

**Wildland Fire Leadership Council**

**Conference Call**

**March 12, 2020, 0930 - 1105 EDT**

**CALL SUMMARY**

**Council Members (Principals or alternates)**

Susan Combs (DOI-PMB), Jim Hubbard (USDA-NRE), Jaelith Hall-Rivera (FS), Grant Beebe (BLM), Ed Christopher (FWS), Louis Rowe (NPS), Pete Wakeland (BIA), Anne Kinsinger (USGS), Keith Bryant (FEMA-USFA), Mayor John Suthers (NLC), Jonathan Shuffield (NACo), Vern Stearns (ITC), Patrick Holmes (Gov. Bullock-Western Governors), George Geissler (NASF), Erik Litzenberg (IAFC) and Mike Zupko (WFLC Executive Director). RSC, senior staff and other interested participants were also on the call. EPA leadership including Anne Idsal (OAR) and Wayne Cascio (ORD) and Yulia Carroll (CDC) were also on the call.

**Meeting Objective:** Provide status update and feedback on deliverables as defined in the WFLC Meeting Deliverables January 9/10 (03/05/20 version) document. **ATTACHMENT 0 (as distributed 03/05/20)**

**SMOKE MANAGEMENT AND AIR QUALITY**

- **Co-chairs meeting with CDC leadership** – Combs and Hubbard discussed their recent meeting with CDC leadership and the continued commitment from CDC to work collaboratively with WFLC and EPA on joint messages as well as developing a deeper understanding of the health benefits of prescribed fire as compared to wildfire.
- **Consolidated data points** – Shawn Buckner (DOI-PMB-PPA) and Pete Lahm (USDA FS-FAM) gave an overview of the consolidated data to date (**ATTACHMENT I**) and discussed several groups that will be assisting with the continued collection and analyzing of data to help support joint messaging and further understand data gaps. This group will continue to support each of the other workgroups in communications, SIPs implementation and HIA development. Once the dataset is refined, it will be shared with the full WFLC membership.
  - **ACTION: Please provide feedback to Zupko if any other known datasets are not currently included in the attachment.**
- **SIP status with prescribed fire included in baseline and engagement with states** – Lahm and McCarthy discussed the link to the Regional Haze Rule and the opportunities for states to embrace the ability to include prescribed fire as part of the baseline. There is a draft document being circulated in the workgroup to define roles and responsibilities in both policy guidance as well as a technical approach. Zupko has engaged other partners (e.g. WGA) to include their knowledge of state engagement.
- **Health Impact Assessment iterative process proposal** - Cascio, Lahm and Carroll discussed the current state of the proposal. It will be an iterative proposal working through both EPA and CDC to address health impacts with beneficial results coming in the short-term, mid-term and longer. This will allow the communications group to be able to build from what is learned on a smaller

scale, but also work towards a deeper assessment that will pull from a depth of health data as well.

- **Joint comms and messaging draft workplan** - Zupko discussed **ATTACHMENT II**, the current working draft of a joint communications and messaging workplan between WFLC, EPA and CDC. This will be a living document that will build upon findings of the data team and will allow various messages to be tested and vetted. It is intended to help leadership understand what has been communicated and each individual potential message will be vetted through each agency before being “confirmed” for joint use. Initially, the comms workgroup will focus on existing messages that have been previously jointly utilized in other co-branded documents and publications, then build out from there. WFLC leadership made it very clear the short-term deadline is to have a set of messages ready to be utilized by mid-April, for use with both the International Smoke Symposium 3 (now virtual) as well as Air Quality Awareness Week.

*Each of the workgroups continues to meet on a regular basis. (Workgroups are identified in the deliverables document.) Zupko will continuously brief the co-chairs and will share any major updates or next steps with WFLC principals as appropriate.*

#### **CROSS BOUNDARY ACTIVE MANAGEMENT**

- **Issue Overview:** Hubbard spoke from the leaders’ intent briefing paper that was concurred with by the WFLC principals over the past couple weeks (**ATTACHMENT III**). He focused on the intent to form a nimble leadership group to evaluate potential geographies/local projects to engage as well as assist in the testing and build out of the draft framework as discussed in the paper. Zupko will work with Hubbard to build the leadership group and design appropriate engagement for the group. Not intended as an additional layer, but an opportunity to help expedite project selection and provide national leadership support.
  - **ACTION: Please provide Zupko feedback on potential members/organizations that would be good to serve on the leadership group.**
  - **ACTION: Please provide Zupko with ideas of geographies that already show leadership qualities for engaging further in cross-boundary activity.**
- **Feedback:**
  - Mayor Suthers offered Colorado Springs as a test case to further expand the work they are doing collaboratively with additional partners and parameters.

