



# **Minnesota Incident Command System 2018 Annual Report**



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# Minnesota Incident Command System

## **MNICS Mission:**

“To provide coordination, education and implementation of the Incident Command System in Minnesota and support fire and all-risk incidents in the nation.”

## **MNICS Goals:**

- Provide timely, safe and cost-effective mobilization and demobilization of resources under the closest forces concept.
- Collect and disseminate intelligence data within specified local and national time frames.
- Assess the capabilities within Minnesota to respond to critical emergency situations.

## **2018 MNICS Board of Directors**

Bob DeGross, Superintendent, Voyageurs National Park

Connie Cummins, Forest Supervisor, Superior National Forest

Joe Neuberger, HSEM Ops Branch Director, Department of Public Safety

Russ Langford, Deputy Regional Fire Management Coordinator, USFWS

Darla Lenz, Forest Supervisor, Chippewa National Forest

Paul Lundgren, Fire Section Manager, Minnesota DNR

Tom Remus, Fire Management Officer, Bureau of Indian Affairs

## **2018 MNICS Task Force**

Kurt Fogelberg, Fire Management Officer, Voyageurs National Park

Chase Marshall, Forest Fire Management Officer, US Forest Service

Roy Holmes, Regional Program Coordinator, HSEM

Seth Grimm, West Zone Fire Management Officer, US Fish & Wildlife Service

Ron Stoffel, Wildfire Operations Supervisor, Minnesota DNR

Cory Berg, Fire Management Specialist, Bureau of Indian Affairs



# Message from the Chair

The Minnesota Incident Command System has a rich history of interagency cooperation, being a national model and example of ICS. As always, we continue to seek out improvements and enhancements which help our organization develop and grow.

The MNICS leadership is confident we can utilize the new combination of the Eastern Area Type 2 IMTs and MNICS Interagency Type 3 IMTs to increase our opportunities and capabilities to respond to incidents, and to build and maintain the qualifications needed for fire response here in Minnesota. This IMT organizational structure better prepares all MNICS agencies to respond appropriately based on incident complexity in the future.

Be assured, the MNICS Board of Directors is engaged, maybe more so now than they ever have been; and the Task Force continues to provide leadership for the day to day operational functions of the MNICS organization, make decisions related to forward direction of MNICS and implement the direction received from the Board. The MNICS Working Teams have been, and will continue to be, an important part of the organization, even with the changes in the IMT structure. We recognize there has been a lot of change in MNICS over the last couple years. We look forward to 2019 and the opportunities, challenges, successes it will bring.

On behalf of the MNICS Task Force, I thank everyone for their dedication, cooperation, professionalism and participation this year.

Seth Grimm (FWS)  
MNICS 2018 Task Force Chair



Winter 2017-2018 was cold and snowier than usual, and winter arrived early after a late October winter storm. Despite that snow, overall precipitation was less than normal, so there was not as much water for the soils going into the spring. Dry conditions worsened in the spring, and northwestern Minnesota had some warmer than normal days during the latter half of April and first half of May. These conditions contributed to several days of critical fire weather conditions in April and May. By the middle of May, the northern half of Minnesota was in need of rain. Four Red Flag Warnings were issued (April 22, April 29, May 4 and May 15).

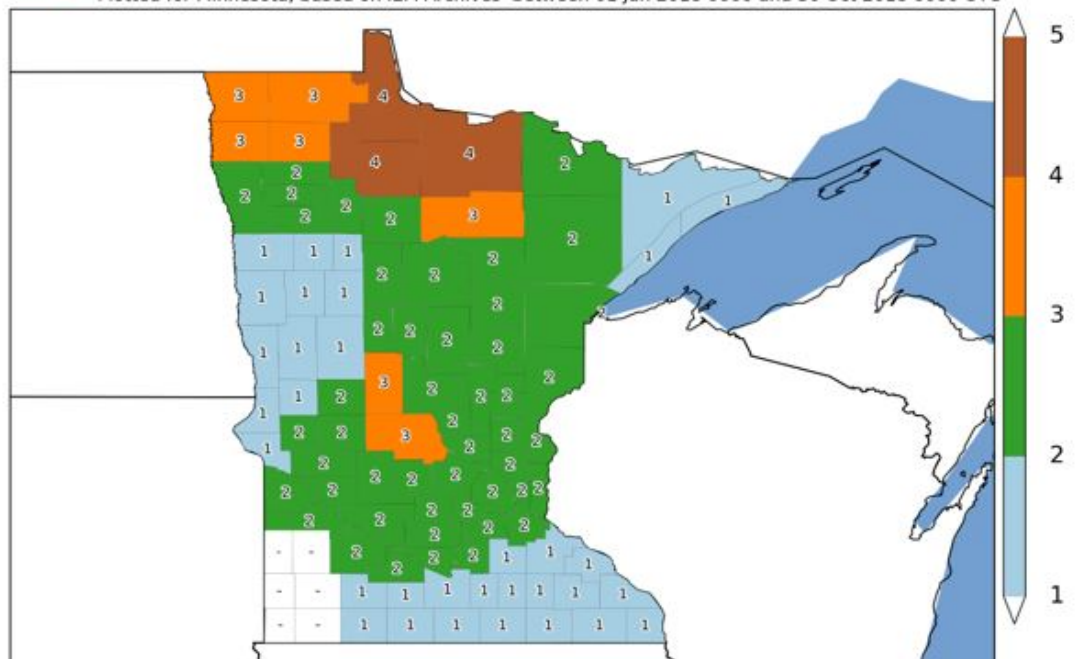
Wetter weather developed in the late spring, and this helped alleviate the creeping drought conditions that were developing in the middle of the spring. However, the dry conditions redeveloped in much of the state during the summer, especially across northern Minnesota. Moderate drought conditions developed in northwest Minnesota by late August.

Temperatures were cooler than average throughout much of the state in the winter of 2017-2018. This caused concerns about the fall fire weather season, but a reversal in the weather pattern to cool and wet weather in the fall made for a very quiet fall. The rains alleviated the drought conditions.



# National Weather Service

 **Total Red Flag Warning (FW.W)**  
Plotted for Minnesota, based on IEM Archives between 01 Jan 2018 0000 and 30 Oct 2018 0000 UTC



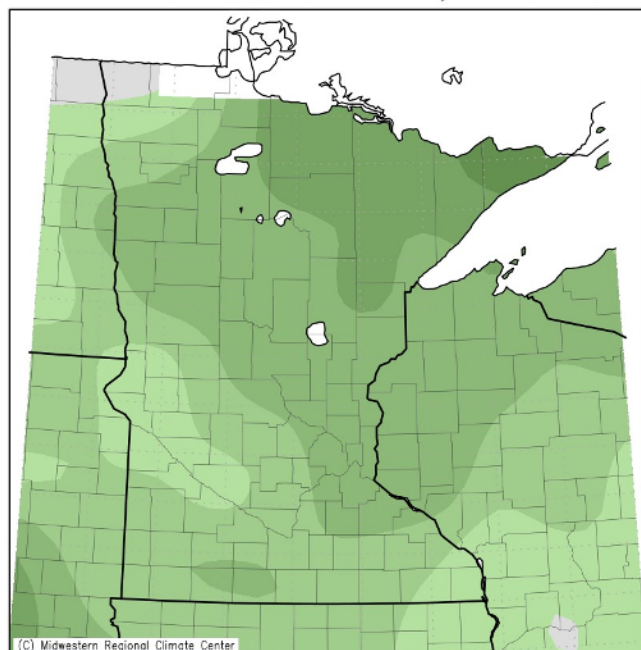
Total number of Red Flag Warnings issued per county in 2018 .

Generated at 30 Oct 2018 7:30 AM CDT in 1.50s

IEM Autoplot App #90

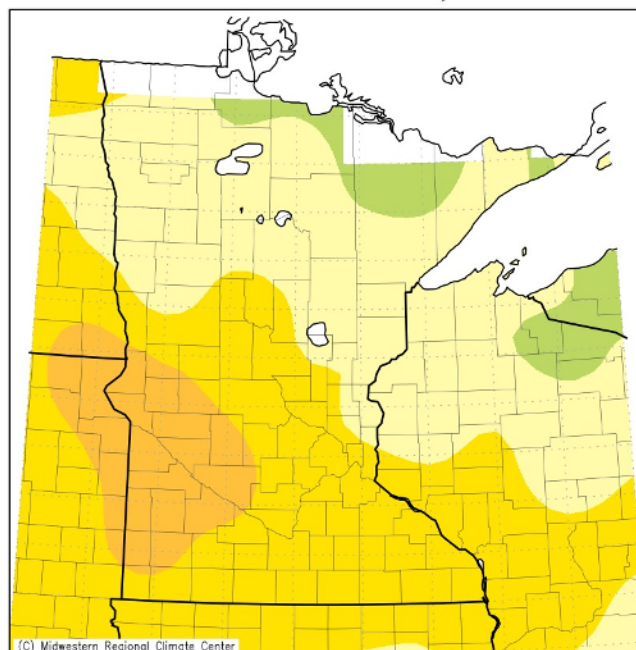
Contributor: Bill Leatham, NWS-Duluth

Average Temperature (°F): Departure from Mean  
December 1, 2017 to February 28, 2018



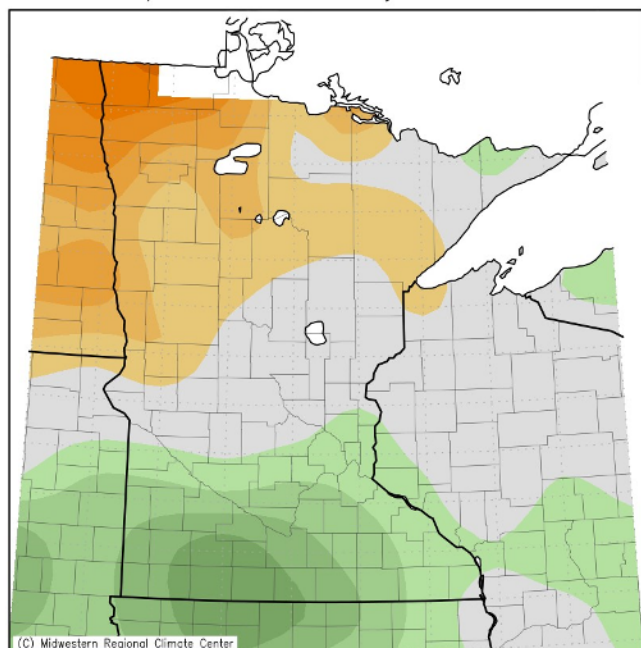
Midwestern Regional Climate Center  
cli-MATE: MRCC Application Tools Environment  
Generated at: 10/31/2018 10:36:15 AM CDT

