

**Green Valley Fire
Narrative
MN-MNS-161007 PNHG0M (P) 13G37
May 14 – 19, 2013
Menahga, MN**



**Mike Aultman
MNICS Team A**



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MNICS Type II Team A
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INTRODUCTION

The Green Valley Fire was reported by the Becker County Law Enforcement Center and identified by DNR firefighters at 15:30, May 14, 2013 and was met with immediate suppression efforts. Observed weather at Park Rapids at 15:53 was 85 degrees, relative humidity 27%, and winds 31 gusting to 44 mph. The Minnesota DNR, BIA, USFS, CCM, FWS, Wadena, Hubbard, and Becker County Sheriff's Department, multiple private contractors, and 53 fire departments including Wolf Lake, Menahga, Frazee, and Lake Park battled the fire. These efforts were supported by 20 fire engines, 4 dozers, 6 water tenders, 4 helicopters, 3-5 person hand crews, 1-20 person hotshot crew, 2 CL-215 water-scooping aircraft, Minnesota Power, TRI-COUNTY HOSPITAL ambulance, and MN DOT.

CHRONOLOGY

May 14, 2013

A formal team in-brief between Mike Aultman's Incident Management Team (IMT) and the Park Rapids Area Forester took place at 2300. The team will assume command of the Green Valley fire at 0600 on May 15th. The plans section began setting up the ICP in the senior citizens center in Menahga.

Liaison officers made contact with the MN Fire Marshall Representative assigned to the fire. They began gathering a list of fire departments (VFDs) used on the Green Valley fire. They made contacts with the Sheriffs of Wadena, Hubbard and Becker Counties and also the fire chiefs of Menahga, Wolf Lake, and Park Rapids Fire Departments. They received lists of VFDs that could be used in the next day's operation. Tim Oland, Liaison Officer, stayed with the fire chief in Menahga to help organize the next day's operations.

Operation personnel arrived on fire and gathered information for the next day's plan. After the in-brief a tactics meeting was conducted and a plan was put for the next operational period.

May 15, 2012

The Delegation of Authority between Mike Aultman's IMT and Mark Carlstrom, Park Rapids area forester, is received. Unified command organization has been established between the Sheriffs of Wadena, Becker,

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and Hubbard counties, along with fire departments from Menahga, Wolf Lake, and Park Rapids. An operational period briefing is conducted at 0700 at the Menahga fire hall. The fire has been divided into 4 divisions (DIVS) and a structure protection group. Division break outs have taken place and resources have been deployed to line. Wind speeds of 10-25 mph, RH down to 20% and a high temp of 80 degrees have made suppression efforts difficult. Heavy use of Black Hawk helicopter and CL 215 has kept the fire within containment lines. Type 3 helicopters were used for recon and bucket work.

Communications has begun to reprogram all fire suppression radios. Each division has been contacted and radios have been either reprogrammed or radios have been reissued. All Fire suppression radios have now been tested and are working. Communication has been established with ICP and all Divs.

Before the fire occurred, land owners conducted land clearing operations within fire perimeter. Many of these areas contain large chip piles. Dozers and water tenders are being used to suppress these burning piles. Within the fire perimeter there are about 40 of these piles, ranging in size from 20 square feet to 200 square feet.

Deputy IC Jim Hines arrived at the Green Valley for Operational period briefing. Jim agrees to work in operations to assist with the structure protection engines. While patrolling along highway 71, Jim overheard air attack expressing concerns about fire activity along the highway. There were three residences adjacent to fire, but they were on the opposite side of road. Air tankers could not work this area because of traffic and structure engines along highway. Jim worked with the county sheriff to move structure engines and close the highway. He then directed CL 215 drops to reduce risk of escape and structure loss. Working with division supervisor, a burnout of about 4 acres was conducted to remove the risk

A staging area has been set up at the fire hall with numerous structure engines and tenders. There is a type 6 engine with a qualified engine boss attached to staging along with a local fire officer from Menahga fire dept. This task force is responding to requests from division supervisors and 911 calls within fire perimeter.

