

- National Predictive Service Group (NPSG) -

Meeting Notes

Location: Southern California Operations Center, Riverside, California
Meeting Dates: January 18-20, 2005

Members Present:

- Gerry Day – NWCC – GACC Managers Representative
- Roger Lamoni –NWS, Western Region– National Weather Service Representative
- Kim Christensen – NICC Manager – NICC Liaison
- Tom Wordell – JFSP – PS/Fire Analysts Representative
- Chuck Maxwell – SWCC – Meteorologist Working Group Chair/Representative
- Charlie Leonard – NICC Intelligence Coordinator
- Mike Lococo – ONCC – Intelligence Working Group Chair/Representative
- Chip Collins – NPS – Grand Teton NP – Field Level Fire Managers Representative
- Bill Plough – CDF – State/NASF Representative
- Rick Ochoa – NICC –Meteorologists Program Manager
- Neal Hitchcock – NIFC (for Alice Forbes) – NMAC Liaison (Advisor)

Guests:

- Jay Ellington, SWCC (via conference call)
- Terry Marsha, NWCCCC (via conference call)
- Tom Rolinski, OSCC
- Judy Crosby, NWCG-PMO Data Architect, NIFC
- Heidi Biglercole – USFS – Social Scientist, La Grande, OR
- Pat Winter, USFS – Social Scientist, Riverside, CA

Notetaker: Laurel Simos, BIA, NIFC

Meeting Agenda Topics:

1. Introductions & Meeting Logistics – Bill
2. Center Manager Meeting Updates – Gerry
3. Review and approval of Boise meeting notes – Gerry
4. Pending Actions
 - Update NWCG on web activities (Task 2004-32) – Jay Ellington (via conf. call)
 - Discussion on Terminology for Fire Potential – Terry Marsha (via conference call)
 - Report on new product development – Tom Rolinski
 - GACC examples of existing products (Task 2004-26) – Mike and Rick
 - Utilization of FCAMMS to generate NFDRS outputs (Task 2004-29) – Rick
 - Questionnaire to identify ‘pinch points’, key successes and/or accomplishments for improving Predictive Services functionality (Task 2004-35)
 - Experimental NFDRS data archival & transport to WFAS (Task 2004-40) – Rusty & Rick

5. User Needs Assessment – Gerry
 - Introduce Pat Winter and Heidi Biglercole – invited Social Scientists
 - Provide an overview of what the NPSG wants to achieve and the objectives of the User Needs Assessment, which “groups” within the Wildland fire agencies need to be included, what hierarchical levels need to be included, available funding, and other ideas.
 - Brainstorm with NPSG ideas to accomplish objectives
 - Finalize strategy, assignments, roles/responsibilities, funding, tasks, due dates and other items needed to proceed with User Needs Assessment
6. NPSG Charter – review and revise (add new members, etc.) – Tom
7. Improving the data infrastructure that supports and facilitates the integration of Predictive Services and the Wildland Fire program – Judy Crosby
8. User Feedback Discussion – Gerry
 - Field Users
 - GACC staff
 - Geographic Area MAC members
9. FY – 2005 Funding Decisions – Tom
10. Management of the National PS Program – Gerry
11. Next Meeting logistics & topics, wrap up and adjourn – Gerry

Exhibits

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|----|---|--------|
| A. | Pending Actions Tracking Table (1-20-05) | 5 pgs |
| B. | Completed Actions Tracking Table (1-20-2005) | 7 pgs |
| C. | User Assessment Evaluation Procedure Alternatives (Goal #1) | 3 pgs |
| D. | NPSG Framework Evaluation and Goals Final Draft (4-23-04) | 14 pgs |
| E. | National Fire Potential Product – Tom Rolinski | 6 pgs |
| F. | Presentation to NPSG – Judy Crosby | 32 pgs |
| G. | Final Met Working Group Operating Plan | 3 pgs |
| H. | Predictive Services Questionnaire on Success and Obstacles | 3 pgs |
| I. | Fire Potential Definition and Terminology – Draft | 1 pgs |

Tuesday – January 18, 2004

Introduction and Center Manager Meeting Updates

Membership: Discussion continued from previous meeting regarding the possible addition of another state person to represent Eastern States. The GACC Managers agreed to add two members to the NPSG, one being the Intelligence Coordinator at the NICC and the second being a GACC Meteorologist (elected by the GACC Mets). Bill Plough will be leaving the NPSG due to other responsibilities. *The GACC Managers at their meeting in Monterey agreed to keep the NPSG as a chartered group under their authority and were not supportive of requesting another group such as NFAEB to become the chartering group for NPSG.*

Decision: NPSG to submit names to Don Artley for a replacement representative for the Predictive Services NPSG to represent NASF State and Private Forestry – continued discussion on January 20, 2005 and reflected in the notes from that day.