Accumulated Precipitation: Percent of Mean  
November 1, 2017 to February 28, 2018



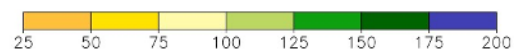
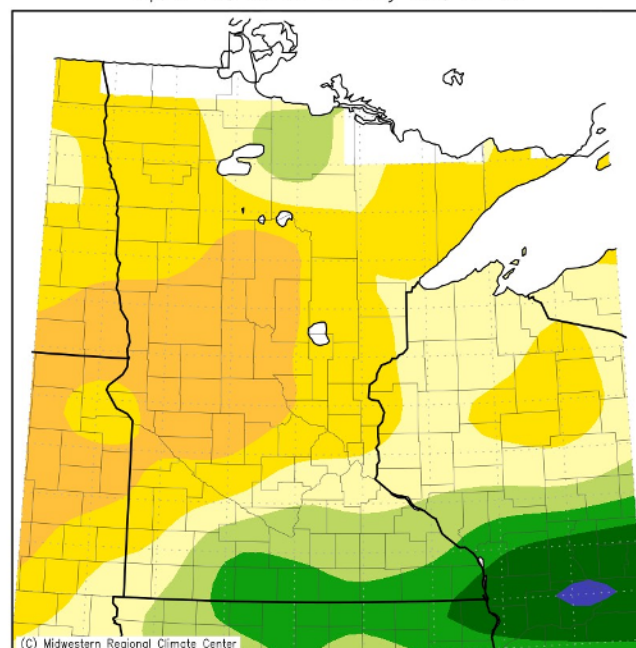
Midwestern Regional Climate Center  
cli-MATE: MRCC Application Tools Environment  
Generated at: 10/31/2018 10:43:27 AM CDT

Average Maximum Temp. (°F): Departure from Mean  
April 15, 2018 to May 15, 2018



Midwestern Regional Climate Center  
cli-MATE: MRCC Application Tools Environment  
Generated at: 10/31/2018 10:58:21 AM CDT

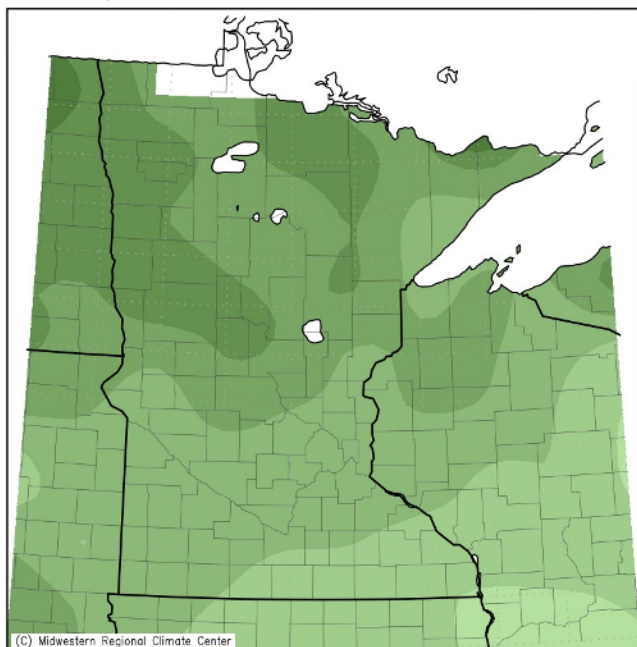
Accumulated Precipitation: Percent of Mean  
April 15, 2018 to May 31, 2018



Midwestern Regional Climate Center  
cli-MATE: MRCC Application Tools Environment  
Generated at: 10/31/2018 9:58:40 AM CDT



Average Maximum Temp. (°F): Departure from Mean  
September 1, 2018 to October 30, 2018

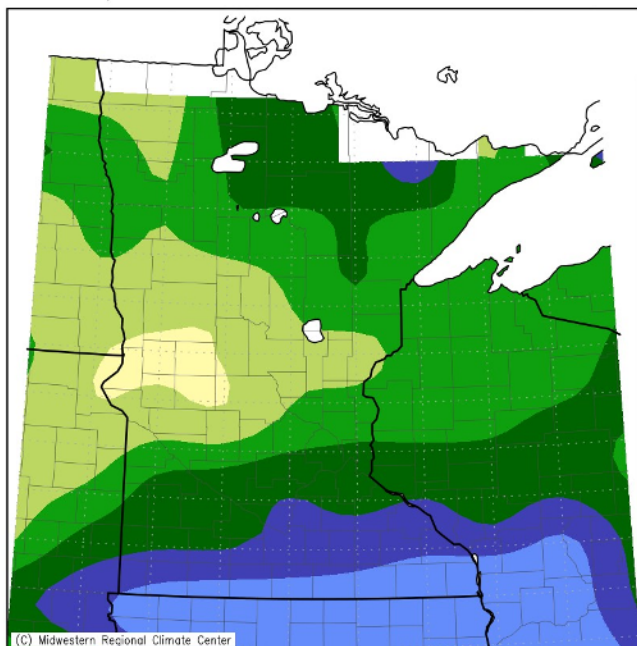


Mean period is 1981–2010.



Midwestern Regional Climate Center  
cli-MATE: MRCC Application Tools Environment  
Generated at: 10/31/2018 11:14:26 AM CDT

Accumulated Precipitation: Percent of Mean  
September 1, 2018 to October 30, 2018



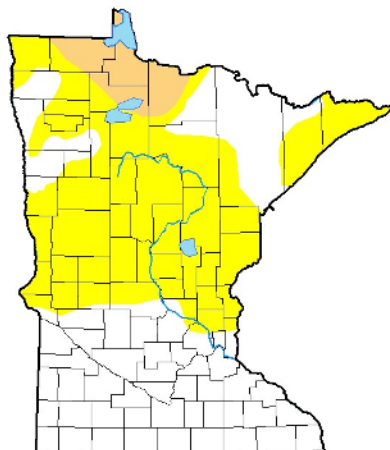
Mean period is 1981–2010.



Midwestern Regional Climate Center  
cli-MATE: MRCC Application Tools Environment  
Generated at: 10/31/2018 11:14:53 AM CDT



## U.S. Drought Monitor Minnesota



**May 15, 2018**  
(Released Thursday, May 17, 2018)  
Valid 8 a.m. EDT

	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0-D1	D1-D2	D2-D3	D3-D4	D4
Current	45.54	53.45	5.47	0.00	0.00	0.00
Last Week (5-8-2018)	60.67	39.33	1.37	0.00	0.00	0.00
3 Month s Ago (2-15-2018)	74.31	25.69	4.41	0.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Calendar Year (1-1-2018)	87.26	12.74	1.37	0.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year (9-30-2017)	82.06	17.34	3.00	0.11	0.00	0.00
One Year Ago (5-15-2017)	85.49	0.51	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

### Intensity:

D0 Abnormally Dry D3 Extreme Drought  
D1 Moderate Drought D4 Exceptional Drought  
D2 Severe Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.

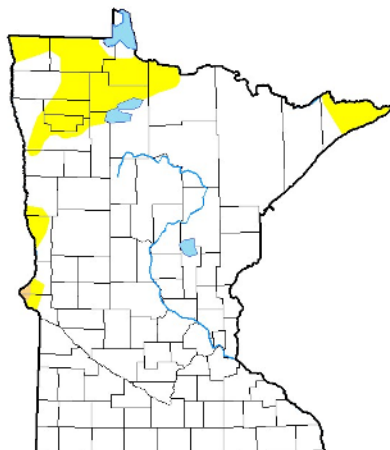
### Author:

ERIC Luebchen  
U.S. Department of Agriculture



<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

## U.S. Drought Monitor Minnesota



**June 26, 2018**  
(Released Thursday, Jun. 28, 2018)  
Valid 8 a.m. EDT

	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0-D1	D1-D2	D2-D3	D3-D4	D4
Current	86.32	11.99	3.13	0.00	0.00	0.00
Last Week (6-19-2018)	86.32	11.99	3.13	0.00	0.00	0.00
3 Month s Ago (3-27-2018)	94.36	5.64	1.37	0.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Calendar Year (1-1-2018)	87.26	12.74	1.37	0.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year (9-30-2017)	82.06	17.34	3.00	0.11	0.00	0.00
One Year Ago (6-26-2017)	70.59	21.41	5.41	0.00	0.00	0.00

### Intensity:

D0 Abnormally Dry D3 Extreme Drought  
D1 Moderate Drought D4 Exceptional Drought  
D2 Severe Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.

### Author:

Richard Heim  
NCEI/NOAA



<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

# MNCC Intelligence



Compared to some parts of the nation, Minnesota's 2018 wildfire season was relatively average.

As of October 29, 2018 MNICS agencies reported 1,333 wildfires totaling 16,993 acres burned in the state.

This compares to 1,009 MNICS agency wildfires for 5,329 acres burned in 2017 and 1,428 MNICS agency wildfires for 12,267 acres burned in 2016.

Six large fires required ICS-209s during April and May. The Moose River West Fire, which occurred in August required an ICS-209. All of these large fires occurred in northwestern Minnesota. The largest was the North County Road 7 fire in the Warroad area totaling 3,200 acres. Conditions in northwestern Minnesota remained very dry into the fall, and are now much improved due to significant precipitation received.

## Fire weather

In 2017, the year ended nearly normal with a wet October. Winter was dry until some mid-winter and early spring snow. Spring 2018 began wet with widespread mid-April snow events. Cold temperatures delayed the normal start of the fire season.

In May 2018, fire season rapidly arrived. May was the polar opposite of April. After the third coldest April in Minnesota, the preliminary statewide average temperature for May was 60.8 degrees F. This became the fourth warmest May in 124 years of records (1895-2018). The preliminary state-averaged precipitation total was 2.70 inches. This indicates the 45th driest May out of 124 years of records.

Throughout the summer, varied rain events crossed the state but failed to keep the northern quarter out of dry conditions. With the fall season upon us, timely rains are keeping the fuels damp; however, drought continues to persist in the Northwest until the snows once again return.