#### **AMERICA BURNING: WUI**

- **Issue Overview:** Chief Bryant gave a quick status update. DOI, FS and USFA are each contributing jointly to allow for a contract to be acquired to help staff this project. He is hopeful the contract will be advertised in the next couple weeks. No other work has occurred on this project since the leadership team developed a white paper capturing issue buckets last fall. **Zupko will inform the group once he is made aware that the contract is being advertised.**

## **NATIONAL INVASIVES SPECIES COUNCIL COORDINATION**

- **Issue Introduction:** Stas Burgiel, Executive Director for the National Invasives Species Council (NISC) and Zupko gave a brief overview of NISC and the opportunity for the two organizations to work closely together. Zupko, Burgiel and his staff have been looking at ways to utilize the NISC workplan and marry it with WFLC priorities to build efficiencies in approach to several issues. Looking at some low hanging fruit, they will continue to build towards best practices, data sharing and research opportunities. **Zupko and Burgiel will continue to coordinate closely on building a joint workplan and task team and will work with WFLC and NISC co-chairs for direction in the short-term.**

## **MITIGATING POST FIRE DISASTERS**

- **Policy gaps / prioritized options for next steps:** Zupko and Troy Timmons (WGA) presented the prioritized items as determined with feedback from the WFLC principals as to the top tier opportunities identified in the policy gap paper (**ATTACHMENT IV**). Timmons reviewed the top four items and discussed how each could be moved forward. Data and tools coordination, post fire coordinator/navigator designation, post fire master agreement and aligning federal and community needs post fire were each discussed.
- **IMT and agency administrator engagement:** ATTACMENT V, the recently concurred with briefing paper, was discussed briefly and it was mentioned as it is more operational in nature, **Jeff Rupert – DOI-OWF and Shawna Legarza – FS-FAM, will be carrying this forward. Rupert and Legarza will work with Zupko to inform the WFLC co-chairs as to progress and will brief WFLC at the next convening.**
- **Navigator whitepaper:** Timmons reviewed ATTACHMENT VI overviewsing the navigator proposal.
- **Emergency Kit roadmap:** Timmons reviewed ATTACHMENT VII, a current working paper with a roadmap strawman, showing four examples of how programs that can help mitigate post fire impacts will be described. Timmons also discussed the intent to how the information will be web-based and interactive. He also discussed the need for support to enable a fully functional site to not only be populated, but also managed to have maximum benefit and linkage to complimentary sites enabling navigators and state and local responders to have easy access to the most up-to-date information. **Zupko and Timmons will work with the WFLC co-chairs on an information proposal of needs and a statement of work to determine feasibility of building out needs for this project.**

**Zupko and Timmons will reconvene the mitigating post fire working group to identify a path forward for each of the top tier policy gap items as well as considering items in the second tier. Additionally, the workgroup will help to further build out the navigator whitepaper and the post fire roadmap. All items are on schedule per the deliverables document.**

### **STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT ACROSS JURISDICTIONS FOR THE FIRE YEAR**

- **Issue Introduction:** Zupko briefly reviewed **ATTACHMENT VIII**, the recently concurred with briefing paper, and discussed the intent is to drive additional coordination at the local level through each agency and organization represented within WFLC. The Forest Service began a round robin discussion around how they plan to engage in local for the 2020 fire year. Due to coronavirus activity and needs of WFLC members to exit the call, the round robin was cut short. **Zupko will attempt to connect with each WFLC member individually and compile how each agency and organization plans to utilize the leaders' intent this year to drive further engagement at the local level.**

### **MISC**

- *Next meeting is currently scheduled for May 6 in Washington DC. This is subject to change due to current circumstances.*