw**- someone who’ll bring people in (look for something pertinent from this summer).
 - Ideas: Chris Peterson, Rob Akey, Jerry Kramer, Harmon Killebrew, Stephen Pyne, Governor Kempthorne.
 - Talk about preparation, working together, collaborative approach.

- Could have 2 keynote speakers in 1 hr 15 minutes or use a 2010 fire example as part of this slot with this keynote speaker.
- Research Ready-Set-Go- as a potential topic for the large group.
- ID Firewise Sessions: cover the new ID Firewise program in the large group session on Day 1- (possibly at 1030). And have more detailed info on this in small group sessions that follow.
- Introduce new Director.
- Introduce website/clearinghouse.
- Show materials/workshops available for local use.
- Firewise Community process and Title III funding.
- Structural Protection Topic - large group presentation.
- **Note: long breaks, 20-30 minutes, so people can mingle.**
- Have facilitated county sharing sessions after lunch on Day 1. Exchange between counties and state working group reps. Use 4 breakouts- regions of counties. Facilitators should have some questions to prompt discussion. Give the counties notice so they aren't surprised. Round-robin discussion. Use some pre-questions like what have you accomplished; leadership for your group/program. Need to plan this- which counties in which rooms. Steve, Laura, Heidi, Todd, Cope, Dave or Mark, Joe Daniels.
- Weeds - how to mitigate spread of weeds/invasive species in fire suppression and Rx burning.
- Ready-Set-Go- 0815-0930- include report out of demo communities in Idaho who tried this in 2010.
- Made several other adjustments- Brett will send out latest draft agenda.
- Save-The Date Card:
 - Add picture; new theme; less writing.
 - 1910 fire and OR Trail side by side?
- Marketing: registration opens in late May. Press release- long mailing list/interviews. Communication committee will meet in May. Make personal contacts for each county.
- Try to get some support funding for each county for some travel. Possibly private donations through ID Firewise.

Next ISFPWG meetings:

June 2-3 in McCall. Location TBA

October 7 in Boise. Three-hour meeting to follow the conference.

END MEETING