



# Notes

## June 3, 2021 MNICS Task Force Meeting

6/3/2021 - (1000 – 1300)

### Attendance:

**Task Force:** Chase Marshall, Kurt Fogelberg, William Glesener, Cory Berg, Seth Grimm, Roy Holmes

**Non-Task Force Attendees:** Mike Mackey (MNCC), Leanne Langeberg (notes), Brian Wise, Shelly Greniger, and Travis Verdegan

DISCUSSION ITEM	NOTES
<b>Building and Budget Update</b>	<p><b>Budget</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The remaining uncommitted COOP funds will be roll over to the next fiscal year.</li> <li>- The elevator repair cost and utilities are not reflected in the uncommitted balance.</li> </ul> <p><b>Building Update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All of the fluorescent lights in the NEK cache, including the mechanical room, have been converted to LED lighting.</li> <li>- The faulty MIFC card reader will be replaced.</li> <li>- The elevator repair contract has been finalized, and a repair date to be scheduled.</li> <li>- U.S. Forest Service conducted the annual Minnesota Interagency Fire Center safety inspection. Brian Wise will share a copy of the final report with William Glesener.</li> </ul>
<b>MNICS Working Team Chair Reports</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MNICS Working Team Chair reports to the Task Force will be hosted Tuesday, June 22, 2021, after the MNICS Planning call. William Glesener will send out the request to working team chairs.</li> </ul>
<b>Predictive Service Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Travis Verdegan plans to attend a two week S-491 virtual course. He will coordinate with with an FBAN to cover fire behavior updates and MNICS Planning briefing calls.</li> </ul>
<b>T3 IMT Rotation Extension</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Task Force agree to request the MNICS Type 3 Incident Management Teams to extend one additional week based on current fire conditions.</li> <li>- Task Force will reassess IMT extension needs in mid- June</li> </ul>
<b>2021 MNICS Fire Academy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Minnesota DNR has requested approximately \$100,000 in U.S. Forest Service State Fire Assistance (SFA) grant funding. The funding will go toward training, including the 2022 MNICS Academy.</li> <li>- The 2022 academy will be a smaller venue that may require support of a shorter IMT – logistics, finance and operations – to help carry out the functions of the academy event.</li> <li>- The courses offered will focused on results from the training needs assessment.</li> </ul>
<b>Training Working Team Needs Assessment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The training needs assessments were sent out in May, 2021.</li> <li>- Task Force will request the Training Working Team share a summary of the results before the July Task Force meeting.</li> </ul>



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## DISCUSSION ITEM

## - NOTES

<p><b>NICS Planning Call - NWS Briefings</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MNICS planning meeting communication with the National Weather Service (NWS) and the delivery of weather briefings this season has not meet Task Force expectations.</li> <li>- A lack of consistent fire weather leadership within local NWS offices has resulted in schedule coordination challenges and a lack of consistent fire weather briefing elements.</li> <li>- MNCC Coordinator Mike Mackey has reached out to the assigned meteorologist the day of the MNICS planning meeting as a courtesy reminder. He is willing to send along with the notes who presented the last weather briefing and who is on deck to present next, but expressed concern that NWS will become reliant on MNCC to coordinate schedules.</li> <li>- Task Force is open to establishing a base weather briefing page on the MNICS website as a back-up resource. It would be similar to the Eastern Area Coordination Center weather briefing page.</li> <li>- Travis Verdegan will address the concerns with NWS, asking them to identify a Minnesota NWS lead to coordinate staff. He will also reach out to the Duluth lead meteorologist Chris Gitro, who has experience with FDRS, and invite him to meet with the Task Force at the July meeting to discuss parameters for weather briefings. He will also invite Chris to sit in on the MNICS planning calls.</li> <li>- Verdegan will continue efforts to integrate a potential StoryMap process for briefings.</li> <li>- As NWS identifies a lead for fire weather, that individual will be invited to sit as a voting member on the MNICS Prescribed Fire and Fuels Working Team.</li> </ul>
<p><b>AT 50 Rollover</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- DNR has completed a final draft of the safety report involving the AT 50 rollover incident that occurred during the Oxcart Fire this spring.</li> <li>- William Glesener will send a copy of the final report to all Task Force members.</li> <li>- As a mitigation in preventing future rollovers, DNR will install curbing on flatbed trailers used to haul tract vehicles to help guide equipment on to trailers.</li> <li>- DNR is developing a tract vehicle safety refresher for DNR staff, and is open to sharing the course curriculum with MNICS partners.</li> <li>- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is using tilt bed trailers for all soft ground vehicles to reduce potential for roll overs.</li> <li>- Task Force will consider incorporating a rollover sandbox exercise scenario delivered to ICT4, ICT3 and to crew boss and dozer boss training courses.</li> </ul>
<p><b>NMAC COVID Checklists</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The transition to MNICS agencies supporting western fire season, MNCC has requested an update from each agency on their requirement for the COVID checklist.</li> <li>- DNR will maintain the checklist until further notice.</li> <li>- U.S. FWS will not require the checklist but will want to assure personnel are covered at the assignment and during return travel to home unit</li> <li>- BIA will not require the checklist. Some Tribes may have stricter travel requirements for personnel.</li> <li>- Mike Mackey will follow up with Chase Marshall on U.S. Forest Service decision.</li> </ul>



