

Idaho State Fire Plan Working Group
Meeting Notes- June 18-19, 2008
McCall Field Campus, University of Idaho
McCall, Idaho

Attending:

ISFPWG Members:

Steve Kimball- NFP Coordinator
Craig Glazier- FS-R1
Mark Larson- State Fire Marshal
Dean Ellis- IFCA
Tim Droegmiller- Nez Perce Tribe
Len Diaz- BIA
Dave Hasz- IEMA
Julie Thomas- RC&Ds
Leonard Wehking- BLM
Dave Jackson- BHS
Jerry Miller- IDC
Mark Compton- Governor's Office
Gary Brown- FS-R4

Guests:

Brett Ingles- BSU
Harry Steele- IDL
Kurt Naccarato- IDL
Susan Jenkins- FS-R1 (FS alternate)

Guests (continued)

Gordon Ravenscroft- Boise County
LaDawn Saxton- FS-Payette NF
Pat Garbutt- FS-R1
Gary Jarvis- FS-R4
Greg Gollberg- U of I
Ivy Dickinson- Nez Perce Tribe
Judith Leraas Cook- Firewise Communities
James Haas- Valley County
Steph Johnson- Valley County
Casey Klaviter- NW Insurance Council
Dustin Miller- Senator Craig
Katie Santini- FS- Sawtooth NF
Chris Schenk- FS- Sawtooth NF
David Skinner- FS- Sawtooth NF
Matt Filbert- FS- Sawtooth NF
John Kidd- FS- Caribou-Targhee NF
John Fowler- FS- Salmon-Challis NF
Dusty Pence- FS- Payette NF

Boise Meeting Follow up

Steve Kimball—Introduction of New Members: Craig Glazier and Gary Brown from the Idaho Panhandle and Payette National Forests will replace Pat Garbutt and Gary Jarvis from Regions 1 and 4 respectively. Susan Jenkins is an alternate for the Forest Service.

Dave Summers, IDL, joins as a new member. Rico George may replace Dennis Seidman as US Fish and Wildlife Service rep (Rico planned to attend this meeting but cancelled). Julie Thomas is attending her second meeting as rep for RC&Ds. Chuck Simpson is apparently representing CDA Tribe (replacing Patrick Warker).

Annual Report—the one page executive summary is a good handout for National Fire Plan Successes. The report helps us focus our program of work for future years.

Steve will hand-deliver annual reports to congressional and governor staff, using this as an opportunity to discuss progress with State wildfire mitigation. Others in the State Working Group should use this widely as a communications tool.

“Are We Safe from Wildfire” video—the video is almost complete but there is some additional editing. 100 copies of the video will be released in its current form within two weeks. This will allow for comment and then 1000 copies of the video will be made after it is finished.

We will distribute the 100 copies to the State Working Group and others. Please review and send comments to Steve or Joyce Dearstyne (Framing our Community).

New GIS mapping—Brett will review the County WUI maps and put them on the website.

New CWPP Guide—a national task force was chartered with putting together a new CWPP guide. This is an addendum to the guide that was written in 2004. The new guide addresses elements that weren't

highlighted well in the 2004 guide- i.e. restoration, rehabilitation, community protection. This should dovetail with our state all- hazard mitigation plan.

Steve will send the new CWPP guide to the State and County working groups. This will be a good opportunity for the State Working Group to work with County Groups (updating the CWPPs with the new guide).

Developing the FRAMES website has been included in the Communication Subcommittee.

Subcommittee Reports

Fall Wildfire Conference:

Subcommittee members include: Brett Ingles, Suzanne Schedler, Jon Skinner, Harry Steele, and Dave Hasz. Subcommittee is active in planning for the Oct 8-9 conference in Boise. Registration is in progress.

We'll do outreach for the logo contest. Steve will work with others in IDL to develop an outreach notice (including finding \$ for a prize). The Working Group will send the outreach to schools, counties, and others throughout Idaho and work together to market this.

Education & Prevention:

Subcommittee members include: Harry Steele, Julie Thomas, Lorraine Simonson, Dean Ellis, Laura Barrett, Jon Skinner, Ivy Dickenson, Serena Carlson, Bob Hatfield, Nelle Coler, and Greg Gollberg.

Subcommittee hosted two "summits" to explore developing a new statewide education & prevention program. These were held in early June in Boise and CDA. CDA group built on the work of the Boise group.

Goal is to develop a sustainable education-prevention program- a clearinghouse of information and resources. Some highlights of the summits:

- Recommended forming a steering committee (or "Coop") to develop and implement the program. Goal is to develop a clearinghouse for dispersing materials, training, etc. Need funding & communications plan. Would like a program manager/director- feel this is necessary to lead the Steering Committee and program. This could be considered a state-level coop.
- General messages include: Firewise principles and practices, prevention messages, fire ecology.
- Target homeowners, K-12, fire chiefs, recreationists, others.
- Identify how to measure success of the program.
- Potential Funding Sources: ISFPWG, legislature, private sources, insurance industry.

