

**NWCG Fire Environment Working Team
Fire Behavior Committee
Meeting
Tucson, Arizona
November 27- 30, 2007
FINAL**

Welcome, expectations, introductions

Present:

John Barborinas
Kyle Cannon
Kelly Close
Dan Jimenez
Risa Lange-Navarro
Punky Moore
Tami Parkinson
R. Ziel

MyFireCommunity:

Demonstration by Paula Nasiatka, Brenna MacDowell
Overview of topics covered on the site, suggestions made about search capabilities, ways to move thru the site, how to best use subgroups.

Specific to FBC:

- Document Depot – how to use
- # Of Topics, streamlining
- Archiving (suggestion for grouping topics by year)
- Process for posting documents to public site
- Executive Committee will review what changes need to be made to site

Charter & Strategic Plan:

- Reviewed purpose and projects undertaken by committee
- Emphasized importance of membership participation
- Considered P. Schlobohm's comments. FBC concurred that current wording is sufficient regarding S492/493. The decision was made to leave as is in the charter.
- Revisions: The full committee will consider Executive Committee representation annually at the fall meeting. Action Item Table will be updated.
- Need approval of Charter at FENWT meeting next week

Action Item #309: Dan will take revised Charter forward for approval, due date 12/3/07.

Action Item #310: Co-chairs will review roles & responsibilities for Exec. Committee after FENWT meeting Dec. 7

Decision: Committee approved Robert Ziel, (Co-chair), Risa Lange-Navarro (Co-chair), Punky Moore (Executive Sec) for 2008.

Curriculum Update:

Noble gave update on curriculum status

S190 – on the shelf, Spanish version is complete

S290 – course is certified, should be available from cache by Dec. 17

FLAME is still on track for online course, instructor will be able to bring in own exercises in the FLAME template.

Pat A. is working on BehavePlus tutorial session, not an official training, but a self-taught, self-paced instructional “How to use BehavePlus” – maybe out by spring '08.

Action item #311: Punky will send addresses to Noble to mail S290 cds for review, due date 12/7/07.

- Asked for comments about weather sections
- Can FBC get into courses/pre-courses without signing up as a student?

FBC needs access to review materials. Discussed possibilities of e-learning for course pre-work.

S390 – certified, errata is in instructor guide, revised course materials

S490 – test course in Atlanta did not have enough students or instructors. Can FBC provide references or assistance to region? Test course in Great Basin went well, all FBC changes have been incorporated, and final edits are being done.

New expectation: FBC will validate revisions/changes to S490 on a community website, maybe LLC.

Action Item #312: There is concern about information being posted on multiple websites. Recommendation that there is one website for the courses, i.e., NWCG. Dan will take this forward to FENWT meeting, due date 1/7/07

Agenda Item – Jan. conference call: FBC needs to consider how website for updates/revisions would work.

Fire Research:

Discussed reorganization/streamlining at the Lab.

Safety Zone Study:

Proposal to do additional research on slope terrain (3 year project)

Nelson Fuel Moisture Model:

Model provides ability to get changing fuel moisture throughout the day. How will the model affect fire behavior assessment? How will the transition occur from old model to new? FBC needs more information about the applications and timelines for integrating this model.

Action Item #313: Dan will contact Matt Jolly about a presentation to committee on Nelson Fuel Moisture Model, due date 1/24/08

Action Item #314: Dan will post Ralph Nelson paper(s) on MFC for FBC review, due date 12/1/07

Action Item #315: John B. will research other wind software models available, due date 1/24/08

WindWizard:

Tool is available, who to contact, cost, requirements.

FBC agreed there is a need to support some form of corporate licensing in order to get technology to more users. Flyer can be submitted to LLC for public posting.

Dan will inquire about timeframe for input regarding WindWizard corporate licensing and find out about submitting flyer to LLC.

Landfire:

Is not part of the Lab reorganization, managed separately.

FBC is interested in information from WFDSS, Landfire AAR week of Dec. 3rd, which might help determine whether/when FBC makes a recommendation about training.

Discussion about updating local unit layers.

Action Item #316: Dan will provide information to FBC from next week's AAR, due date 1/24/08.

FSPro:

There was confusion on many levels how to use, who should be using, inputs and interpretation. Might not be the appropriate tool for every incident but the expectation that it will be used is here. Where does FBAN fit in interpreting products? More discussion planned.

Firefighter Math:

Dan showed committee site. <http://www.firefightermath.org>

Changes from review/revision have not been incorporated yet.

Action Item #317: FBC members will review firefightermath.org website before Jan. conference call, Dan will post review comments, send new comments to Dan, due date 1/24/08.