Law enforcement responded to a potential violent domestic dispute which occurred on DIVS D. All resources have been removed from the Co. Road 159 area. App 45 minutes later, an all-clear was given by Wadena county sheriff's office. Resources have returned to the area and resumed work.

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Night operation briefing occurs at 1900, and all night resources are deployed to the fire line

Public meeting held at high school in Menahga. Speakers at this meeting were:

Mike Aultman	IC MNICS Team
Dave Hillukka	Wadena County Board chair
Cory Aukes	Hubbard county Sherriff
Mike Carr	Wadena County Sherriff
Dale Hillukka	Wolf Lake Fire Chief
Don Hoffman	Park rapids Fire Chief
Dave Kicker	Menahga Fire Chief
Tim Norman	Operations section Chief MNICS
Judy Hane-Gonzalla	Red Cross
Mike Stevens	USDA Service center
Mark Carlstrom	DNR Area forest supervisor

This public meeting was attended by approximately 400 people. The people of the City of Menahga and Wadena County showed a great appreciation for the efforts put out by all fire fighters.

A meeting was held between IC Deputy Hines, Wadena County Sheriff, Hubbard County Sheriff, and the Safety and Liaison Officers to discuss the return of evacuees to their homes. They all agreed that a safety assessment at several residences would need to be conducted before homeowners could return to their homes. Liaison will work with Fire Department representatives to inspect sites for hazard and other risks. The target will be to complete assessments before 12 pm tomorrow so that public can return to their homes

Cost at end of shift on the May 15th is \$400,000 dollars.

May 16, 2013

The briefing occurred at 0700 and all resources deployed to the fire. Fire weather conditions expected for this afternoon: weather forecast is east winds 5 -10 mph with gusts to 15, RH 19%, temperature 65-70 degrees. Good progress is being made on burning piles, resources working on mop up at various locations.

By 1300 safety assessments have been completed and fire is now open to the public.

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Some areas of burning peat have been discovered. One of these is on division D and another area at the golf course. DIVS are making plans on how to suppress the burning peat in these areas.

Night operation briefing has been conducted and resources have been deployed to line.

Cost at end of shift is \$550,000

May 17th 2013

The briefing occurred at 0700 and all resources are deployed to the fire. Palm IR flight was conducted at 0630. This information was delivered to situation unit leader, downloaded by GISS, and placed on maps. 53 spots were located and search and destroy missions were conducted by fire fighters.

Heavy rains are forecasted for the night operation. A plan is created to move night resources back to fire hall and a roll call conducted to account for all resources.

A draw down of firefighting resources is planned for the next operational period if significant rain occurs overnight. This will be our last night operation.

Night operation occurs at 2000 and all resources are deployed to the line.

Cost at end of shift is \$700,000

May 18th 2013

The briefing occurred at 0700 and all resources are deployed to the fire line. Rain occurred overnight on the fire ranging from .4 to .85 inches. All structure engines will be demobilized as the day progresses.

Palm IR flight was flown and 6 hot spots were located. Search and destroy missions were conducted by fire fighters.

FIRE BEHAVIOR AND INCIDENT WEATHER

Fire behavior forecasts with brief safety messages, and fire weather forecasts were produced for each IAP beginning the evening of May 14 and through the duration of the assignment.

A Quick Deploy Portable RAWS was set up on the southeast side of the fire near the head the morning of May 15. Weather observations were transmitted via the GOES West satellite and made available on the internet through the University of Utah – MesoWest. Daily and hourly Canadian Fire

Weather Indices were also initiated and made available on the Lake States Fire and Fuels System through MesoWest. The RAWS was also equipped with a Bendix King radio, making real-time observations available to fireline personnel via the DNR Statewide frequency.

Coordination occurred with the National Weather Service in Grand Forks, who provided twice daily weather forecasts specific to the fire area (Spot Fire Weather Forecasts). The NWS also provided weather related guidance for flight operations on the fire.