Pending Actions Table Review

Pending Action Item Tracking Table Review – Tom

Task 2004-11 – 209/SIT reporting ownership/protection/consistency; (a) Change MOB Guide
b) Submit a request for NPSG to provide input to the NWCG fire occurrence task group during development of charter. Scope and data requirements will be removed from the Pending Action Item Tracking Table.

Status: Neal provided bullet items to Alice for NFAEB Meeting week of January 21, 2005.

Task 2004-14 – NPSG project proposal process

Status: NPSG funding proposal was updated and will be sent out by January 31, 2005.

Task 2004-32 – Status report on standard web page design and implementation

Conference Call – Jay Ellington:

Status:

- Provided briefing at Coordination meeting in Monterey
- Looking for Host GACC site for Predict Services web
- Per charter:
 - Task survey site – complete
 - Provide framework templates - now in place
 - Standardized labels – complete
 - 80-90% complete with implementation guide
- Conference call to Portland for Predicted Services Group meetings
- Created templates – well received
- Post National page by Mar 1
- GACCS need their sites up by May 1
- Need 1 additional member from the logistics side – some have expressed interest
- 90% complete with National GACC website

- 80-90% complete with GACC template
- 80% complete with Implementation Guide – goal mid-February to completion.
- Estimated date Feb 10-14 to complete template
- Guide needs to be distributed with a letter from National MAC after complete.

To see site, go to: URL: www.fs.fed.us/r3/fire/national_web

Other website issues: U.S.D.A. is requiring its agency to follow standard format for website design. We will have to look into this at some point, but NPSG suggests testing the GACC template this year. Will respond to agency directives as needed

Terminology for Fire Potential – Terry Marsha (via Conference Call)

Tasked to provide term definition – Definitions group - Presented alternatives for terminology. A draft of the definitions as revised by the NPSG – (see **Exhibit I**)

Decision: Hold off on confirming definition until Rick Ochoa presents it to the Fire Danger Working Team in early February 2005 for their review.

7-Day Significant Fire Potential Product – Tom Rolinski

PowerPoint Presentation – (see **Exhibit E**)

Change map/image – NPSG supports the prototype design

Assessing Daily Fire Potential Handout – Gerry

In order to get project “on line” by next year (May of 2006), parts of the implementation may need to be contracted. Recommend sending a proposal to DRI for an estimate. A decision needs to be made by early spring in order to meet the project timeline.

Decision: NPSG agrees this is the correct course for a national product - Tom Rolinski to lead. Tom will canvas the GACC's to refine budget estimates. NPSG needs to transmit decision to GACC Managers on direction for this product. This will be accomplished via a letter issued by Kim Christianson to the Center managers. Tom will refine implementation plan. Neal will include this initiative with discussion with the Directors and how fire managers are benefiting from use of the product. NPSG agreed to provide initial funding for 2005 (pending confirmation of available funds).

Pending Actions Table Review (continued)

Task 2004-29 – Assessing the value of mesoscale models in predicting fire danger
Tom issued a handout to the NPSG explaining current status of mesoscale fire danger predictions under Blue Sky.

Action: *Rick Ochoa will discuss this with Paul Schlobohm about taking this task on under FENWT.*

Task: 2004-35 – Predictive Services Questionnaire

Action: *Tom, Heidi Biglercole, and Rick worked on drafting a questionnaire during the meeting. The questionnaire will be sent to METS, Coordinators, and Center Managers and*

followed up with phone interviews. Chuck, Mike, Heidi, and Chip will refine the questionnaire and develop a package that will go out to the questionnaire recipients. Chuck, Mike, and Chip will make phone calls to the METS, Center Managers and Intelligence people to interview them and receive feedback. Plan to initiate questionnaire February 2005.

Task: 2004-40 – Archiving experimental NFDRS products – **Task Completed**

Rick Ochoa talked with Larry Bradshaw and Gene Petrusco about the need to archive gridded experimental forecast maps into WFAS. Larry and Gene are planning to develop a method to archive these products by April 2005. Note: Missoula NWS site has been updated to host these products.

Task: 2004-23 – Ensure PS Webpage gets posted to FAMWEB

Status: On track to be implemented by May 2005. Jay Ellington will spearhead process and draft an implementation letter to be forwarded to Neal, Alice and Tom

Task: 2004-24 – Naming conventions

Status: Ongoing. Needs to be wrapped into website implementation letter

Task: 2004-26 – Inventory and examples of PS products

Discussion – There were some unresponsive GACCS when this information was requested. Go back to goal 2 and reassess the needs for goal #2 – need to be specific, clear and qualitative. The feedback was incomplete and some did not respond. Determine how to accomplish this task.