FBAN/LTAN Discussion:

Discussion involved many implications of the expectations for FBAN/LTAN role, talked about specific experiences in 2007, what did/did not work well. Also referred to comments from Incident Commanders and other fire behavior practitioners.

Decisions:

- There is enough work for two positions (field going & planning)
- What kind of people should we be assigning to the GACCs?
- Tech Specialist – how this fits in
- Participating on accident investigations

- What are the expectations for a Fire Behavior Service Center and the products they produce
- Interactions with field and Command & General Staff

All members will review comments provided for further discussion this week. FBC will develop a position paper before Dec. 4 call.

Task: Kelly will draft tasks required for full range of fireline positions for further discussion later this week. FBC will consider how tasks can be distributed between positions.

End of day 1

November 28, 2007

Reviewed 1st day's action items & key points
Larry Van Bussum joined the meeting via conference call.

FENWT/FBC Action Plan:

Discussed relevancy of document, updating and revising. Action items do not address adequately FBC three main goal areas. Decision was made to condense the plan.

Task: Zeke will reorganize the Plan supported by FBC three goals (education, science & tech, decision support), then we will assign specific projects to each area for budget discussion.

Discussed curriculum tracking process, FBC took the lead in developing the matrix.

Action Item #318: Risa will contact TWT Liaison Mark Koontz about obtaining feedback from course offerings S190 thru S490, due date 1/24/08

Develop & implement a continuing ed program:

Reorganization of S492/493 might be the momentum needed to make changes to curriculum to address continuing education.

Action Item #319: Request funding \$5,000.00 to help support future regional fire behavior workshop/refreshers that support continuing ed. Recommend workshops provide remote access capability, due date 12/3/07.

Action Item #320: John B. will continue to explore avenues that might be available and/or allowed across the agencies for net conferencing. Include this information in Communication Plan, due date 4/8/08.

Strategic Plan Communication:

FBC needs to identify Internal/external communication flow and methods, how to get information to the fire behavior community and the public. Suggestion was made to identify committees, working groups and teams we need to communicate with, assign a FBC liaison to that group and review annually.

Action Item #321: Dan will obtain clarification on communication flow – both internal and external – and inquire what other entities we should be communicating with, due date 12/3/07.

Action Item #322: Committee members will forward communication suggestions (websites, discussion areas) to Punky for consideration in the Communication Plan, due date 3/30/08

Action Item #323: Punky will draft a communication plan for consideration at April meeting, due date 4/8/08.

Fireline Refresher:

Al King gave overview of the evolution of fire refresher training

- 2001 BLM video, relevant, engaging, current
- 2002 WFSTAR, complimentary to BLM video
- 2007 Annual Fireline Safety refresher training steering committee recommended that the FBC become a full member of the Steering committee, making recommendations for refresher updates/revisions/additions

Task: Zeke will forward FBC taskbook review to Al to take back to Safety & Health Working Team for consideration.

Action Item #324: Punky will update ongoing items on Action Item table to reflect submitting various refresher topics, not just video content, due date 1/24/08.

Decisions:

- Tami Parkinson will represent FBC on the Annual Fireline Safety steering committee
- Kelly will be alternate for Tami
- Kelly will be point of contact for dvd/video fire behavior project
- John Saltenberger will be point of contact for dvd/video field weather data collection
- Kyle will be point of contact for WFSTAR project "thinking ahead"
- John Barborinas will assist everywhere
- Long duration fires: Al will contact Pat Garbutt/Kurt Werst about existing NR project. Note: This proved to be a different project so Risa will work with Paul Fieldhouse-Lead on the project.

Assignments are dynamic, dependent on topics any given year.

Communication between points of contact and steering committee representatives needs to be forwarded to committee, i.e., action items

Action Item #325: Punky will add Al King & Ted Mason to distribution list for meeting minutes, due date 1/24/08

Action Item #326: Reaffirm Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training Steering Committee representation at fall meeting

Reminders from Al:

Fireline refresher topics need to be consistent with agency policy and guidance

1. Wildland Fire Safety Training Annual Refresher (WFSTAR)

<http://www.nifc.gov/wfstar/index.htm>

2. Wildland Fire Leadership Development
<http://www.fireleadership.gov/>
 - a. Tactical Decision Game Library
http://www.fireleadership.gov/toolbox/TDG_Library/default.htm
 - b. Staff Ride Library
<http://www.fireleadership.gov/toolbox/staffride/index.html>

3. Refresher Video/DVD
 - a. Annual Announcement
http://www.nifc.gov/wfstar/hottopics/refresh_video.html
 - b. Facilitator Guide and Student Workbook
http://www.blm.gov/nifc/st/en/prog/fire/training/fire_training/projects/refresher.html

Fire Acceleration in Canyons - Viegas Model

Jo Ann Fites demonstrated model, discussed applications of the model, possible JFSP funded project.