Recommendations:

- Having an FBAN assigned on scene is important for a fire of this nature. I recommend that IMTs on future fires with expected multi-operational periods do the same.
- Since the fire did not grow appreciably after the first run on May 14, the FBAN was able to also fulfill weather related functions for the IMT. Products and service provided by the National Weather Service in Grand Forks was excellent. For future consideration, if a fire is expected to continue to move over multi-operational periods, or in other more complex situations, I recommend including an IMET with the initial team call-up or soon thereafter.

COMMAND

In-briefing was from Mark Carlstrom, Area Forest Supervisor at the Park Rapids Area Office at 2300 on May 14, 2013. The Delegation of Authority was received from Mark Carlstrom that night and objectives were established and signed by MN Incident Management Team IC Mike Aultman.

A unified command organization was formed with Aultman's team A; Menahga, Wolf Lake and Park Rapids Fire Departments; Wadena, Hubbard and Becker County sheriff office. The Green Valley fire burned approximately 7100 acres. Fuel types included Norway Pine plantations, mixed hardwoods and upland grass areas. The fire destroyed 12 Dwellings, 43 out buildings and 3 commercial properties. There were 136 Private land owners who had structures threatened or destroyed on this fire. Over 400 structures were saved through suppression efforts

The team began arriving at 2200 on May 15th. Aultman's unified Incident Management Team assumed command of the fire at 0600 on Thursday May 15th. Resources used on the fire were Medawin Hot Shot Crew, CCM Crews, Engines, Track Vehicles, Contract Dozers, along with engines and tankers from Menahga, Park Rapids and Wolf lake Fire Departments. Mutual Aid was established and 50 additional fire departments were involved with response

over the time of the incident. Two CL215, three Type 1 helicopters and two type 3 helicopters were used on the incident.

The Delegation of Authority was transferred back to the Park Rapids DNR Area at 1700 on Sunday 5/19/2013.

LIASON OFFICER

This fast moving wildfire taxed local Fire Departments. Initially Wolf Lake VFD requested mutual aid from Park Rapids and Menahga Fire Departments for structure protection. The fire quickly moved into Hubbard and Wadena counties. Soon after, mutual aid was requested from all fire departments in Hubbard, Becker and Wadena counties. Over 40 departments responded to the initial call for help. Initial reports indicated that at least six residences and an undetermined number of outbuildings were destroyed.

Command and control was initially handled through the Menahga Fire Chief located at Menahga City Hall. With multiple resources arriving at the same time and responding to multiple calls, the Fire Chief did a great job of coordinating the response. Our Liaison Trainee Oland actively engaged in the coordination effort along with Deputy Fire Marshal Mahle. Together they tracked resource status and documented those involved. By the Morning Briefing, they had a list of resources involved with contact numbers. This was invaluable for the planning of the days organization.

Throughout the rest of the incident, coordination of the fire department response was a daily task. Fire Marshal Supervisor Glen Bergstrand assisted with the coordination of the Fire Departments on the day shift.

What Went Well

- Because of the coordination that occurred with initial attack, a day shift plan was put in place very quickly. Fire departments were utilized and given assignments within a short time. We never had any complaints or concerns expressed to us from the fire departments.
- Unified command was initiated at the beginning of the incident. DNR, Fire Department and the County Sheriff were "joined at the hip." Evacuations of the nursing home, and residences were completed and housed prior to the team's operational period. Red Cross, political figures (Mayor and County Commissioner) were also in the Menahga Fire Hall EOC. They signed agreements for Red Cross participation for Response and Recovery efforts. These agreements were out into place before the next operational period. This allowed emergency responders to be fed before the logistics section was in place. It gave the team valuable time

to put the plan into place once the team members were assembled at 0700 on 5/14/2013.

- The Wadena County Assessor's staff helped us immensely with the identification of the structures damaged or destroyed by the fire. Three staff were escorted by a Liaison to survey and document the destruction. Through that survey, they prepared a packet of information on each parcel and its structures involved. This also included an assessed value of the structures destroyed.
- The 53 Fire Departments did an outstanding job mitigating this incident. At a community meeting, a statement by one of the residents was "We were at the point of giving up when the fire was overwhelming us. Just at this point, a fire department apparatus came down the road and said, we are here to help you, and we will take care of this for you." She said "This is a statement I will remember the rest of my life". This effort goes to improve the image of the fire service in the community.