## Minnesota wildfires

As of October 29, 2018, MNICS agencies reported 1,333 wildfires totaling 16,993 acres; of those:

- DNR = 794 fires / 11,645 acres
- FWS = 15 fires / 1,032 acres
- USFS = 76 fires / 181 acres
- BIA = 448 fires / 4,135 acres

## Prescribed burning

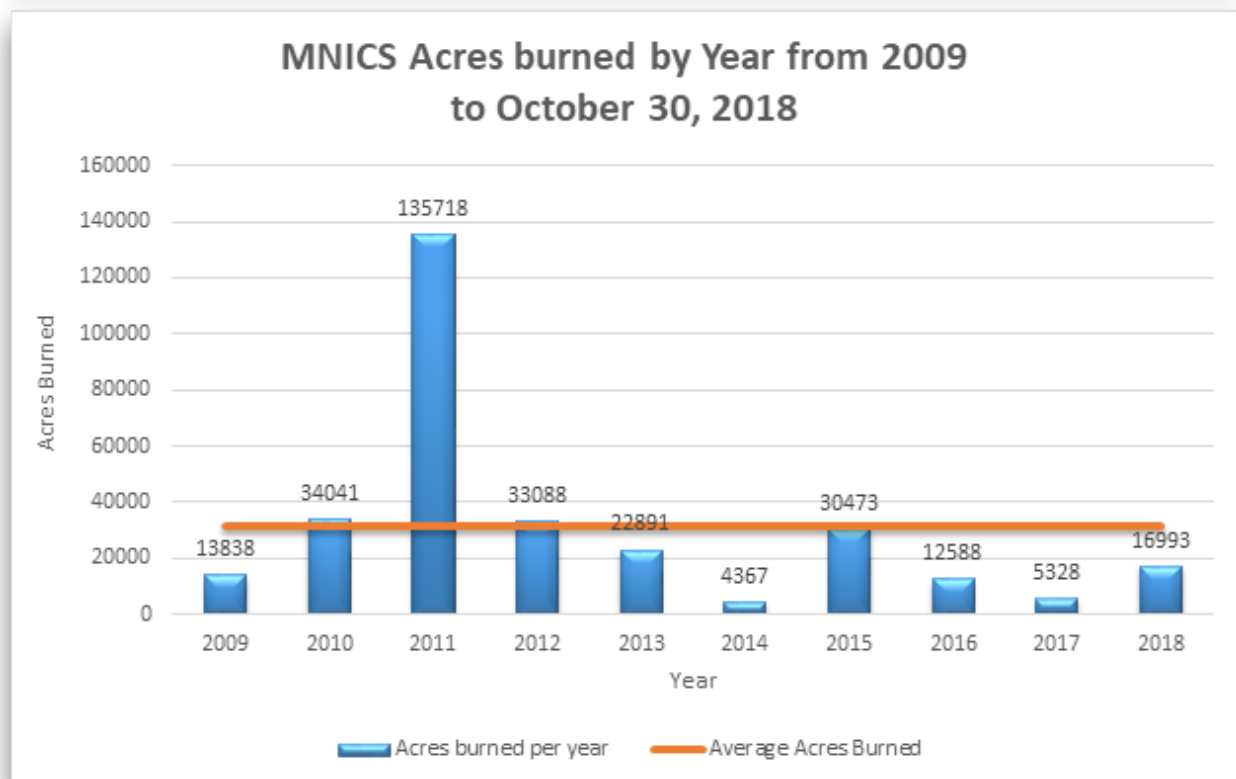
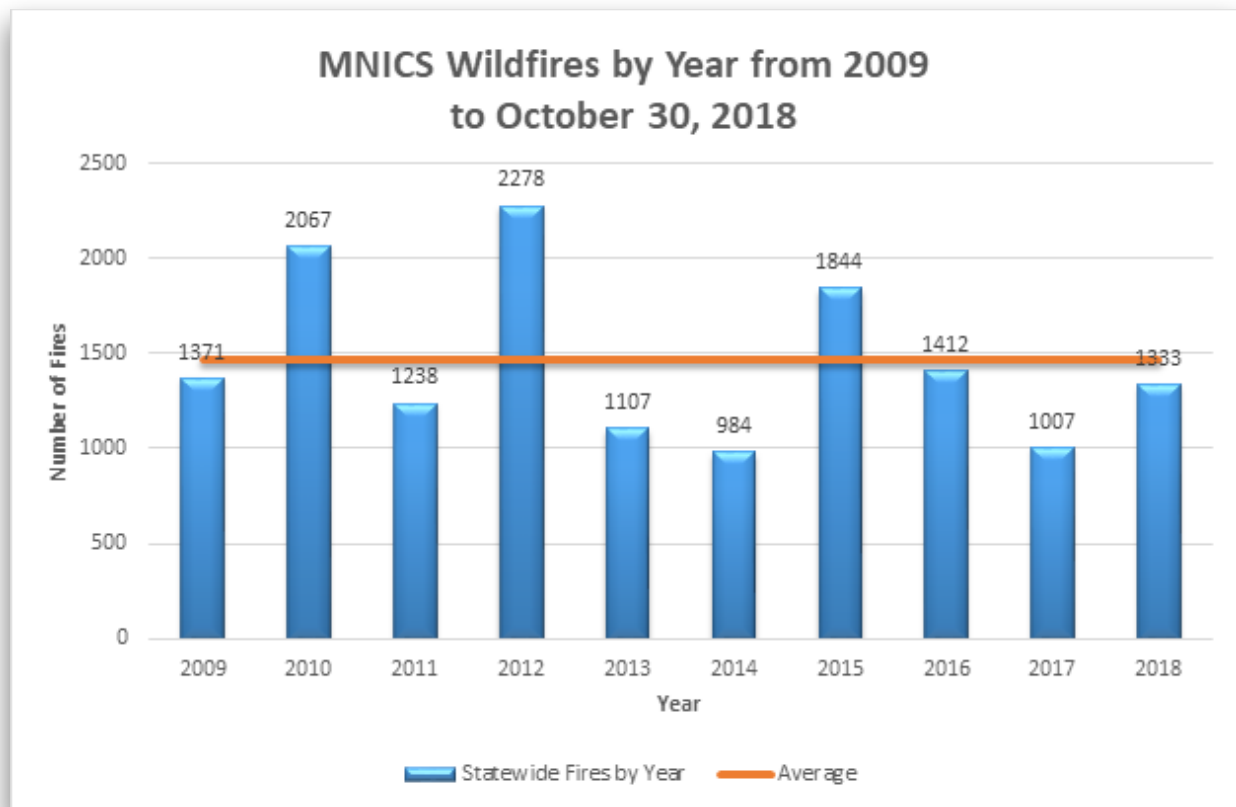
This year, MNICS agencies planned a total of 1,150 burns for over 190,000 planned acres. As of October 29, 2018, a total of 682 burns were reported for 111,138 acres.

- DNR = 374 burns / 49,999 acres
- FWS = 174 burns / 25,164 acres
- USFS = 95 burns / 5,878 acres
- BIA = 40 burns / 30,508 acres





# MNICS Wildfires and Prescribed Burns





# Minnesota Interagency Coordination Center (MNCC)

In January 2018, MIFC Dispatch was renamed the Minnesota Interagency Coordination Center, or MNCC. This new name is part of the reorganization process that has been ongoing since 2017. MNCC works to mobilize engines, aircraft, crews and single resources around the state and out of the state to support wildfire suppression activities during an active fire season.

## In-state mobilizations

A MNICS T2 IMT, with Mike Aultman as the IC, successfully coordinated the 2018 Minnesota Wildfire Academy in June. A Type 3 team, led initially by Ernie Schmitt and later by Jim Edgar, was assigned to manage the Moose River West fire in the Warroad Area. Approximately 743 resources were mobilized to 51 different incidents across Minnesota in 2018. Out of state resources which provided support for both prescribed and wildfire incidents totaled 386, including the Type 2 IA Bay Mills crew, the Type 2 IA Lewis and Clark crew and the Type 1 Pike and Idaho Panhandle crews.

## Out-of-state mobilizations

(Jan. 1 to Oct. 25, 2018)

Outstate mobilizations began in January this year by sending resources to Georgia, Wisconsin and Puerto Rico. Throughout the 2018 season MNCC supported the national fire suppression effort by sending Minnesota mobilized resources to 27 states including Hawaii and Puerto Rico, and Canada. The MNICS Type 2 IMT mobilized to the Bull Draw fire in Colorado for an extended assignment. Four MNICS interagency Type 2 IA crews were mobilized to Colorado. Three Fire Suppression Modules, consisting each of a crew of 10, were mobilized to Colorado. One interagency Type 2 IA crew and 1 MNDNR crew were mobilized to Ontario. Several single resources mobilized to Manitoba and Ontario through the spring. Many resources

Personnel Numbers	MNDNR	USFS	FWS	BIA/ Tribal	NPS	Total
<b>Crews</b>	26	37	9	14	8	<b>94</b>
<i>Rigs in support of crew mobilizations</i>	13	7	3	0	1	<b>24</b>
<i>*Not included in personnel totals</i>						
<b>Engines</b>	18	93	35	61	5	<b>212</b>
<b>Aviation</b>	9	33	0	2	0	<b>44</b>
<b>Single Resources</b>	199	185	35	38	13	<b>470</b>
	<b>252</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>820</b>

October 1, 2017 – September 30, 2018 ROSS Data





# Thank You!

In June, 31 dispatchers and incident management staff attended the 2018 MNCC Dispatch Workshop and ROSS Refresher held at the Coordination Center. Many thanks to all the instructors and contributors: Tasha Woodwick, Rebekah Luedtke, Leith McAuley, Anna Hines, Brendan Neylon, Amber Jungwirth, BJ Glesener, Matt Woodwick, Linda Bruss, Tom Staydohar, Randee Olson, Brenda Miles and Cristine Basina.

MNCC would like to thank all the dispatchers that assisted us throughout the year. Thanks to you we were able to efficiently mobilize our resources for in-state and out-state response.

Days at PL (June-Sept)	1	2	3	4	5
	0	35	39	14	34

were mobilized multiple times to multiple assignments and many extended to 21 days or longer.

## Unable to fill

With the overall increase in fire activity nationwide, MNCC also saw an increase in unfilled requests. For anyone who follows the unable to fill (UTF) lists on the national GACC web portal, it is a good indicator of positions in high demand.