Decision: Mike, Charlie and Rick will review Goal 2 objectives and deliverables to develop an inventory checklist/worksheet to send out to the GACC's. Need performance standards.

Wednesday – January 19, 2004

Task 2005-03 – Update NPSG Strategic Plan Appendix A with historical information
Chip briefed the NPSG on the appendixes for program background, framework document and questionnaire. Fire Ecology strategic plan template; passed out Appendix A – Program background, Appendix B – The Framework Development Process, and Appendix C – The Strategic Framework Development Process.

Decision: Gerry and Chuck will update Appendix A with historical background and references that describes the evolution of Predictive Services.

Discussion of fire potential definition resumed:

The NPSG had a lengthy discussion regarding definitions

Decision: Mike and Tom drafted a definition for resource capability. NPSG continued refinement of the definition for “significant fire potential”. Final decision on terminology will be made following fire danger working team meeting in February 2005.

Goal #1 – Develop and implement a user assessment process so that user needs are understood and defined.

Introduced Pat Winter and Heidi Biglercole, Social Scientists from Riverside and PNW Research Laboratories, respectively, led a lengthy discussion/exercise to assist the NPSG in the development of a user needs assessment and methods process. They met privately to discuss NPSG needs and presented alternatives to the NPSG the following day. (See **Exhibit C**)

Pending Actions Table Review (continued)

Task 2004-30 – Engage research to help NPSG with issue resolution

Action: Gerry will talk to leaders in FS Research (e.g. Tom Quigley & Mike Hilbruner). Chuck with help from Gerry & Tom will develop an abstract with references to help articulate issues within NPSG.

Task 2004-32 – Status report on standard web page implementation

Action: Complete – update provided via conference call with Jay

Task 2004-33 – Contact with Social Scientists for user assessment

Action: Complete – Social scientists attended this meeting and made recommendations, (see Exhibits C & F)

Task 2004-34 – Invite Kim Kelly regarding the development of needs assessment and product development at NWC

Action: Gerry will invite to an upcoming NPSG meeting

Task 2004-35 – Develop questionnaire to identify “pinch points”

Action: Tom, Heidi & Rick drafted questionnaire & will send out prior to survey. Chuck, Mike and Chip will perform phone survey spring 2005.

Task 2004-36 – Review Goal #7 data standards development

Action: Complete – Judy Crosby attended January 2005 meeting, gave a presentation and will continue to provide advice to NPSG (see Exhibit F).

Task 2004-37 – GACC product issuance performance check

Action: ongoing – Rick Ochoa and Kim Christensen will set up monitoring protocol for 2005 fire season.

Task 2004-38 – DRAFT NPSG framework

Action: Complete – Draft framework developed. Strategic plan development still needed (see task 2005-05).

Task 2004-39 – NPSG issue identification and mitigation

Action: In December 2004 Kim gave presentation to NMAC about PS issues, funding and support. Gerry, Kim, Neal and Rick will craft letter to GACC boards and center managers. A process needs to be developed to provide annual updates to NFAEB on PS issues (spring 2005 meeting).

Task 2004-40 – Archiving experimental NFDRS products to WFAS

Action: Complete – Larry Bradshaw and Gene Petrusco will develop process by April 2005

Task 2004-41 – Proposal for data collection approach

Action: Mike Bevens wrote proposal to NPSG Fall 2004. NPSG is tentatively planning to fund the proposal in 2005.

Task 2004-42 – Spot forecast agency policy issue statement

Action: Rick will write an issue paper about the need for NWS to update spot weather forecast and to define agency requirements. Issue paper will be transmitted to FENWT in 2005.

Task 2005-01 – Fire Occurrence Reporting System (FORS) concerns

Action: Complete – Neal will provide brief Alice Forbes with regards to the scope of project to NFAEB January 2005.

Task 2005-02 – Seven-Day Significant Fire Potential product

Action: Tom Rolinski will lead the implementation of this product and solicit input from the GACC's to refine the budget request. NPSG will develop a letter for Kim to send out to GACC center managers February 2005 about the plan for developing and implementing this as a national product.

Task 2005-04 – Recognition and performance awards

Action: Neal, Tom, and Gerry will work on recognition of superior performance supporting NPSG goals Spring 2005

Task 2005-05 – NPSG Strategic plan development

Action: NPSG begin to develop outline and content for strategic plan

Charter

Charter was reviewed in December 2004. Membership section was modified in draft form.