Areas for Improvement

- Fire department orders were not placed through ROSS in a timely manner. A better process would have been to get the request through Operations, the Liaison could have determined availability and either Operations or the Liaison could have placed the order with a General Message form to the Ordering Manager.
- With the mutual aid request for fire departments, we had departments arriving that did not have a Cooperative Fire Protection Agreement in place. Some discussion was to have the departments keep a copy in their unit. Another comment was they can bring one with them when requested. A better solution may be to have all Cooperative Agreement on a digital storage that would be available to any incident in Minnesota. A possible plan to discuss in the future would be to develop a Statewide Cooperative Fire Protection Agreement to be used for Statewide Mutual Aid Responses. This Agreement could use the suggested Equipment Standards and Hourly Rates for payments.

SAFETY

- Team was in full compliance with the 10 Standards Firefighting Orders, 18 Watch Out Situations, Thirty Mile Abatement Plan, Daily Incident Risk Analysis [215A] , OSHA Abatement Plan and the implementation of L.C.E.S. prior to operational engagement.
- All fire personnel received a thorough briefing prior to being assigned to fire operations. A verbal Safety briefing was presented daily at the 0700 Hrs. operations briefing. A Safety Message was developed for each operational period addressing hazards identified and proper mitigations were implemented addressing those hazards, ensuring firefighter and public safety. A.A.R.'s [after action review] were conducted upon the

completion of the daily operations period @2100 Hrs. led by the Division Supervisors, OPSC and SOF2. Hazards not identified in previous briefings were then identified and properly mitigated.

- The required Medical protocols {2011} were incorporated into the daily I.A.P. and reviewed with all resources assigned to the incident.
- An Incident Ambulance was ordered and one was provided by Tri-County Ambulance staffed with a Paramedic and EMT. This provided the Incident Medical Services and Advanced Life Support should either be required. An incident VHF radio was assigned to them and the Medical Unit Leader worked closely throughout the incident with these personnel.
- Incident Communications were a concern involving Armer [800MHz] system and VHF [King] radio systems incompatibility. Issues that developed were mitigated but additional measures will have to be implemented for future incidents to ensure proper communications are in place prior to fire resources engaging in operations.
- All assigned resources were briefed on expectations of conduct for all assigned personnel not only during operational periods but also during off-duty periods while interfacing throughout the community of Menahga and neighboring communities.
- As of this writing no lost time injuries/accidents were reported for the incident.

INFORMATION

As expected, the demand for information on this high profile incident was very high for the first 48 hours. Local media including radio and newspapers were present throughout the incident. Fargo area and twin cities television, radio, and print media including MPR were present the first 48 hours. National television (FOX) also made contact. Numerous television, radio and newsprint interviews, live and taped were provided. Media interest dissipated in relationship to visible smoke and from midday May 16th was nearly nonexistent.

Products developed by the Information section included Daily Fact sheets that were supplied to MIFC for posting to www.mnics.org, provided by E-mail to media outlets that provided E-mail addresses, a list of DNR St Paul staff, and provided to trap line sites in Menahga and Park Rapids. Provided also to traplines were daily map updates. Developed also as a handout was a list of local services and assistance to those directly impacted by the fire for use as a handout by suppression forces that were interacting with those affected and posted on the trapline. Photo's including Aerial shots were taken by staff and supplied to media and posted on the same MNICS web site. Appreciation letters and certificates were developed for all requests.

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Face to face contact was made with all businesses that constituted the trap line and briefed daily. All were advised of the last day that information was being provided. The list of trap line locations has been provided in documentation. There are no unfinished contacts or unmet commitments that are known.