MNCC UTF LIST Oct 1, 2017 – Sept 30, 2018			
AIR QUALITY SPECIALIST	1	ORDERING MANAGER	1
AIR SUPPORT GROUP SUPERVISOR	1	Palm IR	1
BASE CAMP MANAGER	1	PLASTIC SPHERE DISPENSER OPERATOR	1
CREW, TYPE 2 IA	1	PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER, TYPE 2	1
DIVISION GROUP SUPERVISOR	3	RECEIVING/DISTRIBUTION MANAGER	1
DRIVER/OPERATOR	1	RESOURCE ADVISOR	1
EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN – PARAMEDIC	3	RESOURCE ADVISOR, WILDFIRE	1
EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN, FIRELINE	3	RESOURCE UNIT LEADER	2
ENGINE BOSS	11	SAFETY OFFICER, TYPE 1	1
Engine, Type 3	1	SAFETY OFFICER, TYPE 2	1
Engine, Type 3, 4, 5, or 6	2	SECURITY SPECIALIST – LEVEL 1	3
Engine, Type 6	5	SECURITY SPECIALIST – LEVEL 2	5
EXPANDED DISPATCH RECORDER	1	SINGLE ENGINE AIR TANKER MANAGER	1
FIRE BEHAVIOR ANALYST	1	STAGING AREA MANAGER	1
FIRE FIGHTER TYPE 2	2	SUPPORT DISPATCHER	2
Fixed Wing, Air Tactical	6	TASK FORCE LEADER	5
FORK LIFT OPERATOR	1	Team, Type 3	1
HEAVY EQUIPMENT BOSS, SINGLE RESOURCE	5	TECHNICAL SPECIALIST	1
HELICOPTER CREWMEMBER	4	Tender, Water (Tactical), Type 2	1
HELICOPTER MANAGER, SINGLE RESOURCE	4	TIME UNIT LEADER	1
INCIDENT COMMUNICATIONS TECHNICIAN	1	WILDLAND FIRE INVESTIGATOR	1
INITIAL ATTACK DISPATCHER	2		
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>

## Another Note...

We'd encourage you to stop by our newly remodeled space and say hello. We're confident it will allow us to better serve you for years to come.

# 2018 MNICS T2 IA Crew Mobilizations



We saw a decrease in our interagency MNICS Type 2 IA crew mobilizations this year. Last year we were able to support 10 crew mobilizations but this year that number of mobilizations fell to 4 for a variety of reasons. The 2018 crew mobilizations are as follows:

- Mobilization #1: 2018 RMA in Support of OH/CR/EQ/SU, Colorado, Reassigned to Spring Creek, CRWB Ryan Miller (SUF)
- Mobilization #2: FY18 BIA Longterm Severity, Colorado, CRWB Bill Alleman (VOP)
- Mobilization #3: Lake Christine, Colorado, Reassigned to Cabin Lake, CRWB Ryan Miller (SUF)
- Mobilization #4: 2018 RMA in Support of OH/CR/EQ/SU, Colorado, Reassigned to Cabin Lake and Coal Hollow, CRWB Ryan Miller (SUF)



*In addition... For the first time in many years, MNCC was able to mobilize an interagency crew to Ontario to aid our neighbors to the north. They spent their full tour on the Kenora 71 fire. The mobilization was possible through the Great Lakes Forest Fire Compact and the Canada/ US Reciprocal Forest Fire Fighting Arrangement.*



## 2018 Spring Fire Season

MNCC Aviation desk received 304 aircraft requests. Aircraft were dispatched to 120 fires.

Agency	Helicopters				SEATs		FireBoss <sup>+</sup>		Fixed Wing				UAS
	T3 Excl Use	T3 CWN	T2 CWN	T1 EU	Excl Use	CWN	Excl Use	CWN	LAT	CL- 415	ATGS	Lt F/W	Quad
BIA	1	1			1	1	1						
BIA/DNR		2											
BIA/DNR/USFS			1										
MN DNR Forestry	8	2	1		2	1	4				4	16	1
USFS	1	1		1					3	1		5	
State Patrol	1											1	
MN DNR Enforcement	1												
MNARNG				2									

## MNICS Aviation Data (Jan. 1 to Oct. 1, 2018)

### Aviation Dispatches

- MNICS Aviation desk received 304 aircraft requests on 120 fires.
- First fire mission was flown on 4/22/18 and the last was 8/25/18.

### Helicopters

- DNR Responded to 103 fires with 117 helicopter requests
  - Aided in 2 PSD RX burns for 15,000 acres
- BIA Responded to 21 wildfires
  - Supported 3 RX burns for 16,000 acres
- USFS Responded to 9 fires

### Air Attack

- DNR Responded to 46 fires with 51 dispatch requests

### Fixed Wing Tanker

- DNR Responded to 27 fires with 57 tanker requests
- USFS Responded to 10 fires with 12 tanker requests
- BIA Responded to 19 fires with 35 tanker requests

### Detection Aircraft

- DNR – 15 detection routes
- USFS – 3 detection routes

### Flight Followed Conservation Officers and USFWS

- 101 flights.

Contributors: Darren Neuman, Linda Bruss

# Aviation Report





## Aviation Events/Training in 2018

- Ontario provided 2 quickstrikes (Birddog and 2 – CL-415's) to 2 fires in NW Minnesota.
- In April, Oklahoma utilized the Kodiak for initial attack operations, as well as a ATGS and ATGS-t.
- Canadian Effectiveness Study of Fire Suppressants utilized MN Fireboss to assist in the testing procedures in Ontario.
- Utilized MN Exclusive Use Fireboss for Initial Attack in Ontario the end of June.
- Manitoba sent 3 Air Attack Officers to Minnesota to assist during initial attack operations.
- Minnesota sent 3 ATGS candidates to Air Attack Officer training in Ontario.
- Manitoba sent 3 Air Attack Officers to MN's ATGS simulations exercise.
- Minnesota sent an Air Support Group Supervisor and Helibase Manager Trainee to Ontario to assist with fire suppression efforts.
- Implemented electronic Tactical Aircraft Request Order (TARO) which can be emailed directly to MNICS Aviation Desk, tanker bases and helibases, reducing duplicative information recording thus reducing chance for human error.
- Conducted 3 scenarios at the MN Fire Academy utilizing various aircraft.
  - Incident within an Incident: Aerial Platform, DNR Forestry Helicopter, DNR Enforcement Helicopter, State Patrol MART Team and Lifelink Helicopter.
  - Initial Attack Scenario: Aerial Platform, 2 DNR Firebosses and a DNR Helicopter.
  - External Load Exercise with A-219 Students: DNR Helicopter.
- Delivered classroom and flight training to MN State Patrol and DNR Enforcement.
- Accomplished the following aviation projects:
  - Aerial seeding and seedling transport
  - Aerial herbicide spraying
  - Aerial ignition on prescribed burns for 15,000 acres
  - Wolf, bald eagle, elk and moose surveys
  - Sketch mapping
  - Storm damage assessments
- Conducted 15 search and rescue missions
- Annual Hands-on training was conducted at all Exclusive Use Helibases.
- Trained for improved EMS helicopter response at wildfire refreshers.
- Annual MN Aviation Workshop was conducted in February at Camp Ripley.
- Continued to educate the public on UAS and Fire Traffic Area operations.

# Aviation Report



# TRAINING WITH THE MNARNG AT HOME AND ABROAD

The Minnesota Army National Guard (MNARNG) and the MN DNR Forestry have developed a very strong partnership over the past two decades. The MNARNG supports DNR Forestry and MNICS in wildfire suppression when needed with Type -1 helicopters like the UH-60 Blackhawk and CH-47 Chinook. This fills a vital gap for fire aviation given the lack of Type -1 helicopters available in Minnesota. Each season a training session is held at Camp Ripley in early April to give MNARNG pilots the opportunity to maintain currency and proficiency in water bucket operations. This training has proven very beneficial to safety, communications and effectiveness in their mission to support wildfire suppression.



UH-60 BLACKHAWK AT CAMP RIPLEY TRAINING EXERCISE

As a part of the DNR Helicopter Program, Shawn Olsen, a DNR Forestry Technician out of Wannaska, works as the primary liaison with the MNARNG Aviation Wing. As liaison, Shawn has been instrumental in coordinating training and operations. In April of this year, MNARNG pilots attended wildfire suppression training in Sacramento, California for three days with Shawn attending the training as a liaison. The training focused on topics such as airspace coordination, communication, water delivery, etc. This training was given a real world feel with the establishment of an incident helibase. Crews attended helibase briefings and debriefings as they would on an active incident. This training proved to be very beneficial and is a great example of the MNARNG's commitment to supporting the wildfire mission.



CALIFORNIA NATIONAL GUARD HELICOPTERS AT THE  
SACRAMENTO TRAINING EXERCISE

In addition, the MNARNG has an ongoing partnership with the nation of Croatia. Croatia is a nation slightly smaller than West Virginia with a population of 4 million people located on the east side of the Adriatic Sea. This past spring a contingent from the National Guard and Rob Johnson, Helicopter Operations Specialist, from the MN DNR traveled to Croatia to participate in a nationwide all hazard training exercise as observers and evaluators. Rob was asked to



CROATIAN FIREFIGHTERS FAST-ROPE FROM A MI-8 HELICOPTER

# TRAINING WITH THE MNARNG AT HOME AND ABROAD

attend as a subject matter expert, due to the large aviation component of 8 helicopters and 5 fixed wing in Croatia's wildfire suppression strategy.

The primary objective of the exercise was to test the capabilities of Croatia's new Joint Operations center and create better interagency coordination. The exercise lasted 36 hours and included four primary scenarios: four large wildfires, a railway accident (mass causality), an ecological incident and a search & rescue.

For the wildfire scenarios, the Croatians demonstrated a wide variety of tools. The fixed wing compliment consisted of CL-215s, SEAT and FireBoss aircraft. Their MI-8 helicopters performed bucket operations, cargo delivery and passenger transport. In addition, the helicopter crews demonstrated fast-rope, rappel and short-haul capabilities. Ground based equipment ranged from multiple styles of fire engines to the remote operated track vehicle pictured to the right.

The Minnesota contingent was paired up with a member of the National Protection Rescue Directorate (NPRD) and a Colonel from the Croatian military to observe the scenarios and participate in AAR's with local officials. The outcomes of these exercises were very favorable. Their nation is making great strides in its ability to manage potential large scale events.

In closing, the dividends from our long standing partnership with MNARNG have shown themselves over the years on several large incidents such as the Cherry Fire, Pagami Creek, Buffalo Ranch, Green Valley and Skibo. The ongoing commitment to training together continues to enhance safety, efficiency and effectiveness when it counts the most.



