



NOTES

June 25-26, 2013

NACo Conference Room – Suite 500
 25 Massachusetts Ave, NW
 Washington, DC 20001

Attendees

Members:

- Bill Kaage – NWCG
- Douglas MacDonald – I-Chiefs
- Glenn Gaines – DHS/USFA
- Jim Douglas – DOI
- Jim Erickson – ITC
- Jim Karels – NASF
- Mary Jacobs – NLC
- Ryan Yates – NACo
- Tom Harbour – USFS

Support Staff:

- Shari Eckhoff – DFO – DOI

Alternates:

- Dan Olsen – USFS
- Dan Smith – NASF
- Erik Litzenburg – I-Chiefs
- John Segar – NWCG
- Patti Blankenship – DHS/USFA

Others:

- Alan Quan – USFS
- Ann Walker – WGA
- Brad Simpkin – NERSC
- Cathleen DeLoach – NFPA
- Danny Lee – USFS – NSAT
- Erin Darboven – DOI
- James Fox – USFS – NSAT
- Jenna Sloan – DOI
- Judith Downing – USFS
- Katie Lighthall – WRSC
- Larry Matick – NERSC
- Matt Rollins – USGS
- Michele Steinberg – NFPA
- Mike Zupko – SRSC
- Sandy Burnett
- Tom Quigley – METI – NSAT

1. Welcome/Introductions

- Jim Douglas called the meeting to order at 8:30 and reviewed the agenda for the two days.

2. National Risk Analysis Report and Template

- Need clarity on what WFEC expectations are for the national report and strategy
- Reviewed the sections of the National Report Template
- Here today to figure out how we pull it all together
- Focus on the National Perspective and conclusions

Information and discussion – No decision, recommendation or follow-up action

3. Overview of the National Analysis of Comparative Risks and Trade-offs

- WFEC expectations for the next two days
 - Role identification
 - New strategies
 - Proactive
 - All Land – not exclusive to communities
 - Relative to decisions at multiple scales
 - Illustrates conflicts between options
 - Data-science driven
 - Simple...w/appendices
- Frame Issue
 - What is known
- Interpret
 - What it means
- Translate
 - Complex/technical into simple
 - What it can mean
 - Cascade of decisions

- Devine
 - Intergovernmental “Story”
 - For Overview see Handout – Presentation – 1: Slides 1-5
- Information and discussion – No decision, recommendation or follow-up action*

4. Introduction to the National Analysis/Framing the problem

- See Handout – Presentation Slides
- Tom Quigley provided an overview of options to think about
 - National level identifies a framework and does not look at individual actions, cost, etc.
 - Not a top down one size fits all and not so prescriptive
 - Trying to find the marriage of the top down and bottom up
 - National piece – set the environment within which decisions and policies occur
 - Look at data available – establish a set of priorities, statements of intent – built around policy environment – around the decision environment – the science environment – the collaborative environment

Information and discussion – No decision, recommendation or follow-up action

6. Exploring Major Policy Options

- No one size fits all
- Set of tools that are applicable in certain places
- Mr. Fox explained the concepts of Community Clusters, Resilient Landscape Classes, how these are combined into Combinations.
- Reviewed the list of policy options and how they potentially apply to the cluster combinations.
- The material presented does not prioritize any of the options
- A potential question is: What would it take to make more of this map green.
- Lends itself to a desirable outcome
- Local communities may be able to reallocate resources – if there is data to show the impact.
- There may be unintended consequences of focusing exclusively on response. Those need to be integrated into the other two goals.
- Need to be careful about how things are presented – the response option 8 could be misinterpreted as “we are not prepared” which is not the correct interpretation
- Remember we are not working on a cohesive tactical plan – it is a cohesive strategy

Information and discussion – No decision, recommendation or follow-up action

7. Public Comments (1530 – 1535)

- Michele Steinberg, NFPA
 - Really good learning experience
 - NFPC has a role in outreach to communities – lots of community interactions
- Mike Zupko –
 - Need to address this from the perspective beyond just writing a report
 - Some folks sitting back and waiting
- Sandy
 - Things have come together quite well – lots of progress since Phase I when we really didn’t know what we were going to end up with
- Ann
 - Thanks to the folks that made it possible for us to call in and for making the material available
 - CWPs were on the high end of occurrence in the public comments
 - Danny: When we talk about theme 6, the FFMPs will come into play.

8. Introductions – Re-cap of Yesterday

- We need to leave here today with some management options that are keys for success at both the national and regional levels
- We will not make decisions on the “trade offs”. Those decisions are at the local level. We are setting the framework at the national level.
- Identify the important choices and the consequences of those choices. They are not all equal.
- How those choices are made is a different issue.
- We will identify what good option suites are for different areas

- Those options move us toward achieving the three major cohesive strategy goals
- Need to think about how we communicate this information – sharing this binder will not be received well.
- Need some real outcome narratives – what is the benefit?
- How do you affect those national options? Through grants, etc.