What went well:

- In briefings that occur during the first day of the event are always beneficial to Information staff getting ahead of the information crush.
- The ability of MIFC to supply the requested number of PIO's in a timely manner and the addition of a PIO (T) to the initial order of the team set the section up to successfully deal with the first day information requests. This support is critical in the first 72 hours.
- The utilization of a first day and subsequent second day (Team assignment) media briefing to manage media requests and consolidate escorts worked well, as hoped. These were greatly facilitated by MIFC news release support.
- The ICP facilities were excellent for Info needs.
- The CTSP was invaluable to the success of the info team.
- Holding a successful public meeting the first day of the assignment got in front of the public need for information and all but eliminated rumor control during the critical first couple of days in the life of incident information needs.
- The ability to share some of the expertise of PIO staff with communications worked well from my perspective.

What needs improvement:

- Getting hard line phones that can be staffed dependably within a plan is critical to media and public credibility in public information. This resource was slow to develop and resulted in known lost opportunities to work with media and residents.
- The clothing that media arrives in continues to be a restriction to line escort and restrictive to meeting their need and expectation. This is a safety concern on fires like this with such good road access.

OPERATIONS

The direction provided for the Green Valley Fire was:

- Keep the fire from burning south toward the city of Menahga and east toward other private lands and state forestland
- Secure fire perimeter and protect unburned structures within the perimeter
- Mop up 150 feet from structures and control lines
- Locate and extinguish burning chip/slash/dozer piles

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Local and non-local fire department, agency and contractor resources had stopped the spread of the fire by the time our team assumed responsibility for the fire on the morning of May 15.

The challenges associated with the Green Valley Fire were;

- Large size (7,100 acres)
- Multiple structures damaged/destroyed and threatened
- Dry flashy grass/conifer fuels
- Wildland Urban Interface hazards common to WUI fires
- Numerous burning chip/slash/dozer piles.

Hot-spotting by ground and air resources kept the fire from growing and kept more structures from being damaged or destroyed on the 15th. Mop up and perimeter control continued until and after the rainfall came.

Fire Departments, aircraft, tracked vehicles, dozers, engines, and hand crews were utilized on the Green Valley Fire, with approximately 217 personnel on the ground during the peak of suppression efforts.

Recommendations:

A key to our success on the Green Valley Fire was the use of engines, tenders, provided by volunteer fire departments. The positive working relationships with these departments should continue to be maintained and enhanced where possible. Continued training with the VFD's will enhance and improve our response to future wildfire and all risk incidents.

CCM crews and DNR Ready Reserve fill a critical niche in fire suppression. Ready access to those crews was important in successfully suppressing the fire.

Commendations:

Menahga Fire Department and City employees were very helpful, despite the serious impacts of the fire to their community.

AIR OPERATIONS

What went well:

- Mobilization of National Guard Blackhawks. System is in place, has been tested and works fairly well. Pilots know our operation and are fairly versed in communications, tactics, etc. Military managers are assigned and are essential to a smooth operation.
- Support from MIFC getting our Helitack trailers here and set-up.
- Palm IR missions and getting hot spots to the DIVS. in a very timely manner.

- Park Rapids Airport worked very well as a Helibase for the Guard and our Light helicopters. Excellent cooperation from the city, no fees, no Use
- Agreement needed. Having 2 ASGS assigned to this incident were critical. Logistics of the Guard, remote Bases from ICP, etc. Thief River Airport works very well as a Guard Base also.

What needs improvement:

- Communication - Air/Ground Frequency did not work when Air Attack was coordinating CL-215's for clearing the line, etc. This occurred on 2nd day of incident.
- Division break change in the middle of operational period, affected helicopter operations.
- Chinook not needed for this incident. Standard complement should be 2 Blackhawks.

LOGISTICS

The logistics section was staffed with a LSC2, 2-FACL, FDUL(T), SPUL, SPUL(T), ORDM, RCDM, COML, 2-COMT, 4-RADO. This was a good training experience for the SPUL(T) and the FDUL(T). We used the Senior Community Center as an ICP. Plans and Liaison were the first to arrive in Menahga and with the help of city officials obtained the use of the center which worked out great for needs. The center along with the fire hall served as our ICP and area for briefing.