Action Item #327: Zeke will draft a request to Fire Lab to do a formal review of model, due date 12/1/07

COMET:

Update on status of project. S290 project begins April 2008, current funding will last 6 months. Liz Page showed how webcast and interaction works on the S591 online course; similar concepts will be used for S290.

At the end of the online modules, there is a virtual conference (gotomeeting) to interact with experts and training specialists. Discussed capabilities of keeping course dynamic as changes are made.

Action Item #328: Risa will check with Noble to get new course material to COMET, due date 12/7/07.

Online courses may not be a full replacement for classroom courses, but there are possibilities to capitalize on various learning methods.

Discussed who is responsible for identifying course SMEs, what the commitment expectations are. This is the opportunity FBC needs to establish a more persistent group to be responsible to provide continuity through the maintenance of the courses, starting with S290.

Recommend members review curriculum matrix and be prepared to make suggestions for SMEs.

RAWS/ROMAN:

FBC was reminded of the ongoing issue to attempt to obtain full funding for the project in support of validation of gridded products. FENWT made presentation to NWCG;

recommendation is for this site to be a one-stop shopping site. Committee members are encouraged to recommend to our respective agencies to be familiar with issue.

NOAA Fire Wx Research WG:

John Barborinas updated committee about status of this working group tasked with reviewing programs and services to make recommendations about future research efforts and tech transfer. Group is looking for presenters also. Discussed using gridded weather data in FARSITE runs. Next meeting will be second week in Jan. Final report is due by fall 2008

Ted Mason:

Contacted Ted regarding Fireline Refresher video/dvd, timelines and expectations for FBC input/assistance. Still thinking of using fire behavior acceleration in canyons for the fire behavior module. Key points:

- Underestimating accelerating fire behavior
- Over optimistic about travel time
- Area fire behavior/back draft

Ted Mason will contact FBC in 1-2 weeks to continue the discussions.

End of day 2

November 29, 2007

Reviewed yesterday's key notes and action items.
John Saltenberger joined the meeting.

Curriculum & Application Development:

Zeke gave an overview of curriculum matrix, how it was developed, what the practice of fire behavior assessment requires. Pre-requisites and continuing ed areas still need to be addressed. FBC was reminded about TWT direction that the curriculum needs to flow from job requirements.

FBC will go back to taskbook reviews and cross walk with the matrix to ensure the level of content of fire behavior assessment knowledge and skills, tasks and learning objectives are adequately evaluated.

Action Item #329: FBC will send review comments in proper format to Vince_Mazzier@nifc.blm.gov, due date 1/17/08

Agenda Item – Jan conference call: Once review is complete, we will deal with whether there are additional issues that need to be sent formally to IOSWT.

Germane to the curriculum & application discussion is the issue of oversight and continuing maintenance of the course curriculum. The SME discussion included the importance of continuity for all of the courses in the fire behavior series. FBC is working towards efficiencies in training and fulfilling our mission "to provide leadership in establishing and maintaining consistent nationwide standards and procedures for wildland fire behavior assessment." More discussion is necessary.

Agenda Item – Jan conference call: Discuss expectations for SMEs, timelines for revisions, interaction with TWT and Development group

FBAN/LTAN/THSP:

In anticipation of the Dec. 4 call to begin developing a strategic plan, FBC considered many issues related to positions and expectations such as rapidly changing technology, minimal qualifications needed for technical specialists, the roles played on incidents, service centers and in predictive services as well as whether there is merit in defining two FBAN positions.

Some of the specific skills and abilities that the FBC felt are worthy of discussion include:

- Line support
- Operational support
- Briefing & forecast development
- Burn plan development & review
- Fireline safety emphasis
- Short term projections & analysis for operational planning
- Validating model inputs & outputs for landscape level analysis & planning
- Accident Investigation

The following FBC position will be presented on the Dec. 4 call:

Positions	FBAN	Decision Support Specialist	Planning Analyst	Technical Specialists & Mentorees
Expected Skills & Abilities	Ops Safety Work for OPS?	Decision Support Planning Tech Skills Type 3?	Decision Support Planning Operations Tech Skills Safety	Decision Support Tech Skills No Briefings Works under supervision of one of other 3
Associated Training Requirements	S590	S590 S490/91/92/93 WFDSS S580?	S590 S490/91/92/93 WFDSS S580?	Decision Support Apps
Quals	DIVS	SRB	DIVS	

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Field Reference Guide:

The current reference guide is no longer available from Boise. Discussed pros and cons of maintaining the manual and if it's still a useful tool. The manual has been converted to electronic format.