Mark Larson pointed out we should target education to County Commissioners- at that level they are key to establishing county regulation or incentives for Firewise development.

We're working with U of I to bring FRAMES technology to enhance our NFP website. Greg Gollberg has developed some prototypes to show what a new site would look like. We recognize the website is one of the most important educational forums of the future (cultural shift to more and more web inquiries).

State program would be umbrella and support for local programs and efforts- it won't replace or displace local efforts. It will be a collection and umbrella of resources for local use. There may be some statewide campaigns (radio spots, etc) but these will be coordinated with counties and communities. Local programs will remain and will be supported (i.e. Bonfire, Firesmart).

Possible measurements of success:

human caused fires, survey of behavioral/attitude change, etc.

Next Steps (suggested from Boise session)

1. Develop Communications Plan
2. Meet with marketing professionals
3. Get Buy In

4. Make the Case & get support and funding.

Next Steps (from CDA) meeting:

1. Resource Clearinghouse (FRAMES model) (inventory of resources available)
2. Form committee/State Coops
3. Program Manager- individual responsible for getting sorting materials for usefulness & redundancy.

Greg Gollberg presented mockup site pages for a potential new public website for the Idaho National Fire Plan. The website will be an increasingly important mechanism of information delivery. It will be a key method for delivering wildfire education information and materials.

Jon Skinner pointed out that the Firewise site may not always draw high interest. We should integrate these messages into other more pressing messages, events, and opportunities. And we can use links to the site from other compelling sites.

Moving Forward: Next Steps with a Statewide Education/Prevention Program.

Goal: delivering interagency sustainable education and prevention messages.

First, should identify the charter/program description. Need define mission, scope of work, priorities, roles, and duties/priorities for current funded positions. Include how it links to county working group work. Arizona may have a similar charter to use.

Need an interim subcommittee to develop the charter or descriptions of program and roles, position duties (essentially a charter). Include the committee/coop and program manager.

We will come back to this topic.

Communication:

Subcommittee Members include Steve Kimball, Greg Gollberg, Bob Cope, Brett Ingles, Nelle Coler, Andy Brunelle, and Mark Compton.

It is important that we make our progress, activities, and successes known. Annual Report is an important communications tool.

"Are we safe from fire?" video will be used to help shape the perspective of people towards wildland fire. Going to try to show it on local PBS stations.

Refurbishing our National Fire Plan website. The website is probably our most used communication tool.

Fire Facts: draft document being developed by IDL will be basic information about wildfire on State-protected lands. State Working Group has been asked to review and comment on the draft and to consider developing a broader version that would include information on federal and private lands.

Action Item—Review Fire Facts draft by July 10. Steve will provide an electronic copy of the document to all Working Group members. This could be an important document for use in 2010 (100th anniversary of the 1910 fire). Respond with: 1) suggested edits for the current draft document (scope is State protected lands). 2) whether or not the State WG should expand this document to cover all lands in Idaho (add federal and rural dept perspectives/information).

Restoration:

Subcommittee includes Steve Kimball, Kurt Naccarato, Bob Cope, Mark Compton.

Subcommittee took an inventory of restoration projects that are currently taking place in Idaho including the Clearwater drainage and the Idaho Panhandle (Blue Alder, Myrtle Creek). This committee is relatively small at this point. Also looking at the Murphy Complex Rehabilitation.

Looking for more subcommittee members for Restoration. Let Steve know if you're interested in tracking and participating in some of the restoration or rehabilitation efforts in the State.

Working Group members should watch out for restoration and rehabilitation efforts and alert Steve and subcommittee. We want to track and support these efforts.

Agency Updates

Jerry Miller- IDC: facilitating assistance to businesses impacted by disasters (winter snows, fires recently). SBA loans- low interest, long term. Community Development block grants- due in November. Workshops in Boise in August on this. Communities can use these funds to build fire stations (structures). Communities/rural departments should contact IDC (Smiley Cr may be interested).

Dave Jackson- BHS: 2008 pre-disaster mitigation grants have been "pre-awarded". Preliminary notifications going to applicants. 4 of 8 Idaho applicants were "pre awarded." Some additional work needed by BHS and applicants prior to their being awarded. Working with IDL on Fire Mgt Assistance program. 2009 predisaster grant applications coming out in a week. Applications due in December- more time for preparing applications this year. Projects could be fuels reduction, water supply, fire hall retrofits, and other mitigation on non-federal lands.