We used several different motels and resorts in the surrounding area/communities. As always it is a real challenge to find and track on rooms. We were able to keep people on per-diem and as far as we know meals were not an issue. The incident did furnish lunches for line crews/folks.

The local government authorities were very helpful and great to work with. Local vendors were also very helpful and went out of their way to accommodate our needs. This was also one of the best details we have had as far communication with MIFC, especially in ordering! There were some issues with communications that did take some time to resolve but were taken care of for the second shift. The COML will bring these issues up to the communication working team. There were no medical emergencies/injuries reported.

FACILITIES UNIT

- ICP was located at the Menahga Senior Center.
- Menahga Fire hall was utilized for incident briefings.
- Meals and Lodging were not provided by the incident everyone was self-sufficient.

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- Lodging was provided by Motels and Resorts in Park Rapids, Menahga, Wadena and surrounding area Resorts
- Sack lunches for field personal were provided by Hugo's market in Park Rapids and the Cottage House café in Menahga
- Water, gator aid and ice were provided by Hugo's market

Things that went well:

- The senior center had adequate space for this incident.
- Local venders and community members were extremely helpful

GROUND SUPPORT UNIT

Ground support arrived in Park Rapids at 2200 on the evening of 5/14/2013. Briefing was held at 0700 the next morning. A lot of equipment was already engaged (dozers, fire dept., & agency personnel). Had numerous inspections to do on dozers and track vehicles. All inspections went well, though it would have been more efficient/timely to have an EQPM to assist. An EQPM was ordered on Tuesday 5/14. This order went unfilled with the problem/concern being offices not letting qualified people go due to staffing needs at their offices.

Only issue was diesel being dispersed into a gas engine and gas being dispersed in a diesel engine. Both issues were resolved with no equipment damage. An individual could not locate fuel card when refueling and had to charge it at the Shell station in Menahga. The Shell station could not accept a credit card for payment. Finance had to setup a vendor ID for payment. Had one flat tire and one lost chainsaw; paperwork was given for the chainsaw (Lost or Stolen Form). The driver (George Lilly) stepped in and did a great job for ground support.

COMMUNICATION UNIT

I would like to thank local forester Brad Witkin for his efforts in getting the night RADO slot filled, with all the other duties he had; he was still able to get some local assets mobilized and fill a difficult slot.

Early on in the fire there was confusion on what frequencies we were to be using. This caused some serious problems for safe operations on the fire. Within a few hours the problem was discovered and corrected but it did require an on the fly re-cloning of all radios assigned to the fire. A thank you to the Division supervisors for helping to get this done as quickly as possible.

A good location for the repeater was located in the middle of the fire that gave fair communications over the fire. There seemed to be some pretty steep topography in places that may have reduced the quality in some areas

but no dead zones were reported.

RADOs were again hard to come by. There was a surplus of PIOs; two of which had RADO qualifications, which were loaned to the communications unit. This greatly helped resolve the issue. It was difficult to fill RADO positions.

MEDICAL

The Medical Unit was established at the ICP in the Menahga Community/Senior Center on 5/15/2013.

Staffing:

- Richard Marsolek served as MEDL 5/15 and 5/18-20. John Bajda was MEDL 5/16-17.
- Two EMTs were ordered for the fire. The order was filled with one EMT and one paramedic. They were assigned as a team to patrol the fire area.
- They will be DEMOBED at the end of the last operational period on 5/19.
- Tri-County Ambulance, Wadena, was contracted as an incident ambulance, 5/15-5/17. They were positioned in the fire area.
- Ambulance was demobilized at the end of the operational period on 5/17.

Injuries and Illnesses:

- No injuries were reported.
- No significant issues or concerns were identified.

Several factors made it possible to expect transfer of patients from fire ground to hospital within the "Golden Hour".