Decisions:

- Cohesive Strategy provides a framework at the National Level
- Trade-off decisions will be made at the local level
- It will be necessary to articulate the outcome/benefit of executing the options identified.

9. Intersecting the Options

- Discussion emphasized the need for collaboration
- WFEC is responsible for identifying preferences for what options we think are smart to accomplish the identified objectives
- We want to say there are three or five specific strategies that we want to identify in order to meet some objective. Answer the question...if you want resilient landscapes, you need to....
- We have the three major goals of the cohesive strategy
 - First question – how are you going to accomplish those things
 - We have a number of choices that have been identified
 - Second - are there dependencies that dictate order?
 - Where do you get the most bang for your buck?
 - Third – identify the various roles and responsibilities – who has the ability to implement
- Identify the things that we think are going to be the smartest investments that lead us to the outcomes that we want
- Need to give a rationale for the actions we recommend
- It should inform the budget decisions, but it is not an allocation tool
- Common set of themes that drive action plans
- The cohesive part is working off the same set of assumptions, goals and objectives
- Danny led the group through a decision tree beginning with Option 8 - Response
- Brainstorm priorities
 - Reduce cost
 - Limit fire ignition and spread
 - Resilient Landscapes
 - Increase fuel reduction
 - Increase fire resistant communities
 - Robust response capability

Information and discussion – No decision, recommendation or follow-up action

10. Next Steps

- Starting with proposal on how to get around the story
 - Three of those – which relates to the graph – page 31
 1. Increase suppression and community protection
 2. Increase fuels investments which places an emphasis since we can't do it all.
 3. Favorable combination of all of those things
 - Under each of those would involve a mix of options
 - Three scenarios – each has a different set of options
 - Does someone have to make a choice between those scenarios?
- Each Community Cluster/Class combination should have an additional narrative on how it relates to the 3 goals
- 3 scenarios, 1-optimal, 2-fuels intensive, 3-response
- Each described in a narrative way
- Tab 5 is only presented for the optimal scenario
- Prioritization is either in the development of the action plans or the local decisions

11. WFEC Recommendations

- There were no specific recommendations to go forward to the Secretaries via WFLC at this time.
- Decisions for Next Steps in the development of the National Report and National Action Plan:

- The information in Tab 5 will be presented as the optimal scenario – Combos with options identified
- Each Community Cluster/Class combination should have a narrative that indicates how it supports the three Cohesive Strategy Goals
- Prioritization of the potential actions will be done within the action plans or by local decision makers

12. Public Comments

NFPA – Michele Steinberg

- Please consider editing maps on Option 6. This visual implies that the option of home and community actions are not necessary or useful. Specify that this is a sampling. Home density should drive the 6B option because of issue of home-to-home ignition. It is perfectly OK for this leadership group to say "all property owners should pay attention to home preparedness," regardless of how strange that would look on a map (all green). If, as verbalized in the meeting, the group feels that individual home preparedness is valuable and makes a difference, that should be expressed clearly in the report. There is no reason why every homeowner with a wildfire risk (even a low risk) in the US should not learn what they can do to protect their home and no reason why they should not be receiving wildfire safety messages. Just like the stock market, past history of wildfire does not guarantee future performance. Focus for community action needs to clearly take into account the risk to homes in areas that have not yet experienced major fire losses, as well as what we know about fire history.
- I compliment the researchers on their work to try to integrate the best data possible with the considerations of so many stakeholders. In particular, use of the NFIRS data correlating "buildings involved" and accidental human-caused ignitions (Option 10), focuses on the needs of local-level fire departments. As a national Cohesive Strategy, this attention to the challenges faced by non-federal stakeholders is critical (IMHO) to meeting Congress' intent of this effort.

Mike Zupko

- Regions struggled with a lot of these same questions – we want to give the best information to the decision makers at whatever level they are
- Decisions that are made national versus the decisions made below have to be cleared. Are they looking up for some answer?

Sandy Burnett

- We have done a lot of what GAO has asked for
- We don't have the cost associated with these options
- Policy group – report to congress – help them to plan for future budgets – where should the money go

Ann Walker

- Have some suggested groupings for options/data
- Our priorities is to look at vulnerable populations
- Look at high fire risk areas – vegetation
- Include economic and marketable opportunities – look again at high fire risk areas
- No planning, no markets, no prescribed fire – opportunity to build that collaborative effort
- High fire risk – high accidental ignitions – rural component – CWPP – target the prevention aspect and human ignitions to help that prevention plan
- Would get to the reduction of cost of suppression
- Option 4 – appeared to be problems with some of the data – determine economic markets – significant opposition from CO and WY that have millions of acres of dead trees
- Agree with NFPA – Option 6 – need to show the information that is in there

Larry Mastik

- Need to consider addressing the face that we are faced with large scale fuel creating events – affect time, resources and budgets
- Have Danny identify the trade-offs for dealing with those events
- Things like tornados, blow downs, and other events that affect the fuels on the landscape that affect risk to communities, risk to responders, etc.

Jim Douglas adjourned the meeting at 4:15 on June 26, 2013