CROATIAN UNIMOG ENGINE



REMOTE OPERATED TRACK VEHICLE EQUIPPED WITH DOZER BLADE, HYDRAULIC JAWS AND BOOM MOUNTED WATER CANNON

*Written by: Rob Johnson, DNR*





# Homeland Security & Emergency Management

## Disaster Response

This past year has been busy for disaster response and recovery staff across the state and at the Minnesota Department of Public Safety division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DPS-HSEM). Severe weather events have left behind a trail of destruction in dozens of counties and tribal nations. It all began with the historic April blizzard, continued with severe thunderstorms and widespread flooding in June and July, extended to a tornado outbreak in September, and coastal flooding along Lake Superior in October. Many of these storms led to state disaster declarations. By the end of 2018, Minnesota will likely have eight (or more) state disaster declarations.

## Federal Disaster Declaration

Twenty-seven counties and three tribal nations in Minnesota will receive federal assistance after the president issued a major disaster declaration for widespread flooding in June and July. HSEM staff accompanied Gov. Mark Dayton as he made several

visits to affected communities. The funds will reimburse counties, cities, and tribes for repairs to more than \$21 million in damaged public property; as well as response costs related to the severe storms. HSEM will now work with FEMA to fund 75 percent of approved costs. Under state law, Minnesota will pay the 25 percent non-federal share out of the State Disaster Contingency Account.

## Emergency Management Assistance Compact

HSEM coordinated several Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) deployments in 2018. EMAC is a mutual aid agreement that allows states to send each other resources when requested during an emergency. Minnesota teams deployed to disasters such as:

- The Hawaii volcano eruption.
- Hurricane response and relief efforts in the Virgin Islands, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia and Florida.
- Recovery efforts following the Massachusetts gas line explosions.

## Public Outreach

Engaging with Minnesotans during the year is a priority as HSEM continues to educate people about all-hazards preparedness. That's why



HSEM Director Joe Kelly participated in WCCO-AM's "conversation" on weather in May. Remember, a weather event—no matter if it's a thunderstorm or a snow storm—is the worst time to figure out how you're going to respond.

Another public safety message that Director Kelly emphasized this year is the importance of flood insurance. Flooding is one of the most common disasters in Minnesota thanks to heavy rain events and rivers that breach their banks. Ninety-five percent of Minnesotans live in a community that participates in the National Flood Insurance Program. However, most homeowner's insurance policies don't cover flooding automatically, so people must ask their agent for the additional coverage.

## Renaming the Integrated Emergency Management Course

HSEM's Integrated Emergency

Management Course (IEMC) has a new name. Moving forward, it will be known at the Minnesota Community Emergency Preparedness (CEP) program. The exercise-based training activity is designed for management-level on-scene command (OSC) staff, emergency operation center (EOC) staff, and Multiagency Coordination (MAC) groups. The training and exercise simulations are tailored to the jurisdiction based on selected objectives.



### Information Sharing in an Emergency



Implementation of WebEOC continues at HSEM. The web-based, crisis management software will enhance emergency management efforts in preparedness, response and recovery. WebEOC provides a common operating picture so that all jurisdictions and agencies involved can communicate and share information during a disaster or emergency. Minnesota's state agencies, counties, tribes and cities of the first class are all part of the WebEOC platform. This allows common efforts, such as resource request and tracking, damage assessment reports, emergency hotline call logging, news releases, and state and local emergency operations center status to take place under one system.

The MNICS partnerships are part of the foundation that allows for safe and effective wildland fire operations in Minnesota and throughout the United States. The Bureau of Indian Affairs and Tribal Fire Programs of the Minnesota Agency and Red Lake are proud to serve their communities and assist our interagency partners.

The 2018 wildfire season got started later than the past few years, but had a fast pace once the snow melted. Both Red Lake and the Minnesota Agency programs were able to implement a number of prescribed fire projects in the shorter spring burn window. We also benefited from having the Bay Mills Type 2 IA Crew here this spring. They not only helped us meet burn targets, but also responded to multiple wildfires for the Tribal programs and other MNICS agencies.



Reservation	Wildfires	Acres	Prescribed Fires	Acres
Red Lake	367	3977	9	29,012
White Earth	70	152.5	16	1106
Fond du Lac	2	1	4	40
Mille Lacs	6	3.5	3	19
Bois Forte	2	1	1	12
Grand Portage	1	0.25	3	97
Leech Lake	N/A	N/A	3	112
<b>Total</b>	<b>448</b>	<b>4135.25</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>30,398</b>



*"Coming together,  
sharing together, working  
together and succeeding  
together."*

# Bureau of Indian Affairs

## Aviation

The BIA continued exclusive use contracts for a Fire Boss and SEAT at the Bemidji Interagency Airtanker Base. The Red Lake Helitack crew staffed the BIA exclusive use Type III helicopter in Bemidji/Red Lake, shared staffing of a CWN Type III helicopter in August and September at Bemidji (split between the DNR and BIA), and supported the other BIA Helitack modules around the country. The BIA also shared costs with the DNR for a CWN Type III helicopter in Park Rapids and shared costs with the DNR and USFS for a Type II restricted helicopter in Orr during the 2018 season.

2018 BIA Aircraft Use	Wildfires	Flight Hours
<b>T-817 (SEAT)</b>		
BIA/Tribal	7	9.66
MN DNR	7	13.6
USFS	2	2.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>25.46</b>
<b>T-205 (Fire Boss)</b>		
BIA/Tribal	7	11.1
MN DNR	6	11.4
USFS	2	3.15
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>25.65</b>
<b>N144BH (Type III helicopter)</b>		
BIA/Tribal	21	63.12

Despite the dry conditions in August and September that brought an increase in fire occurrence, many resources supported wildfire response nationally. Assignments included engine mobilizations, MNICS Type II IA crews, fire prevention, dispatch support, aviation support, communications, security, and filling a number of positions on the MNICS IMT assignment to Colorado.

After 24 years with the Bureau as the Minnesota Agency and Red Lake FMO, Greg Peterson retired on August 4th. Two days later he was hired as an AD and responded with the MNICS IMT to Colorado. We are happy to report that since that assignment he is taking retirement more seriously.

Contributor: Cory Berg



# U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service



## Training and mobilizations

The FWS coordinated RX-310 Fire Effects at the MN Wildfire Academy and assisted with several other courses. The FWS will also coordinate S-290 Intermediate Fire Behavior in December at Sherburne NWR.

This year's mobilization season was very busy. Over 120 FWS personnel, including 17 trainees, were dispatched to about 12 different states. Personnel held positions in operations, dispatch, logistics and plans.

## Personnel Changes

- Steve Schumacher FMO Detroit Lakes WMD retired in November after 34 years in Federal Service.
- Darrin Franco left his position at Agassiz Refuge to take the position of FMO at Detroit Lakes WMD.
- Jason Ferguson joined the fire staff at Fergus Falls WMD as the Career Seasonal Fire Technician.
- Javier Fuentes-Mattson accepted the Career Seasonal Fire Technician position at Detroit Lakes WMD.

## Big Projects or Happenings

FWS and MN DNR from multiple areas completed a difficult joint burn of Fuglie WPA Ulen WMA for 490 acres.

FWS and Ridgewater Technical Community College teamed up to offer training opportunities for multiple rural fire departments by burning multiple structures on newly acquired FWS land.

The spring season started out snowy and wet. As the weather moderated, fire managers were able to get into the field and conduct 168 prescribed burns for a total of 23,473. Over 50 detailers from 15 states were brought in to assist with the spring prescribed burn season. Personnel were from the FWS, BLM, and NPS. The skills of these firefighters were very valuable in accomplishing field station prescribed burn goals, including Burn Bosses, Single Resource Bosses, and Specialty Track Operators.

The wildfire was busy with 15 wildfires for 1032 acres on FWS property and assisting our MNICS partners on many other fires.

Station	Wildfires	WF Acres	RX Burns	RX Acres
AGASSIZ NWR	2	820	4	1968
BIG STONE NWR	0	0	8	806
CRANE MEADOWS NWR	0	0	3	44
DETROIT LAKES WMD	3	106	10	3875
FERGUS FALLS WMD	2	56	30	3376
GLACIAL RIDGE NWR	0	0	0	0
HAMDEN SLOUGH NWR	0	0	1	81
LITCHFIELD WMD	0	0	30	2667
MN VLY NWR	2	26	8	834
MORRIS WMD	0	0	32	3727
RICE LAKE NWR	0	0	1	3
SHERBURNE NWR	4	24	15	3078
TAMARAC NWR	0	0	3	1230
WINONA DIST	0	0	1	120
WINDOM WMD	2	0.3	22	1664
<b>Zone Totals</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>1032.3</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>23473</b>

# National Park Service



The Border Waters Park Group consists of 7 National Park Service units in Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan:

- Voyageurs National Park
- Grand Portage National Monument
- Pipestone National Monument
- Apostle Islands National Lakeshore
- Saint Croix National Scenic Riverway
- Isle Royale National Park
- Keewena National Monument

However, changes are coming. The Midwest Region of the National Park Service is realigning the Fire Management boundaries within our region. We will be known as the Border Park Group along with North Dakota parks, with a Zone FMO from Theodore Roosevelt National Park, Rodney Skalsky. However, St. Croix National Scenic Riverway will fall under the Great Lakes Parks under the direction of Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore.

Voyageurs National Park continues to support the MNICS Interagency T2 IA crew program providing overhead, along with firefighters and vehicles. Individuals from Voyageurs, and St. Croix took part in the MNICS T2 IA crews.

Of the mobilizations, 10 individuals were assigned to 20 person crews; 8 on T6 Engine, and 6 single resources were assigned to incidents this season. Also, 7 assisted with other NPS and FWS RX burns.

Fire season was relatively slow here at VOYA with 4 small fires for minimal acres. However, we did have a fire in late August which we had assistance from the MNDNR with personnel and a helicopter, along with a USFS Beaver that helped us locate the fire and provide air support as the fire was very remote and very poor access.



# U.S. Forest Service

## Wildfires

The Chippewa National Forest's fire season began with their first fire on April 4th. There were a total of 43 fires for 166 acres. The largest fire being a fire for 62 acres on the Walker Ranger District in grass and timber.

The Superior National Forest's fire season began with their first fire on May 3rd. There were a total of 33 fires for 15 acres. The largest fire being 5 acres on the Kawishiwi Ranger District in grass and timber.

