



California Fire Alliance

California Fire Alliance Leadership Business Meeting Minutes October 20, 2005 USFS – McClellan, Sacramento

Leadership Members

Date: 10-20-2005

Dale Geldert, Chair/CDF
Bruce Turbeville/CFSC

Steve Thompson/FWS
Henry Renteria/OES

Bernie Weingardt/USFS
Jon Jarvis/NPS

Staff Group Members Present:

Karen Mayer/CDF
Frank Vidales/LA County
Mike Staley /OES
Christie Neill/NPS

Tom Hoffman/CDF
Erica Bisch/CFSC
Judith Downing/USFS
Miriam Morrill/FWS

Craig Barnes/BLM
Dennis Orbus/USFS
Jessica Wade-Bannister/FWS

Other Attendees Present:

Doug Waggoner/FWS
Wayne Mitchell/CDF
John Rowden/OES
John Hofmann/RCRC
Lisa Boyd/CDF
Mike Dietrich/USFS

Karen Barnette/BLM*
Carol Forrest/CDF
Ron Recker/BIA*
Dale Morris/BIA
James Newman/BLM

Ray Quintanar/USFS
Ed Wehking/BLM
Amy Dutzchke/BIA
Soledad Holguin/BIA
Victoria Smith/BLM

*Acting in the Director's Place

INTRODUCTIONS:

The meeting started shortly after 9:00 AM. Chief Geldert welcomed everyone for attending the Leadership's Business Meeting. Introductions were made by all attendees.

Miriam Morrill gave a brief overview of the briefing package: Agenda, Staff Transition Outline, Plans of Actions – Updates.

Fire Alliance Leadership Chair and Support Staff Chair - Transition

Miriam Morrill, Support Staff Chair, opened the discussion by announcing that Tom Hoffman, CDF, will be taking her place as the new Support Staff, Chair since she is now in her new position with the Fish & Wildlife Service. With this change and the updating of the Alliance Charter, the questions had come up: **1)** Who will be assuming Leadership Chair next?; **2)** Is chairperson policy still appropriate?; **3)** Should the Leadership and Support Staff Chairs be from the same agency?; and **4)** Should the length of term be longer than one-year term?

All the Leadership spoke on this topic with a variety of suggestions: **1)** that the Leadership and Support Staff Chairs should serve a two year term; **2)** that there should be a Deputy Chair who would be the next Chair and would be Acting Chair in the absence of the Chair; and **3)** that there are pros and cons on the Leadership and Support Staff Chairs being from the same agency or different agencies. It was discussed that it wouldn't make any difference on the agency as long as the Support Staff Chair had the knowledge and background and time and that the Support Staff would choose their Chair.

Miriam also talked about the staff workload for Support Staff Chair. The workload is heavy and very time consuming and the possibility of needing an administrative assistant. The administrative assistant would assist the Support Staff Chair.

ACTION: Chief Geldert wanted this topic at the next Executive Meeting (TBD). How are they going to staff the support staff Chair and staff? Leadership Chair term? Review and Update the Charter?

There was no discussion on who will be the next Leadership Chair.

Alliance Website

Lisa Boyd, CDF, gave an update and brief background handout as well as demonstration of the Fire Alliance Website. As of September 26 the new and improved website was up and running. There were still changes being worked on and the maintenance of website. The CDF contractor for the Fire Alliance Website is with Version 3. The contract will end June 30, 2005. A decision by the Leadership will be needed by January 2006 to find the funding to continue the maintenance along with the staff support, discuss whether or not the website will remain with CDF or become another agency responsibility. She also talked about the need for new pictures from the different agencies and new success stories. Tom Hoffman encouraged that the federal agencies notify their field staff of the Fire Alliance Website

ACTION: Support Staff to submit a white paper to the Leadership before January on what the funds and staffing needs are with recommendations and alternatives.

Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP)

John Hofmann, RCRC, gave an update on what the CWPP task group has done to date. The CWPP's are on the Fire Alliance Website and if you wanted to see a CWPP you are able to click on the link and see the plan. There are 57 CWPP's in the works which 15 of them are "approved". The federal agencies are concerned with the low numbers that are in the approval process. FY 2006 and FY 2007 funding may depends on CWPP's and that any grant requests that have an already approved CWPP will

have priority over all other grant requests. Tom Hoffman, CDF, mentioned that California has been ahead of other states when it comes to having fire plans but they are not necessarily in the CWPP format. This brought up the question “What do we need to do to encourage the Fire Safe Council’s and Communities to do a CWPP?” Besides to receive federal grant monies an “Approved” CWPP will be needed.