Leonard Wehking- BLM: Recent judicial decisions on TES and NEPA issues affecting fire rehabilitation and fire suppression approach (sage grouse, NEPA). Fuels projects are competitive nationally now.

Julie Thomas- RC&D: Upper Snake RC&D put on a Fire Summit in April for 8 county area in SE-SC Idaho (Steve and Harry presented the State WG program). Working on other local issues following fires last season- i.e. training for prospective local contractors so they can be qualified for firefighting. Working on two Firewise Communities (communities in Twin Falls and Lincoln Counties). Prevention radio ads by local fire chiefs. Mitigation projects underway supported by RC&D's.

Gary Brown- R4 FS- Patty Koppenol will be new R1 Fire Director soon. Preparing for fires in R4.

Pat Garbutt/Craig Glazier- R1 FS- Budget in 09 about 1 million for three states (ND, MT, ID). More coordination between north and south Idaho Forests on fuels treatment priorities.

Mark Compton- Gov office: working on collaborative restoration projects: Clearwater Restoration (Crapo lead and Steering Committee working to initiate),

Dave Hasz- IEMA- Hosted a *Living on the Edge* training- 60 attended. Forming new rural fire departments. Each county in Idaho is supporting 2 people to fall wildfire conference.

Len Diaz- BIA. Working on '09 budgets- expect stable fuels funding, and wildfire prevention plans.

Tim Droegmiller- NP Tribe: New FMO. 2 recent fire starts. Prevention work happening, including teacher tour.

Dean Ellis- IFCA: firefighter license plate program is generating funds- so far through the years the program has raised \$275,000 in grants to fire organizations throughout the state (\$55,000 - \$60,000/year for grants). Supported Firesafe cigarette legislation.

Mark Larson- State Fire Marshal: working on fire code administration with rural departments throughout state. Mark will clarify the state code is minimum requirement for fire preparation throughout state. Mark or BHS might be able to support an additional position for fire prevention- suggests may be easier to fund in one budget rather than multi-funded throughout WG members. Mark worked on Firesafe cigarette legislation.

Valley County Update

Stephanie Johnson, Cabin Creek Enterprises (filling in for Chair John Lillehaug who is on a fire). Valley Co WG began meeting again in May & July, 2008- firmed up organization, updated CWPP, worked

through communication issues and grant opportunities, priorities. Another meeting in Nov 2007- John Lillehaug was appointed Chairman. Four subcommittees were assigned and chartered: Land Management, Response, Education Outreach, and Legislation. Working on grants for new equipment, priority areas for fuels reduction projects, drafting a new WUI code and building codes (modeled after Kootenai County's codes). They are also doing a new county hazard assessment to identify county high risk areas (using GIS mapping and quantitative information). They've completed a draft CWPP update and are working on getting the working group and commissioners to approve. They'll work more on future priorities at a meeting next week.

Adams County Update

Don Horton, County Building, P&Z, Emergency Manager: CWPP completed in 2004- been working on implementing it. They've been having 1-2 meetings/year. Accomplished all high hazard projects through grants and now working on moderate hazard projects. Mainly working to reduce fuels around small groups of homes in WUI. Finishing subdivision on Middle Slope area below Forest Service fuels project. County has fire ordinance in place requiring mitigation before building and maintenance of the mitigation. They've gained two new rural fire departments: Cuprum and Bear. Building awareness of Commissioners. This year applied for a BHS grant for fuels reduction not adjacent to national forest (above Meadow Creek). Working to understand what Forest Service response will be on private land this season and beyond. County has hired a forester to plan and implement private property protection work. County is considering applying for a grant to purchase tools for homeowner use. Would like to have grant funds for individual home defensible space work- still sees a need- so they'd like a way to continue to supporting individual home work. Don said the State dispersed fire mitigation education and information helps their county efforts. He feels the new Deer Cr video can help and is excited about the fall conference.

Federal Policy Update- Gary Brown

Reviewed written federal response policies of 1995, 2001, and 2003. The 1995 policy is effective in explaining where we're at currently. Appropriate Management Response term refers to range of fire management options available, and the process of sizing up a fire, evaluating options and determining a strategy. (See Flowchart handout). The result is the response strategy chosen. There has been confusion over AMR- mistaken interpretation that it was a strategy or set of tactics. It is the range of options and process of evaluation.

Structure Protection- Reviewed the April draft guidance letter from Northern Rockies Coordinating Group. Emphasizes safety, intent is to limit use of gelling, wrapping, extensive hazardous fuels reduction, and use of T1&2 engines, and unified efforts of partners. Reviewed May 15, 2008 letter of direction from Payette Forest Supervisor to Type 5,4,3 IC's and Trainees. This letter includes principles for community and structure fire protection. Also reviewed draft communication plan for "Modification of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy Guidance."