Both the Chippewa and Superior National Forests were able to send resources to help partners with prescribed burns and wildland fires. We were very active in supporting regionally and nationally throughout the 2018 fire season with our Type III helicopter, Type 2 IA crews, engines and overhead resources.

## Prescribed Fire

The Chippewa had busy prescribed fire program in 2018. The Chippewa NF completed 30 prescribed burns for approximately 4201 acres. The largest being done in cooperation with the DNR and LLDRM for 3096 acres near Boy River.

The Superior completed approximately 1396 acres with 49 prescribed fires. The program continues into the fall and winter with pile burns. These prescribed fires would not have been possible without the invaluable assistance from our MNICS partners. Thank you for the cooperation!

The two national Forests did a combined 22,627 acres of Integrated Fuels Treatments (This is one of two Flagship Targets the USFS has nationally) The Chippewa was able to complete 11,012 acres and the Superior completed 11,615 acres.



## Aviation

The Superior and the Chippewa National Forests both had active aviation this year.

The Forest Service flew for a total of 895 flight hours between all aircraft that were contracted or owned by the agency. This includes 144 hours of helicopter, 751 hours of fixed wing including 186 hours of detection by the FS Beaver Aircraft.

We would like to thank the MNICS Cooperators for their assistance in proving aircraft for use as well as staff to help support our aviation program. Without your help this program would not be nearly as successful. We look forward to next year and continuing our aviation accomplishments!

## Off unit support

To date, there have been 578 out-of-state assignments. Many of the Forest Service resources that were mobilized had multiple assignments and were reassigned from preposition orders to new or ongoing incidents out west and east. The forest service also brought in a total of 284 out of state resources to assist with incidents this year, not including aircraft.



## Training

In 2018 the Superior and Chippewa National Forests introduced Tracy Fifarek as the designated Fire Training Specialist.

In 2018 the Forest Service initiated 136 task books and dispatched 135 trainees to various incidents across the US. As of October 2018, the Fire Qualifications Review Committee approved 52 new qualifications.

With the assistance of an ICC intern Carmen Bergstedt, over 400 IQCS master folders were created, reorganized, and archived. This new position is located at MIFC which allows for close collaboration with our State and other Federal partners in terms of coordinating training courses, nominations, and IQCS/IQS management.



# Minnesota DNR



As of September 22nd, the MNDNR reported suppression action on 770 wildfires for 11,291 acres burned. Six large fires required ICS-209s, all of these fires occurred in northwestern Minnesota during April and May. The largest was the North County Road 7 fire in the Warroad Area totaling 3,200 acres.

The MNDNR also reported completing 394 burns totaling 62,192 acres.

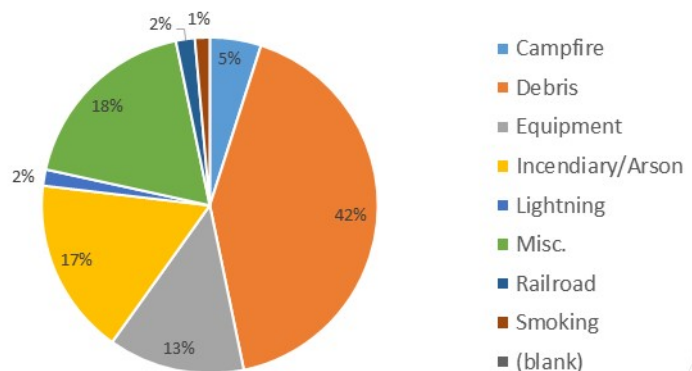
## Prevention and Firewise

Building upon a successful Living with Fire workshop in Ely, two videos were produced to capitalize on the event. Each video is 5-7 minutes long and captures the highlights and topics of the event including fire ecology, living in a fire environment, fuels reduction and the afternoon of field tour of the 2012 Highway 1 Fire that threatened Ely. Dovetail Partners, Inc. coordinated the filming of the event and the final production, enabling the use of a great event to encourage future workshops and homeowner presentations. Both videos are available for viewing on the MNDNR channel on YouTube.

In addition to participating in local parades, county fairs and making presentation to community groups, DNR prevention staff coordinate Governor's Fire Prevention Day activities at the Minnesota State Fair. With record-setting fair attendance for the second year in a row (2.05 million), the Prevention program committed more than 600 hours of staff and volunteer time to distribute approximately 5,000 pieces of wildfire prevention materials to an estimated 15,000 visitors.



2018 Minnesota Fires  
Fires: 770 Acres: 11291  
(as of 9/19/2018)



Each third week in April the state observes Wildfire Prevention Week. This year, in addition to traditional radio and print ads, the Program implemented a focused communication plan to increase utilization of social media beginning with Wildfire Prevention Week. In coordination with the MNICS information officer, active fire messaging through social media (primarily Facebook and Twitter) produced 1 or more daily messages to communicate timely and current information on wildfire conditions. Messaging continued throughout fire season. During the month of May, Twitter engagement with these messages earned 151,400 impressions, demonstrating the effectiveness of this method of



slowly but consistently acquiring or replacing new wardens. Currently there are 3,700 dedicated volunteers annually providing more than 22,000 hours of service.

Additional statistics and highlights:

- Recognized Firewise Communities – 48
- Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP) in place – 9 (6 county-wide, 3 tribal, area or fire district), Lake County updated in 2018.
- Identified Communities at Risk covered by a CWPP – 330
- Wildfire risk evaluations using remote sensing – 228,000 (2013-2017)
- Individual home risk evaluations – 4,948 (2013-2017)

### Rural fire department assistance

The MNDNR Division of Forestry's Rural Fire Program (RFP) exists to assist local fire departments obtain low cost equipment, manage cost share grants and provide technical expertise for fire departments.

In 2018, the

# Minnesota DNR

Firefighter Federal property program obtained \$12.5 million in equipment and supplies. These items were distributed to 410 Minnesota communities and four state agencies. Examples of the items disbursed included medical supplies and equipment such as tourniquets, bandages, defibrillators, and portable generators, as well as rolling stock items such as a Chevy Tahoe, a Freightliner chassis and all-terrain vehicles (ATVs). Many rural fire departments could not afford this equipment if not for the FFP program.



communication to increase the reach of wildfire messaging. Traditional outreach efforts included 63 print and television contacts (40 focused on fire prevention), 286 30-second radio ads reaching an estimated 280,000 Minnesotans during the fire season, and three statewide press releases.

Itasca County was again recognized for its continuing efforts to help the people of the county become more Firewise. In September, MNDNR Prevention staff had the opportunity to spend a full day meeting with Cathy Prudhomme, Firewise USA National Program Manager, for a Minnesota state program visit. Cathy shared with the staff that when all counties were compared, Itasca County was revealed to be the 5th most active county in the country, behind only Jackson (OR), El Paso (CO), San Juan (WA) and Yavapai (AZ) counties. Itasca County is really keeping some good company!

The volunteer township fire warden program continues sharing the responsibility of issuing burning permits across the state,



The Rural Fire Program (RFP) purchased ten one-ton trucks from the State fleet program and sold them at a reduced cost to fire departments. These trucks had met the criteria for replacement by the fleet managers. The used vehicles still have service life and can be used as a grass truck to extinguish small fires. The demand by Minnesota communities far exceeds the availability of these units.

The Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) grant program received 381 applications for the 2019 grant cycle, and 181 Minnesota communities were awarded grants for their projects. This cost-share program is available to fire departments that protect communities with a population of 10,000 or less. A total of \$426,805 in federal and state grants will provide cost share funds for the purchase of radios and pagers, personal protective gear, water movement equipment, and wildland firefighting safety items.



## Training

As of September 2018, there have been more than 35 classes offered to MNICS and GLFFC partner agencies. Course offerings ranged from basic firefighting to advanced leadership; more than 1,070 students were successfully trained. Courses are being added regularly to the 2019 Minnesota DNR Fire Training Calendar. As Work Capacity Test logistics are determined and scheduled, these physical endurance assessments will also be added to the calendar.

### 2018 Wildfire Academy

The 2018 Wildfire Academy was held June 4-8, 2018 at Itasca Community College in Grand Rapids, Minnesota. A total of 33 classes were conducted for the 850 enrolled students.

Participants were from the Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin DNRs, National Park Service - Wisconsin, U.S. Forest Service (representing Chippewa and Superior National Forests), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – South Dakota and Nebraska, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) - Wisconsin and Minnesota tribes. Students also came from the Conservation Corps of Iowa and Minnesota, the Nature Conservancy, Minnesota Department of Transportation and numerous fire departments from across the State. In addition to Minnesota, students also represented the states of Iowa, Michigan, Missouri, Nebraska, New York, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

*Contributors: Todd Manley, Terry Flatley*



**Minnesota**  
**DNR**

## 2018 HAWAIIAN MOBILIZATION - KILAUEA EAST RIFT ZONE

All fifty states are part of the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), which is the nation's state to state mutual aid system. This past June was the first time that Minnesota has responded to an EMAC request, to the State of Hawaii to assist with the developing emergency around the eruption of the Kilauea Volcano. Unlike a 'normal' fire assignment, Governor signatures from both the requesting and sending states are required for individuals to be mobilized, and for the assistance to be provided. Jacob Beauregard with HSEM and Rebekah Luedtke with the DNR and MNICS, were able to get those signatures and all other details completed to send initially two MNDNR Division Supervisors (DIVS) to Hawaii - Ernie Schmitt (day shift) and Joe Frenz (night shift)

The initial mission was for them to supervise a Forward Operating Base (FOB) near Pahoa, HI on the Big Island. As the volcano eruption continued into early August, Joe and Ernie were replaced by Jim Edgar and Harlow Thompson. Minnesota also sent 2 HazMat Specialists from Minneapolis Emergency Management to fill the function of Safety Officers – Ken Boelter and Brian Gorman.

The mission of the FOB was accountability and safety of anyone who was headed to the East Rift Evacuation Zone. People authorized entry included:

- Security (HI National Guard, Police, Department of Lands & Natural Resources (DLNR) Conservation Officers)
- United States geological Survey (USGS) ground and air operations
- Press (accompanied by HI National Guard units)
- FEMA staff (accompanied by HI National Guard Units)
- Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT). Trained individuals who escorted evacuated individuals into their homes

Each person passing through the base headed into the East Rift Zone was given a bar coded badge and a safety briefing. They were to check in and out of the FOB as they entered and exited the zone.

