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October 3, 2024, MNICS Task Force Meeting

Task Force: Greg Carlson, Cory Berg, William Glesener, Darrin Franco, Jacob Beauregard, Nick Petrack

Non-Task Force Attendees: Ryan Kingsley, Leanne Langeberg (Notes), Brian Wise, Kevin Carlisle,

Guest: Caleb Schreiber, USDA Forest Service

DISCUSSION TOPIC	NOTES
Budget Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The Task Force reviewed the monthly budget expenses.- The MNICS Coop funding is awaiting an invoice from the USDA Forest Service for the Minnesota Interagency Coordination Center chairs. Ryan Kingsley will follow up on the invoice status.- USDA Forest Service grants and agreements inquired about the status of signatures for the MNICS financial operating plan. Ryan Kingsley and William Glesener will coordinate efforts to obtain the final signatures.
Building Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The Minnesota Interagency Fire Center and NEK Support Cache building inspection was conducted in September.- The training room smartboards are currently in contract bidding status.- USDA Forest Service Region 9 engineer plans to visit the Hibbing Tanker Base to inspect the tanker base trailer as a possible replacement of the Radio Shop trailer at the fire center. The Minnesota DNR will be building a new office facility at the Tanker Base, and the current trailer, which served as office space, will become excess property. If the trailer fits within the footprint of the current radio shop at the fire center location, some retrofitting of the plumbing, heating and electrical will be necessary.- The Task Force reviewed the building committees' office plan and will approve the final draft, which it will then submit to the MNICS Board of Directors for final approval.
MNICS Master Cooperative Agreement Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The MNICS Master Cooperative Agreement is ready to move to the next level of review with the regional grants and agreement team with the USDA Forest Service and will then be reviewed by the Washington Office.- The Task Force will review the current document in the Pinion document management tool and make any final edits by October 9, 2024.
MNICS Meeting Planning Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The <i>MNICS Meeting Hold the Date</i> notification and request for MNICS award nominations was distributed MNICS-wide.- The location of the meeting will be at the Holiday Inn & Suites Duluth, Downtown. A follow-up email will be sent out with additional meeting details when the hotel confirms and sends the hotel room-block information.- Langeberg will send a request for Annual Report contributions sometime next week.- The three guest speakers are set.- Due to budget constraints for some of the MNICS partners, the Task Force requested a question be added to the registration to verify attendees have the agency's fire management officer's approval to attend.- Registration will be turned off by November 15.- The general session will not be hosted as a live hybrid meeting. Working teams will have the option to set hybrid meetings on their own.



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Meeting with the MNICS Board of Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Task Force will meet with the Board of Director's on November 7, to discuss the - Future of the MNCC Dispatch white paper. The Task Force will provide copies of the white paper for each board member and present an introduction and summary overview of the information in the white paper. - As time permits, the Task Force would like to incorporate a brief tour of the current MNCC dispatch floor and establish the December joint Board of Directors and Task Force meeting agenda topics.
Fire Restrictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The burning restrictions language was not officially relocated to the Minnesota Fire Danger Operating Plan (FDOP) when it was agreed be removed from the MNICS Mobilization Guide in 2022. - A single amendment will be shared with the Board of Directors and used for the remainder of this year. - The Task Force will assign updating the Fire Danger Operating Plan's Public Fire Restrictions staffing plans as a working team assignment to the Prescribed Fire and Fuels with the assistance of the Operations Working Team.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BIA – The BIA's request for long-term severity was approved on October 2. Fire occurrence is more notable as conditions continue to dry, and resources are moving around to meet the need. The Helicopter and Helitack from the Crow Agency is prepositioned in Bemidji and will time out at the end of October. BIA is looking into adding a Fire Boss to pair with the one currently at Bemidji Tanker Base. Berg is working with the Eastern Area Geographic Coordination Center manager to streamline the ordering process to improve the approval time for aircraft requested at the regional level. The BIA has paused prescribed burning nationwide, and the pause is expected to remain until the national preparedness level reaches PL-2. The regional training position announcement has closed, and the agency hopes to fill the position in early November. - DNR – The state has brought in two engines from Michigan. The engine will be available to the state for two weeks. DNR is moving firefighting staff around to support the areas in need. The Radio 2 Technician position is open and closes in three weeks. A Type 3 helicopter is now available out of Grand Marais. DNR is working on issuing burning restrictions for Lake and Cook Counties. The restrictions should be signed by the close of business and have an official start time of 12:01 on October 4. DNR has hired and onboarded an MNCC operations dispatcher. The Great Lakes Forest Fire Compact meeting was held last week in Manitoba, and a notable change to Manitoba's wildfire leadership change was announced during the meeting. Set up is underway at General Andrews for the FI2010, including some prescribed burning to set up plots for the course. The division has three instructors and five students attending. - FWS – A selection for the Detroit Lakes fire management officer position selection was made. Agency staff are taking on fewer fire assignments. The agency is preparing for the new fiscal year. The agency has advertised the 1039 positions and is accepting applications - HSEM – EMAC requests for hurricane response are steadily coming into HSEM. St. Louis County has sent a command post down, and the army guard group is on standby. They are expected to depart on Saturday or Sunday. The All-Hazard team will be heading down to support. The agency will be participating in a communications exercise hosted in Superior, Wisconsin.



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Agency Updates cont.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- NPS – The fire season is winding down at Voyageurs National Park, and seasonal staff positions will wrap up at the end of the week. The park is waiting on a budget before approving the hiring of a new GS-06 fire position. The furlough positions will move a schedule of 22 pay periods on and four pay periods off. The Omaha Deputy Regional Fire Management Officer position is open for applications. The fall burning projects are pending with dry conditions. The park superintendent has been briefed on the possibility of burning restrictions coming soon.- USFS – The Superior National Forest’s request for severity was approved and will go into effect the next pay period. The driest conditions in the Forest occur in the Ely and Seagull Lake area of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. The Chippewa National Forest completed a 200-acre burn. The Chippewa’s indices are slowly starting to increase. The Superior will be bringing in an out-of-state engine. The Job Corp will send a crew to support the Superior National Forest. The temporary fire staff – 1039 and 18/8 seasonal positions have been released for the season, and no extensions will be granted. The NEK Cache positions are still moving through the hiring process.- MNCC – MNCC is bringing on additional detailers to assist with 14-hour 7-day staffing and covering time off and vacations for regular MNCC staff.

Next Task Force Meeting will be November 7, 2024 at MIFC.