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<b>Resource mobilization updates –</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Task Force supports sharing an update on the resources assigned to western mobilizations this summer and fall season during the MNICS planning call.</li> </ul>
<b>MNCC Staffing Updates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Staffing shortages for MNCC dispatching in operations and aviation continues to be a challenge.</li> <li>- MNCC is often working with only one qualified dispatcher in each area. The qualified dispatcher is also working with trainees at the same time, which is making it difficult to schedule needed time off.</li> <li>- A lot of the trainees are working on multiple task books before they can support the dispatch area.</li> <li>- New dispatching guidelines may require Initial Attack qualifications before moving into aviation dispatching (which requires EDRC), placing a strain on staffing.</li> <li>- William Glesener and Cory Berg will talk with their agency Board of Director member to ask about NWCG requirements for dispatching.</li> <li>- The Dispatch Working Team is actively working with the Training Working team to identify training needs.</li> </ul>
<b>Annual Meeting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In the effort to host an in-person meeting, Task Force agreed to limit the size of the MNICS Meeting to voting working team members, Task Force, Board of Directors, and Weather Service, approximately 70 – 90 people.</li> <li>- Working Team chairs will be asked to incorporate a virtual component to their meeting session so all staff can participate.</li> <li>- Task Force members will request current individual agency requirements for in-person meetings, and respond back to the all Task Force members by June 10, 2021.</li> <li>- Leanne Langeberg shared a report from the MNICS Meeting Planning Committee. The committee is meeting monthly.</li> <li>- Langeberg will share a couple of presentation bios from previous events for the Task Force to consider.</li> </ul>
<b>Agency Updates</b>	<p><b>BIA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recent fires more active due to dryness, but occurrence of fire is lower.</li> <li>- Tribes moving resources around to support needs at White Earth and Red Lake. BIA is working with smaller Tribes to assure qualified staff get days off.</li> <li>- Aviation assets - CL-14 aircraft order was approved by the national office. The CL-14 brought in to Grand Rapids, MN will move to Hibbing, MN. The Fire Boss 205 aircraft located in Bemidji was extended through June 15. The Type 1 Helicopter Sky Crane scheduled to arrive Thursday morning.</li> <li>- Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) work on the Goods Fire at Red Lake was successful. The Type 3 UAS had thermal capabilities that were used to detect burning peat on the Goods fire. Data was compared to tests conducted on known peat burning from other fires earlier in the spring. No indications found that peat was burning. Cory Berg plans to share a summary of the UAS work with the Task Force.</li> <li>- Planning to advertise the fire operations specialist. Looking at additional organization structure positions to fill holes and help out the tribes.</li> </ul>



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Agency Updates Cont.	<p><b>DNR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Areas are staffing up for critical fire weather expected over the weekend. All DNR fire leads have shifted back to a normal schedule and all leads will be laid off except for the northwest.</li> <li>- Most areas are extending staff coverage until significant change in fire weather.</li> <li>- Continue to hold on to the current compliment of aviation assets, and will continue to reassess needs.</li> <li>- DNR is still operating under current COVID best practices, awaiting MMB to adjust guidelines for operations.</li> <li>- Spending plan in progress, expected to be similar to the previous year.</li> <li>- DNR is working with the U.S. Forest Service on the shared protection plan, which might require the operational plan to be resigned.</li> <li>- A support dispatcher was hired for the Region 2 Office in Grand Rapids, Minn.</li> </ul> <p><b>Forest Service</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Region 9 Fire Management Officer’s (FMO) meeting is currently in progress, and the agency is anticipating a busy western fire season.</li> <li>- The Zone FMO panel has wrapped up, expecting a name will be shared out in the near future.</li> </ul> <p><b>Fish and Wildlife Service –</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continue prescribed burning operations at a few select locations, before wrapping up the season.</li> <li>- FWS has aviation funding available to support a Fire Boss, and is working with BIA to decide where to assign to best support needs.</li> <li>- Short term severity package is in place for the upcoming fire weather over the weekend.</li> </ul> <p><b>HSEM –</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No new updates, continued emergency management operations.</li> </ul> <p><b>NPS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continue to staff for fire response. Area has received very minimal precipitation.</li> </ul> <p><b>MNCC Coordinator</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Forest Service will update the network on Tuesday, June 8, and the system will be down a couple of hours during updates.</li> <li>- Detailers are being brought in to support staffing needs.</li> <li>- Mike Mackey will be taking scheduled leave in mid-June, working on approval to have Dan Nagle fill in.</li> <li>- Coordination centers nationally are revisiting the discussion on re-establishing websites for all coordination centers nation-wide.</li> </ul>
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Next meeting June 30<sup>th</sup> – 12:30 p.m. – hosted on Webex.