ICS was stretched and tested on this incident due to a reluctance of the local jurisdiction, County of Hawaii Civil Defense, to delegate authority to an IMT. Deputy IC, Charles Tripp of North Carolina and his team, were able to set up an ICS structure that functioned and functioned well in most cases. This North Carolina team transitioned to multiple teams from the State of Washington as the incident continued.

As on nearly all incidents flexibility was necessary to meet the demands of both the incident and the needs of the local response agencies. The willingness of everyone to work together to meet the common goal of responder and public safety resulted in a very challenging and successful assignment.







## KILAUEA EAST RIFT ZONE



*Photos and written by: Joe Frenz, Ernie Schmitt, Jim Edgar and Harlow Thompson*



# Northeast Interagency Cache

## Northeast Interagency Support Cache

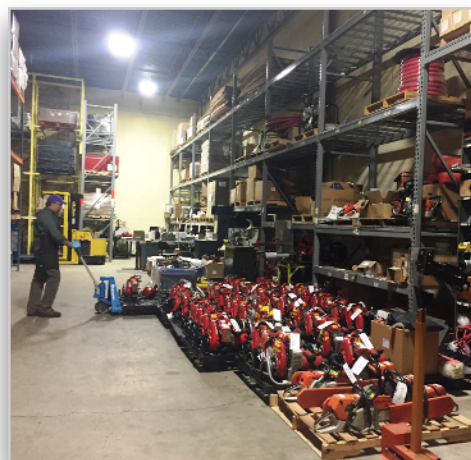
The Northeast Interagency Support Cache (NEK) processed and shipped 3,467 line items of supplies that totaled over \$1.8 million. We processed 1,072 line items of returns for a total of \$867,494.

NEK supported the National Cache System by shipping over \$2 million worth of supplies to Caches in several states; including Alaska, California, Colorado, Idaho, Kentucky, Montana, New Mexico, Oregon, and Washington. NEK also supports the National System by refurbishing pumps for the Southern Area and Rocky Mountain Caches. Almost every high pressure pump within the national system was issued this past year.

We also outfitted four Type 2 IA crews for out of state assignments.

The Cache provided supplies and equipment of over \$560,000 for one Wildfire Academy, four college training courses, and numerous other training sessions. We provided supplies to nine contract helibases, three tanker bases, and for State and Forest Service prescribed burns.

NEK staff supported the western fire season by assisting in the following positions: Assistant Cache Manager, Cache Liaison, Supply Unit Leader, Cache Supply Technician, Materials Handler, Ground Support Unit Leader Trainee, Equipment Manager, and Technical Specialist. Cache personnel did a total of nine fire assignments.



## National Symbols Cache

The National Symbols Cache processed 3,513 orders for just shy of \$880 thousand in sales in 2018. This was down from the sales in the previous three years which had all topped \$1 million.

We currently stock 84 products. New products this year included a Smokey collapsible flying disk and a “Let’s Color with Smokey” coloring book.

Smokey will celebrate his 75th birthday on August 9th, 2019. To commemorate the occasion the National Symbols Cache added fifteen new products. Please visit our website, [www.symbols.gov](http://www.symbols.gov), to view and order these products along with our standard product offerings.



## New Staff

In January, Don Green started working as a Fire Cache Worker in the warehouse. Amanda Jones started working in the cache office in July as a temporary Supply Technician while we continue to work at filling the vice Robertshaw position. Don and Amanda have been welcome additions to our NEK staff.

Contributor: Brian Wise

## LOGISTICS WORKING TEAM

### Recruitment and Training

The entry level logistics workshop was the Logistics working team big accomplishment for 2018. The workshop was held back on May 31, 2018 at the MIFC training room. This workshop covered some of the entry level logistics positions Base Camp Manager (BCMG), Equipment Manager (EQPM), Ordering Manager (ORDM), and Receiving and Distribution Manager (RCDM). Nominations went out and within 2 weeks we had more folks sign up than the training room could support. In all 54 students attended the workshop. There was a waiting list for this class as well of 10-15 people. We were very pleased with the turnout and participation of all the students. Cadre consisted of Bill Lauer (LSC2), Kevin Carlisle (GSUL), Jamie Chopp (SUPL), and Adam Fisher (LSC2).

Supply Unit Leader class was offered at the 2018 Wildfire academy. 14 student took this class. A good portion of these students also were at the logistics workshop.

### Incident to Cache Resource Order Spreadsheet

Logistics working team worked to develop an incident to cache resource order spreadsheet for the NE Interagency Fire Cache. This spreadsheet will make creating resource orders through the cache much faster, and hopefully reduce the amount of errors in the future.

### Trailers

Working team members started the process of getting replacement trailers through the FEP program. Slow process. All the approvals, and most paperwork is in place. Just waiting the right equipment to come available.

*Contributor: Adam Fisher*



## Working Teams

## AIR OPERATIONS WORKING TEAM

With the creation of the interagency dispatch center, the AOWT was tasked with developing new flight following procedures that all MNICS agencies used in 2018. Efforts are also underway to expand National Flight Following and Air Guard coverage in the state. With the help and expertise of the radio technicians at MIFC, three additional towers will have radios using those two frequencies. A new plan for air to air frequency use was also implemented in 2018.

Some additional focus was put on aviation training in 2018. The AOWT updated SOPs for using air ambulance services and incorporated this information into the 2018 refresher material. Aviation training material has already been created for the 2019 refresher. The AOWT also developed a 2 year aviation training plan, hoping to address the specific needs of the MNICS agencies.

There are number of annual tasks that the AOWT undertakes to benefit the MNICS agencies. Some of these tasks include pilot training for the MN State Patrol, MN Air National Guard, EMS, and media; outreach to UAV operators; and updating communication plans.

*Contributor: Cory Berg*

## TRAINING WORKING TEAM

### Wildfire Academy

In its 18th year, the Minnesota Wildfire Academy was held June 4-8, 2018 at the Itasca Community College in Grand Rapids, Minnesota. From basic firefighting, to air operations, chainsaw certification and incident command system (ICS) courses, the weeklong academy drew in 850 students, many instructors with 33 courses being offered. With the help of Itasca Area Schools Collaborative Education (IASCE) this year the participants were able to register online. The Academy was managed by a MNICS-IMT (under Mike Aultman). The team transferred Itasca Community College into an ICP with the same function and structure that students might encounter on a wildland fire assignment.

### Other training

This past calendar year 1087 students attended 36 courses outside of the fire academy. Some of the highlights from these courses include the S490 course that was offered in February, and also 21 students from Ontario Ministry of NR attended two courses, Railroad Fire Investigation and Powerline Fire Investigation. The MNICS/Minnesota Board of Fire Fighter Training Education (MBFTE) once again put on an L-381 Leadership Course. The goal is to continue bringing wildland and structural firefighters together in a classroom before they meet on the fire line.

In final:

- 850 students attended the Wildfire Academy which offered 33 courses.
- 1,087 students attended 36 courses outside of the academy.
- 1,246 students attended 34 RT-130 DNR sponsored courses.
- 39 instructors for DNR refresher courses
- 39 instructors for courses outside of the academy
- 34 lead instructors for a the academy

*Contributor: Troy Boschee*

## Working Teams







## INFORMATION MANAGEMENT WORKING TEAM

The Information Management Working Team (IMWT) worked on some items in 2018. The primary focus was finishing some ongoing projects / tasks and supporting skills development for qualified and trainee PIOs.

The MNICS Display Banners were completed and delivered to MIFC for use as needed at meetings, presentations, conferences, and trainings. A draft IMWT Charter was developed and will be ready for Task Force review in early 2019.

In January, the IMWT coordinated a Minnesota PIO refresher workshop in Grand Rapids. Topics included appropriate use of social media and video platforms, how to handle donations, PIO role in serious accident or fatality, Incident Commander's perspective, MNCC updates, and emerging technologies. PIOs continue to balance the traditional means of information delivery like trap lines and telephones with the emerging electronic methods of social media, websites, and videos.

The IMWT has always been focused on mentoring new PIOs.

In 2018 we had a few PIOF and PIO2 trainees gain experience on fire assignments. This will continue to be a priority for the Team because we had one PIO2 leave the state and another PIO2 will soon be retiring from agency service.

Several PIOs worked on prescribed fire support and some small wild fires in Minnesota during the season. Several MNICS PIOs were on multiple out-of-state fire assignments during the year where they gained valuable experience. Nine MNICS PIOs worked on 23 (type 1 and type 2) assignments in 2018. They worked in Oklahoma, Texas, Colorado, Wyoming, California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, and Utah. There were numerous challenges during the busy and intense fire season in the Northwest Geographic Area and North California Area and several MNICS PIOs worked on fires there during the season.

*Contributor: Tim Engrav*

## Working Teams

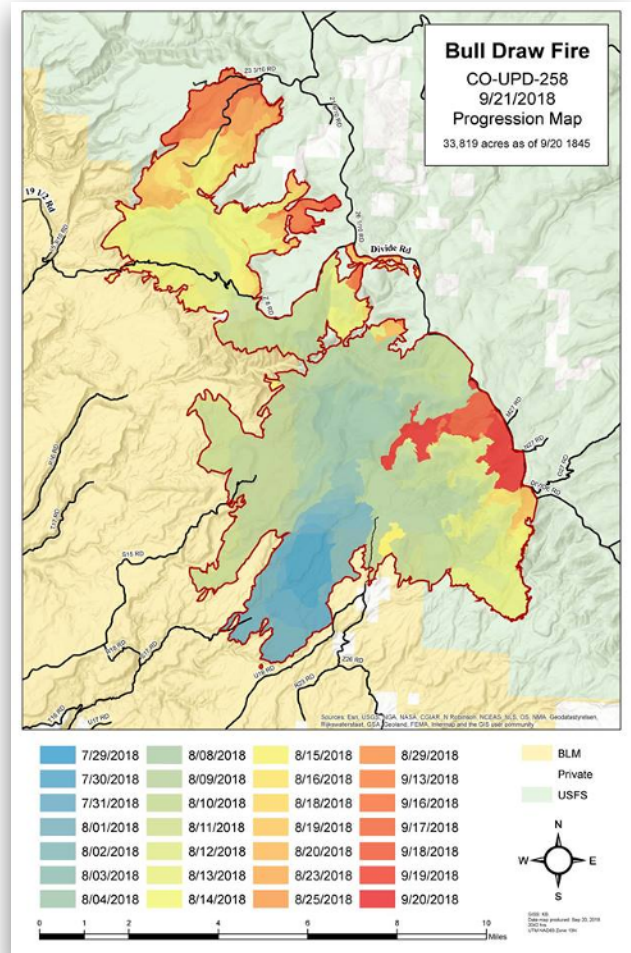
## ITSS-GISS WORKING TEAM

Last December, the newly combined Incident Technology Support Specialist (ITSS) and Geographic Information Systems Specialist (GISS) Working Team met at the MNICS annual meeting to discuss hot topics, strategies and needs that include:

- ArcGIS Online (AGOL) and Collector-ArcGIS training.
- Wireless mesh with the capability to blanket an ICP area for internet access.
- A formal Agreement between Minnesota IT Services (MNIT) and MNICS for incident support.
- Number of people in GISS/ITSS positions, only 1 certified and 1 trainee in both supported the position for 2018.