- Road access to the fire ground was very good.
- Advanced Life Support ambulance service was available for assignment as an incident ambulance for the first three days of the incident. The paramedic/EMT crew was provided with an incident radio.
- The local first responder group had a well-equipped rescue vehicle and was capable of rapid response to the fire ground. Though they could not transport, this was still a good resource to have available after the incident ambulance was released two days before the fire was transitioned to the Area. They also loaned a backboard to the incident paramedic/EMT team. The backboard will be returned at the end of the 5/19 operational period.
- The ambulance was not on incident for night operations but night ops crews included a paramedic and EMTs with equipment.

Points to consider:

- The fire was in the Tri-County Hospital ambulance primary service area and therefore, ambulance response is from Wadena, approximately 30

minutes from Menahga, even though North Ambulance in Park Rapids is only approximately 15 minutes from Menahga. Likewise, Tri-County ambulance will transport to Tri-County hospital in Wadena, even though St. Joseph's hospital in Park Rapids is closer.

- The Tri-County Ambulance crew indicated local air ambulance services prefer to pick up patients from hospital rather than responding directly to the scene. Tri-County hospital has a helipad, St. Joseph's does not.
- It would be an asset to have backboards and trauma kits included in the cache van, as suggested after previous incidents.

SUPPLY

Things that went well:

- Supplies were received on schedule from R9 fire cache and supplemented with local purchases from finance.
- Orders flowed smoothly between MIFC dispatch and the ordering unit.
- Ordering entered the local supply purchases into ROSS directly. This made it very efficient for creating "S" numbers in a timely manner. We highly recommend that this procedure continues on future incidents.

FINANCE

Things that went well:

- The use of the state emergency credit card to pay for local purchases.
- The knowledge of Nancy Calder and her contacts to gather contracts for fire departments invoices. Fire departments came from 6 Forestry Areas.
- The computer network system worked very well. The staff were able to set it up and maintain it through the incident.

What needs improvement:

- A better system to handle large call-ups of fire departments. There were 53 fire departments with 142 pieces of equipment. Not one department carried a contract with them. Park Rapids Area Forestry had the contracts with the local departments, but outlying departments contracts were not available. With the rapid turnover of equipment and fire departments, the billing process quickly became chaotic.
- Longer periods of time that a fire department piece of equipment is committed to the incident. While rotation of fire departments delivers fresh firefighters to the incident, daily changes of departments brings in firefighters who need to learn the terrain, the current conditions, hazards, tactics and strategies, but then leave for the next rotation of firefighters.

Recommendations:

- If a large incident occurs again that requires the use of large numbers of fire departments, I would recommend that an invoice processing group of a Procurement Unit Leader and 1 EQTR's per 10 fire departments be assigned

PLANS

Schedule

Operation Briefing	0700
Command and General Staff	1300
Tactics	1800
Planning	1900
Night Brief	2000

The Plans Section was staffed with a PSC2, PSC2(t), SITL, RESL(t) GISS, GISS(t), CTSP, CTSP(t). Moving from the Buffalo Ranch Fire to the Green Valley Fire caused a great upheaval of team organization. Green Valley fire was in the original PSC2's home area, so he was unable to continue with the assembled team. Upon arrival at the Green Valley Fire, PSC2(t) and LIOF determined the Fire Hall was not suitable for an ICP and an alternate was secured. At the in-briefing, there was confusion between Planning Ops and the Plans Chief trainee regarding assigned resources. A plan without assigned resources was created. During the first two operational periods, the RESL(t) was not able to keep up with check-ins, creating a night ops IAP, and developing an IAP for the next operational shift. The unit struggled to catch up, but was running smoothly by the third operational period.

What went well:

- The team had excellent cooperation and support from the local community and areas. We used the mobile plotter. Having it transported in the minivan worked really well.
- The Menahga community center functioned well for ICP.
- Copy service was obtained at the Menahga City Hall. They gave us a key and we documented the number of copies made.

What needs improvement

- Meeting space was limited
- Fire Hall ICP was often confused with MNICS ICP
- Management of the VFD check-in did not operate efficiently

RESOURCES UNIT

The mobilization to the fire and set up went very well. The first major challenge was getting information on resources present on the incident and

preparing an IAP for the first shift. The first briefing helped to acquire a lot of information on resources, especially the fire departments. The Resources unit was overwhelmed with the check-in of new resources and preparation of a night shift IAP and the second day shift IAP. Eventually the team provided assistance and everything was caught up.