Committee considered how the guide could be used as a web based core component with linked modules. FBC discussed possibilities for an html or pdf format. Also considered the benefits of downloading to the desktop. Suggestion was made to add a section on the Canadian indices and prediction system.

Question: Who is going to be the manager of such a website with responsibility for updates and maintenance?

Decision: There is merit in pursuing tasks and costs associated with having the reference guide on a website.

Action Item #330: Risa will ask Noble if there can be a link added to the NWCG training site to the electronic document, due date 1/24/08.

Action Item #331: Dan will post the reference guide on MFC, FBC will begin the process of editing/updating, due date 1/24/08.

Action Item #332: Dan will inquire about the cost required to convert electronic file to an html file that can be easily maintained and updated, due date 1/24/08.

Agenda Item – Jan conference call: Discuss possible JFSP proposal for web based field reference guide.

Budget Discussion:

Updated FBC portion of FENWT Work Plan to reflect planned projects related to FBC goals. Updated work plan for 2008-2010 with identified budget related projects will be provided to FENWT week of Dec. 3.

Action Item #333: Risa will check with Noble Dunn on FLAME progress, due date 1/24/08

Events of Interest:

The 88 Fires: Yellowstone and Beyond
Sept. 7-13 2008, Jackson Hole, WY

Action Item #334: Risa will look into information about conference, due date 1/24/08

2008 Meeting/Conference Call Schedule:

Jan. 24	Conference Call	10:00 PST
Feb. 14	Conference Call	10:00 PST
Mar 27	Conference Call	10:00 PST
April 8,9,10,11(am)	Meeting	Portland, OR (Boise, back-up)
May 29	Conference Call	
June 26	Conference Call	
July	No Call	

Aug	No Call	
Sept 18	Conference Call	10:00 PST
Oct 16	Conference Call	10:00 PST
Nov 13	Conference Call	10:00 PST
Dec 1 – 5	Meeting	TBD

End of day 3

November 30, 2007

BehavePlus:

Pat Andrews spent the morning with the committee presenting information about updates, revisions and progress being made with BehavePlus and other fire behavior models. The fire behavior models discussed reside at: <http://www.firemodels.org> The committee considered alternate methods for website depositories and who would be responsible for the maintenance of information. JFSP report is due in March. Pat discussed the following:

- BehavePlus, past, present, future
- Fire Behavior and Fire Danger Systems
- Version 4 status
- Canopy Bulk Density
- Variables paper
- Training material
- Additional modeling (version 5, flanking fire, hauling chart, diurnal fire behavior)

Question: What is the role/involvement of the FBC with testing, review and lessons?

Some issues were:

- How to communicate the information
- Reviewing lessons – what would be the time commitment?
- FBC should be informed of updates and changes to training material
- How to evaluate skills, validation, demonstrate competency
- Staying involved, communicating
- Consider writing application lessons in the next phase
- Pairing application experts with science & research
- Relationship of BehavePlus training with other training

April Meeting Topic:

Decision Support:

Rob Seli joined the FBC via conference call and gotomeeting to share historical and current information about WFDSS. Interface design will continue through the winter. WFSA will end in 2009.

The committee talked about the implications of a total web based (thin client) application when the availability of internet access is not guaranteed on many remote incidents as well as the possibility that access may be a dial-up situation; these concerns need to be addressed.

Decision: Inquire where to send FBC position regarding a complete web based system. Answer will possibly be an outcome of Dec. 4 call.

One-on-one training in geographic area locations was an important part of what was offered in 2007, questions were posed whether more training will be made available. Also discussed additional off-season applications for WFDSS, prescribed burning, etc. Possible training opportunities could be provided through go to meetings in March.

Additionally, the research handoff was discussed with a Fire Behavior Service Center idea. Some of the components a service center would be responsible for:

- Training
- Help Desk
- Tool maintenance
- Etc.

Round Robin:

Overall, committee members expressed positive comments about the week long meeting. Some of these comments were:

- Time was well spent
- Felt grounded in discussion and business
- Continue to look at how to divide time during the week for work vs. business related items
- The committee is passionate about the job at hand and open minded to change
- Relationships with other working groups are important
- Open discussion, shared ideas, good outcomes
- Remain the key component in fire behavior training and course development
- The committee is pro-active and action oriented
- MFC is useful tool
- Members were engaged and participated
- Internet access for all is very important
- Build relationships - invite other individuals, groups to participate in our meetings and conference calls
- Committee participation is important, accomplishing work is the focus

End of day 4