At Resource Assessment Office in April, the ITSS-GISS working team held its winter refresher to discuss implementation of goals and new procedures. At this time GISS, ITSS, and SITL working team members learned core concepts including ArcGIS online (AGOL), Collector, Setting up and incident (ITSS), and Status check in. During 2018 Western fire season this many GISS/GSAN/ITSS/SITL positions were on assignments in this many states.

*Contributor: Joel Perrington*



## PREVENTION WORKING TEAM

The MNICS WFPET participated and conducted these events this past year.

The MNDNR Prevention/ Firewise

- 48 Recognized Firewise communities
- 9 Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP) in place
- (3 county wide and 3 tribal areas or fire district)
- 330 Communities identified as at Risk covered by a CWPP
- 228,000 Wildfire risk evaluations using remote sensing (2013-2017)
- 4,948 individual home risk evaluations (2013-2017)

The Red Lake Agency (MN-RLA) Fire Prevention Program participated in

- Smokey Bear Day at Itasca State Park
- Fire Prevention Day at MN State Fair
- Fond Du Lac Resources Management event
- Red Lake 4th of July Parade
- Ponemah Labor Day Pow wow

The Red Lake Agency considers the events that they participated in as MNICS WFPET events.

*Contributor: Mike Beaulieu*

**Working  
Teams**



## COMMUNICATIONS WORKING TEAM

Another wet spring/summer for 2018 and again there were no wildfire incidents in Minnesota. We did not send any communications trailers out this year but..... radio requests are always an "item" to procure from our cache at MIFC as needed. Sent just about every last unit for the folks.

### On the Minnesota front

The three new Air-Net repeaters linked through the States DNR LAN system worked fine in extending the reach of our dispatch folks at MNCC & the tanker bases throughout the State. There are a few bugs that will be ironed out yet with how the system works – the radio shop & MNIT will get these taken care of as we track them down. This year a request came to us for Two Harbors dispatching, we now have the ability to dispatch that area from MNCC when needed as they run short on folks up there – Vo/Ip makes this possible again – any of our people, DNR or USFS will be able to talk to them from dispatch in Grand Rapids.

For 2018 we sponsored four D.O.T. radio techs to enroll into the Wildfire Academy at Itasca ICC in June, after completion they will be able to head out and grab some experience on incidents nationwide while being part of the MNCC organization.

Our com-techs held a short refresher course & meeting at MIFC going through the Com trailers, the portable towers, our ACU-M interoper box, a short programming class for the new KNG portables along with operations on these & lastly how to use the cloning cables for the new models. The KNG P150 will be replacing all of the legacy GPH's and next year the GPH (+) models, the DPH units were discontinued in the spring 2018. After 2019 the DNR radio stock will be around 95% P25 digital compliant.

### For the outstate activities

In late June, the Great Lakes Forest Fire Compact (GLFFC) communications working group were to meet in Michigan. Due to the members working on outstate fires and other incidents we were

not able to get together – this meeting is planned for next year & hopefully a chance to see how Michigan communications operates.

Last year, we initiated the GLFFC frequency group for incidents

that could occur in Ontario, Manitoba, Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. This is designated to group 16 on D-model portable radios in Minnesota. These are the frequencies used in the compacts' region and can be used as such for incidents that occur in these areas. We had some discussion on these & there will be no changes for now – all still good to use.

### For the Partners (USFS)

The upcoming remodel at the air-desk continues – we are also expanding the Airguard/Flight Following footprint within the State by adding three additional base stations at Wannaska, Park Rapids, & Carlos Avery (Metro). The audio is tied into the DNR LAN system and back to MNCC dispatch. These base stations are in addition to the Ely (USFS) and the MIFC sites now in use. All Forestry aircraft equipped with these frequencies will be able to contact the dispatch folks as they enter into our State.

Work is progressing on the Superior East/West zone additional frequencies as Dave is installing more equipment at his tower sites. The USFS are beginning to replace all non-digital radios with the new KNG P&M 150 models along with upgrading their base stations & repeaters with P25 CODAN units.



*Contributors: Pat Coughlin, Dave Jalonon*



## FINANCE WORKING TEAM

The Finance Working Team met at the last MNICS Annual Meeting to discuss issues related to finance and administrative management on emergency incidents. We had several new members attend. Our numbers in Finance are increasing but still very low.

There were a few training opportunities that we took advantage of this year. In February a small e-ISuite refresher was put on in Bemidji MN where we made plans for using an e-ISuite database to track out of state resources that are shipped around the state in the spring of the year. In June we held the S-261 class at the academy. We incorporated e-ISuite into the class, teaching the students how to apply the lessons that were taught. At the same time, a few trainees were getting some experience working with the academy Type 2 IMT.

We had one in-state fire with a Type 3 IMT. That allowed 3 persons to work on PTRC, EQTR and TIME task books. A handful of persons went on out-state assignments this last year and 2 had tasks books signed off, one as PTRC and one as FSC2.

In an attempt to share knowledge and become a cohesive team, Flash drives with a whole host of documents gathered from several persons' past experiences were shared to team members.

At the 2018 MNICS meeting, the FWT plans to review and make revisions to the MN DNR Wildfire Protection Business Management Manual forms. We also plan to work on creating some standard operating procedures for our MNICS Finance folks.

The Finance Working team is continuously looking for ways to increase our numbers in the Finance section and finding training opportunities to get task books completed.

*Contributor: Donna Edelman*

## Working Teams

### PRESCRIBED FIRE & FUELS WORKING TEAM

A primary Prescribed Fire and Fuels Working Team (PFFWT) task is to coordinate interagency aerial ignition resources and prioritize burns needing aerial ignition. Accomplished this spring, there were no conflicts for needed aerial ignition resources. Another primary PFFWT task is to continually work with EPA and MPCA on smoke related issues. No occurrences were recorded in 2017 and the report will be available for approval at the 2018 annual meeting.

#### Summer meeting at Sherburne NWR

This summer, PFFWT met at Sherburne NWR to discuss progress on the Fire Danger Operating Plan (FDOP) and to identify accuracy of the 2016 EPA Emissions Inventory. The team was able to validate 20 of the over 2000 entries. The 20 validated were the largest prescribed fires identified by satellite. Further validation is needed for fires smaller than 1000 acres. Thank you to the Sherburne NWR staff for leading the team through a presentation and tour of the South Spur Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project.

#### Fire Danger Operating Plan

The team is continuing to make progress on the FDOP. 7 Fire Danger Rating Areas (FDRA) have been identified and the team has completed a "General Description" for each. Empirical weather and climatological data has been collected for each FDRA and is being utilized by the team to define indicators that could be applied to "Large Fire Day" staffing plans.

*Contributor: Jared Culbertson*

## DISPATCH WORKING TEAM

The theme for 2017 may have been “B is for Building and Better” but this pretty much carried through into 2018. We had some members take a step back or get pulled into other working teams so we once again are building our team. We have some new faces on our team but we are still looking for representation from BIA and NPS. So if you’re interested give us a shout.

Before the 2018 spring wildfire season we were able to make updates to the MOB guide and the Mobilization Issues & Commonly Asked Questions: FAQ for Single Resources guide. In June dispatchers from across the state joined us at MIFC for the Dispatch Workshop. This was held over a two day time period. The first day was all about ROSS, with refreshers offered at different user levels. There were 3 sessions available, beginner, intermediate and IMT users. Day 2 was all about updates in the dispatch world and discussion about position needs. Overall the 2 day workshop received great reviews. Our next dispatch workshop will take place in 2020.

Some exciting news that we received this year is that the era of ROSS will be coming to an end. A web-based program called Interagency Resource Ordering Capability or IROC will be taking the place of ROSS in 2020. The timing of training is currently unknown but look for more information on introductory training in 2019.

In 2018, Minnesota once again saw an increased demand for our dispatchers nationwide. Out-of-state MNICS dispatch assignments include:

- 4 – ACDP, Aircraft Dispatchers (1 Trainee)
- 2 – EDRC, Expanded Dispatch Recorders
- 21 – EDSD, Support Dispatchers (8 Trainees)
- 3 – EDSP, Supervisory Dispatcher (1 Trainee)
- 5 – IADP, Initial Attack Dispatcher (2 Trainees)

This year our first resource went out on assignment on April 6 and our last assignment started on November 12.

A huge thank you to our MNICS dispatchers for their support, expertise and willingness to train others. We look forward to the 2019 fire season and continued changes to our MNCC dispatch organization to support the ever-changing fire environment.

*Contributor: Amber Jungwirth*



# Working Teams

# 8th Annual Wildfire on Ice Hockey Tournament & Banquet



**An event to benefit the Wildland Firefighter Foundation**

(over \$27,000 was raised for the foundation at the 2018 tournament!)

**Saturday, January 19th, 2019 @ the Walker Area Community Center**

**Admission is free for the public!**

Plenty of chances to donate - Raffle, Silent Auction, Merchandise, and more!

## **4 TEAMS**

Minnesota Incident Command System

Department of Interior

United States Forest Service Minnesota

Department of Natural Resources

## **SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**

Friday night: Open hockey/ warmup skate open to everyone (bring your equipment)

Saturday morning: Tournament Games Begin (similar format as 2018)

Early afternoon: Family skate with Smokey Bear

Saturday afternoon: Tournament games continue

Saturday Evening: Tournament banquet @ **Chase on the Lake**

**[www.wffoundation.org](http://www.wffoundation.org)**

**[www.wildfireonice.com](http://www.wildfireonice.com)**

Find us on **Facebook** too!



# MNICS Awards

## SERVICE AWARD

Greg Peterson  
Ron Stoffel

## TEAMWORK AWARD

Natasha Woodwick  
Anna Hines

## RETIREMENT AWARD

Mark Wurdeman  
Steve Olson

## OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE AWARD

Ryan Miller  
Lee Schaar



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