Direct questions on expected response in specific counties or communities to local federal agencies- they will work with local rural departments, emergency folks, etc on agreements on local response.

Firewise Communities USA Program- Judith Leraas Cook

With only 5 national Firewise communities in Idaho, we'd like to explore the benefits and advantages of more communities in this program. The program fosters ownership, self-reliance, and long term commitment with communities. Benefits: communities/neighborhoods receive newsletters and materials from national organization; they learn to assess and mitigate their hazards and continue this over time. They develop a plan and are taught accepted techniques that will lower their risk. Program seeks small changes, small steps. Once on board they take little attention from the State- quite self reliant in keeping up with their preparation work. Now 338 Firewise communities in 37 states. In Idaho: Wilderness Ranch, Johnny Creek subdivision, Cave Bay, Conklin Park, and Avimor.

Discussed how to structure this program with partner agencies and counties. In New Mexico, the Colfax County Coalition of Firewise Communities is a good model. County organized a network of Firewise communities/neighborhoods (communities under County umbrella). Arizona Firewise is a good model for a state education/action committee.

Requirements for national Firewise communities:

1. Complete an assessment
2. Form a Firewise Committee- do an action plan

3. Sponsor an annual event
4. Invest a minimum of \$2/capita in the community efforts each year (can be volunteer time).

We'll look for opportunities to interest more communities in this program. A goal will be to increase the number of national communities significantly in the next years. The communities need to be motivated to take the lead with this- we can just provide info on the benefits and details of the program.

Follow up on Education Subcommittee's Work

Need a subcommittee to develop the white paper-charter to define the broad statewide education program. This will evaluate need, scope, roles, leadership, tasks, funding needs. Harry Steele, Dean Ellis, Jon Skinner, Robert Feeley, Julie Thomas, Dave Olson, Ivy Dickenson

After the program is defined we may need to find funds for an education program coordinator. Coordinator could build the program and do outreach for more partners and funding over time.

Due: 1 month prior to Fall meeting

Same subcommittee will work with Gollberg and U of I to develop an initial version of the website which will serve as a clearinghouse. They will identify what exists in the state and load it onto the website. Name will be "IdahoFirewise.Org" or something like that.

Fall Meeting of State WG: Monday afternoon, Oct 6-Tues a.m. Oct 7 in Boise. Brett will check on availability of Doubletree Hotel.

Above-Base Evaluation for Region 4 Forest Service for FY 09 Projects in Southern Idaho

WG Members listened to Forest presentations and then scored projects according to criteria. Individual members' scores were collected and averaged. Scores determine rankings. Rankings are recommendation of the working group.

WUI Projects:

Cottonwood III- Boise NF- Chris
Placerville- Boise NF- Jason
Yellow Pine East- Boise NF- Mark
Golden Gate- Boise NF- Mark
N Zone Structures- Sawtooth NF- Matt Filbert
Howell Canyon- Sawtooth- Katie & Chris Schenk
Soldier Creek WUI- Sawtooth NF- David Skinner
Custer Fuels Reduction- Salmon-Challis- John Fowler
Blind Springs RXB- Caribou-Targhee- John Kidd
Soda Point- Caribou-Targhee- John Kidd

Non WUI Projects:

Barker Marsh RXB- Sawtooth NF- David Skinner

Research Project (not for Above-Base funding- for info only):

Warm Lake- Evaluating the effectiveness of fuels treatments in reducing impacts of wildfires and threats to communities. Project is a joint effort with the Payette NF and Rocky Mountain Research Station. Project cost is \$70,900 for research and \$10,000 for publication.

Project Scores & Ranking:

Placerville: 29
Howell Canyon: 29
Custer Fuels: 26
Cottonwood III: 23
Blind Springs: 22
Soldier Cr WUI: 21
Yellowpine East: 20
Golden Gate: 20
Soda Point: 20
NZ Structures: 17
Barker Marsh: 12

Grant Evaluations:

Above Base, BHS, and IDL all evaluate grants differently. Steve is looking for members of the working group to work with IDL to qualitatively evaluate grant applications for this year. The following members agreed to participate:

Julie Thomas
Dave Jackson or Mark Stephenson
Dave Hasz
Mark Compton
Dean Ellis
Tim Droegmiller
Len Diaz (for fall)

Action Item: Counties to Visit

Camas
Washington
Blaine
Bingham

State and Private Redesign

State assessment—state strategy (map) of where we need to do a combination of work for multiple protection and restoration needs. This creates a series of high priority areas to work on with State & Private Forestry programs.

Dave Jackson—BHS is interested in partnering with IDL on this and has funding available.

Meeting Critique

Meeting went well. Good topics and discussion. Facility was great.