A suggestion to help with the initial surge of resources and data entry needs is to order two Resource Unit Leaders or else assign someone from another unit to assist. A combo status check-in\time recorder is a good example.

DEMOBILIZATION UNIT

After the forecast rain, demobilization was also forecast to be busy. We coordinated with Finance and Staging to reduce bottlenecks in the ICP. Staging held resources until notified that Finance was ready to process more resources. While at staging, the manager helped fill out shift tickets for contract equipment. There were very few hold ups and all demobilizations were processed efficiently. I would recommend this process to reduce the amount of resources bottlenecked in demobilization.

There was a lot of contract equipment, mostly fire department engines, which were on scene during initial attack only. These engines did not complete the check-in or demobilization process and had to be processed as one group.

SITUATION UNIT

After setting and breaking down up an ICP for the Buffalo Ranch fire we arrived at 2100 in Menahga and set up the Situation Unit. We received our in briefing at 2300 and due to the late hour we produced hand drawn maps for the next day's IAP. Thereafter GISS produced maps for the IAP, Transportation, Air Operations, Information, ownership and Rehab needs. 209s were submitted daily direct to the FAMWEB site.

What Went Well:

- Having a dedicated plotter available to the incident. Sherry Watson brought it with her and it was up and running as soon as we arrived at Menahga.
- A GISS(t) assigned. Having two GISS personnel assigned allowed for quick updates to maps as needed. Their varying expertise complimented each other well.
- Menahga City Hall provided copy service. The staff was friendly and cooperative. Having the ability to make numerous color 11x17 copies locally was extremely helpful.
- The Menahga Senior Center had ample space and a wireless internet that was available as soon as we arrived.

What needs improvement:

- The Isuite 209 report is not consistent with reporting needs in the 209. Standardizing agency categories and resource names should be done.

GISS

GISS working team contacts were utilized the first day to help remotely collect data and post maps to the MINCS website at www.mnics.org. Local county GIS staff provided an updated parcel ownership GIS layer for rehabilitation efforts. A GISS(t) was available which was helpful as the first few days would have been hard to be efficient and productive otherwise. The GIS data and products produced during the Green Valley Fire incident can be downloaded from the National Interagency Fire Center Incident FTP Service at

[Ftp://ftp.nifc.gov/Incident Specific Data/EASTERN/Minnesota/2013 Green Valley/GIS](ftp://ftp.nifc.gov/Incident%20Specific%20Data/EASTERN/Minnesota/2013%20Green%20Valley/GIS).

COMPUTER SPECIALIST

Two CTSPs were ordered for this incident. The network was setup at the Senior Center and was connected directly to their Internet connection. The wireless connection was also utilized. Isuite v. 13 was installed on the kit machines, but there are several issues and no known fix. Isuite v.13 was removed and Isuite v. 12 was installed.

A ROSS Import was done through Isuite. The ROSS Import took approximately 15 minutes to do and the Quick Reference Guide on the Isuite website was accurately useful. All six kit machines were deployed; two in finance, two in plans, one in logistics, and one for the server. All other PCs were brought by individuals. Longer cables were made to connect the communications and finance trailers to the Senior Center. The Buffalo Drive was also setup. It worked well to have two CTSPs arrive on incident to setup the network. After initial setup and the network was stable, team reduced to one CTSP.

Isuite Passwords & Server Information

Isuite Version:

12.01.02

Isuite Admin user:

Username: GreenValley

Password: Greenvallley2013!

Isuite Database:

Green Valley Fire Narrative

Name: Greenvally

Password: Greenvally2013!

IP Addresses:

Server: 192.168.10.100

Buffalo: 192.168.10.235

Plotter: 192.168.10.115

Xerox Printer: 192.168.10.115

HP 4500 Printer: 192.168.10.110

HP Color LaserJet CP3525: 192.168.10.125