ACTION: California Fire Safe Council to put a direct request to each of the federal agencies formally asking for their assistance in assisting the Fire Safe Councils and Communities in preparing the CWPP.

Grants Clearinghouse and MOU

Erica Bisch, CFSC, gave an update on Grants Clearinghouse plan of work and “Draft” Clearinghouse MOU. She reported that this was the 3rd year of the Grants Clearinghouse. A “Draft” news release is coming out shortly for the “Call for Concept Papers for Fire Safety Grants Available to fund community Projects and that there will be grant writing workshops given.

The MOU for Grants Clearinghouse is out to the Support Staff and for Leadership review. Comments are due January 10, 2006. If all agencies agree, the MOU could be signed at the next Executive meeting of the Leadership.

ACTION: Support Staff to review and comment on the “Draft” News Release by November 1, 2005.

Leadership and Support Staff to be able to give and verify the following information by November 1, 2005:

USFS: 2006 pot of money; 50/50 cost share

\$2.5 million for San Bernardino National Forest

BLM: 2006 Plans for the projects selected that are unfunded

NPS: 2006 Plans for the projects selected that are unfunded

FWS: 2006 Plans for the projects selected that are unfunded

CDF: Prop 40

All Agencies: Predictions for FY 2007

Environmental Compliance

James Newman, BLM, gave an update on environmental compliance with discussion about NEPA, CEQA, ESA, and NHPA compliance for grants. James and Christie Neill, NPS, reported nothing new other than they were still working on it and a “Draft” has gone to CDF for review.

Cooperative Rural Fire Assistance

Jessica Wade-Bannister, FWS, gave an update on Cooperative rural Fire Assistance activities in Fiscal Year 2005. BLM and FWS period closed with 55 applications. NPS extended their period to November.

Alliance Communications Plan/ Alliance Outreach Strategy

Tom Hoffman, CDF, gave a brief history of the Fire Alliance Communications Plan. Asked the Leadership for what their goals and objectives were for the future.

Judith Downing, USFS, gave an update on Alliance Outreach Strategy/WUI Strategy and the work coordinated with David Horne.

No consensus on goals or strategy was reached.

Community At Risk (CAR) Update and GIS Support

Victoria Smith, BLM, gave an update on CAR listing process on how a community can “apply” and “be taken off” the list and discussion on GIS support needed to maintain the website. As of to-date the Fire Alliance has received five applications from communities to be put on the list. The applications will be up for approval in December or January and the communities will be official notified in February.

Victoria also talked briefly about getting the GIS person from each agencies and the information from the field and the need to get each of the agencies to formalize a process.

ACTION: Reconvening the CAR committee to review the application for approval.

Victoria and a task group prepare a paper of the GIS issue, scope, and recommendations for the Leadership consideration.

CWPP Helpdesk

Craig Barnes, BLM, discussed the development of the CWPP Helpdesk plan of action. A task group has been formed and a draft of the POA is out for comment.

Blue Ribbon Commission

Mike Staley, OES, discussed the development of the Blue Ribbon Commission plan of action. A handout was given “BRC Recommendations – Assigned to the California Fire Alliance”.

ACTION: BRC task group to meet with Chief Geldert for briefing and direction. Tom Hoffman to coordinate.

Mountain Area Safety Task Force

Mike Dietrich, USFS, gave a presentation on the Mountain Area Safety Task Force (MASTF) partnership in the Lake Arrowhead area – Landscape mitigation efforts.

Other Alliance Activities

Miriam Morrill, FWS, gave an update on completed projects: Camp Smokey and Wildfire Awareness Week. These two (2) projects are annual projects that the Support Staff will be working on for next year.

ACTION Support Staff prepare new Plan of Actions for Camp Smokey and Wildfire Awareness.

New Business

Tom Hoffman, CDF, asked the Leadership's approval to submit on behalf of the Leadership NFP nominations for the staff who worked on Fire Planning and Mapping Tools. It was approved.

Ray Quintanar, USFS, asked about the New Membership status. Miriam Morrill, FWS, said that to date, there has been no New Membership applications and if anyone was interested it is on the Fire Alliance Website.

Chair Geldert, CDF, would like to extend the time for the next Business Meeting by an additional 2 hours. The next meeting would be then from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The Leadership agreed.

Bernie Weingardt, USFS, announced that Ray Quintanar received the "Fire Chief of the Year" award.

Meeting Wrap-up & Closing

Chair Geldert, CDF, along with Leadership and Support Staff thanked Miriam Morrill for all the hard work she has put in on as being the Support Staff Chair and being involved in the Fire Alliance and wish her well at her new job with Fish & Wildlife Service.

Chair Geldert, CDF, closed the meeting at 12:35. There was no discussion on when the next General Public Meeting will be.