Action: Sign and post on website. Gerry has timed-out of his Chair position, Tom Wordell becomes Chair. NPSG members voted Rick Ochoa to become vice-chair. Proposed amendments to the membership portion of the charter; Kim will take Charter to Center Managers for approval.

FENWT Representation – *NPSG will nominate Tom as Chair to Paul Schlobohm to represent NPSG on new Fire Environment Working Team.*

Meetings: Week of March 28th (probably 29, 30, 31) - Boise

Week of May 30th (May 30, June 1 and 2) - TBD

October or November – TBD

Meteorologist Working Group Operating Plan – Rick Ochoa

Action: Rick made minor editorial corrections and will present to Meteorologist Working Group for approval.

Improving the data infrastructure that supports and facilitates the integration of Predictive Services and the Wildland fire enterprise architecture – NPSG Goal #7

Judy Crosby made a presentation on Wildland Fire Enterprise Architecture to the group – (see **Exhibit F**). Judy agreed to continue to provide oversight and guidance to NPSG with regards to data standards.

Action: NPSG framework was modified to incorporate enterprise architecture language to Framework page 2.

Thursday – January 20, 2004

BIN Items

Implementation of 7-Day “Significant Fire Potential” product:

Summary - The issue is whether or not the new 7-Day product will conflict with existing weekly outlook products (for example in the Southwest).

These issues need to be worked out during implementation so they make sense and don't confuse the customer. An implementation plan needs to be developed to address these concerns and educate center managers and GACC predictive service units about how the new 7-Day product will be implemented.

Implementation Plan needs to include the following :

- Address whether something replaces a product or is in addition to the product.
- Ensure that verification process is followed.
- Identify when other current products are determined to no longer be required.

Expectations:

- Daily product: would like North and South Ops to come together and help NPSG determine criteria for verification.
- Determine at least one verification process.
- Verify different things: actual numbers, large fire activity, and both should be verified the same way, validity of product.
- Validation is part of implementation plan.
- Review the validation process. – Chuck to identify some people to provide pier review throughout the GACC's. Need a larger base of people to provide pier review on the processes.
- Present the process in other places/forums (Canada meeting) and solicit feedback.
- Get feedback on approach (analytical, etc.)
- Set or standard process which is uniform across GACC's
- Document the processes – provide a record. Re; a process library – Judy.
- Verify the data standards and colors to be used
- Identify any products which are going to be replaced and when – may or may not be related to this document.
- During implementation, look for issues by running things simultaneously – work with GACCs

Structured implementation:

- Identify who will declare when things are operational?
- Identify the protocol for direction – mob guide – letter to GACC's – adherence, etc

The process:

- As GACC's become operational, they need to 'certify' when they are ready to go and coordinate the "roll out" of their products. As a result of that, they will need to coordinate the decision to stop using former product.
- Need a process of notifying the user when product meets the requirements. Rick and Kim will put a statement in the mob guide.

Documentation of procedures:

Operating protocols for overriding the model by the person who is issuing the product - allows the operator to make adjustments. The principles need to be documented in the user guide.

Define terms and ensure there is a glossary of terms

Document/define data standards

In addition:

- The NPSG is appreciative and supportive of the efforts Tom Rolinski has made. Tom Rolinski will contact the NPSG for assistance and support.
- Tom Rolinski will set up a technical advisory NPSG or implementation task group who can technically assist the GACC's.
- Tom Rolinski and two others will provide training or a workshop in order to help facilitate accomplishing the tasks at the GACC's.
- Realistically, the Western U.S. can be implemented by next May; however they cannot realistically have Eastern U.S. and Alaska implemented by next May. They will incorporate implementation timelines into their plan.

Action: Tom Rolinski will develop a brief implementation plan spring 2005. Chuck plans to issue the 7-day significant fire potential product along side of his weekly outlook product and will run them side by side to help assess similarities and differences between the two products. (2005-02)

Action: Validation and verification process should be part of the implementation plan for the new "Seven Day Significant Daily Potential" product. Needs peer review and should be validated by a broad base of disciplines. (2005-02)

Recognition:

During the year, there are a number of people who do outstanding work for the NPSG, and/or do ongoing work during the year which greatly benefits Predictive Services. NPSG needs a mechanism for thanking and recognizing these people.

Decision: Neal, Tom and Gerry will get together and work out a proposal for awards/recognition and bring a proposal to the next meeting spring 2005. (2005-04)

Reminder of prior agreements:

- The proposal and discussions made by Tom and Tim on validation, verification and evaluation and agreement by GACC center managers
 - Weekly product
 - Monthly product
- Reminder to Predictive Services
- Naming conventions
- Items due by certain dates – monthly outlook

Action: Charlie and Rick will take the lead to go back through notes, look through items for ongoing commitments – share by email with NPSG. (2005-06)

Upcoming Predictive Services meeting scheduled for Alaska:

It is not cost effective to host this meeting in Alaska.

Action: Kim will contact Dave Curry to determine another location for this meeting. (2005-07)

Assessment Workshops - Rick:

The NPSG has some concerns about this workshop:

- Electronic copies of the reports come out quickly. Hard copy of report sent out too late. Hard copies will come out within two weeks after the workshop.
- Cost of the workshop is within reason.
- Report was labor intensive - they will have a writer-editor at meeting. Rick, Tim, Greg and Heath are on the steering committee.
- Steering committee needs to consider a post-meeting update which does not necessitate a meeting.
- Revalidate prior workshop
- Eastern Workshop: same timeliness problems with the product/report.

Writer-editor is already on board for the March Western Assessment Workshop. Follow-up and provide report on both workshops to the Jackson meeting.

User Assessment Evaluation Procedure Proposal (NPSG Goal #1) – Heidi and Pat

(See Exhibit C)

Action: In support of using methods 1, 2, and 3. Designing and developing the survey that goes out to federal individuals via mail, email, and web. Put into OMB approval circuit so it can be expanded and integrated with web pages so we can go with ongoing evaluation. Support the use of limited number of focus groups yet to be defined in number and locations. (2005-08)

Evaluation: In focus groups open to gathering comments of products and services and will be put into/through normal procedures. Verify using evaluation to achieve.

Action: Explore feasibility - Heidi will call Tom and report back. Will come up with a mini proposal with what needs to be done and how much it will cost. Will be initiated summer for optimizing feedback, and will have it back to the NPSG by April 2005. For the development of questions: Heidi will draft some survey questions then meet with Tom, Rick, Charlie and in Boise in tentatively the week of April 4. Draft questions to be prepared by the April meeting. (2005-08)

NPSG State and Private Representative

NPSG needs to recruit and fill NASF representative for group. Preferably this person should have:

- Interest in the NPSG
- Knowledge about the subject matter
- Time to make a real commitment to the NPSG.
- Knowledge of state concerns and have worked with feds
- Understanding of federal issues and concerns
- Knowledge but doesn't necessarily need to be a technical expert.
- Ability to work well in a group environment
- Ability to represent diverse agency perspectives
- Ability to maintain a connection with all of the states, engage them in the processes, and will communicate and solicit feedback as well as pass along concerns

Action: NPSG recommendations will be passed along to Don Artley for consideration after providing him with the profile. Tom and Bill will conference call Don Artley and discuss. (2005-09)

MET Working Group Plan

Exhibit G

NPSG Meeting Notes Boise (Fall 2004)

Action: notes were approved

Definitions:

Action: Rick will take proposed definition for “fuel dryness” and “fuel condition” to the combined meeting of the FDWT and FWWT to get their review and input before making final decision on definitions. (2005-10)

ERC Model G:

Decision: NPSG felt it was important for the GACC's to continue the verification on the monthly outlook product. Convey to the Center Managers that the verification on the “weekly” ERC-G product is no longer required, and reiterate that the “monthly” product and verification continue to be produced. This will also be addressed during the severity request period. Include a mob guide reminder about the agreement that was made and the expectation that the Centers provide this. (2005-11)

GACC Product Issuance

Action: Items which are late, not addressed, or not prepared properly will be tracked and addressed by NICC. Verification report on the thirty-day must be submitted to Heath Hockenberry one month prior to the fall meeting of the annual Predictive Services meeting. Letter to the Center Managers will go out by the end of February. (2005-12)

Vice-Chair:

Decision: Rick Ochoa has been nominated and voted as Vice-Chair. (2005-13)

Funding

Tom reviewed last year's budget expenditures and the group discussed budget proposals and decisions for 2005.

Management of the National PS Program

Action: Kim, Neal and Gerry will provide bullet statements within the next two weeks and will conference with NPSG. (2005-14)

Predictive Services Questionnaire

Exhibit H

Will send out, give time to review, establish time frames.

Next Meeting

Chip will do the logistics for the meeting: has internet access. April 26-28, 2005 in Moose Wyoming

Logistics:

Meeting Room Requirements:

Conference Bridge

Projection Access

Ability to order food in

Invite Predictive Services Guests, earlier in meeting to be more effective

NPSG Meeting Dates:

Spring Meeting

April 26-28, 2005

Start at 0800 on the 26th

Jackson Hole, WY