



Notes

July 6, 2021 MNICS Task Force Meeting

7/6/2021 - (1300 – 1500)

Attendance:

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

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

| DISCUSSION ITEM | NOTES |
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| <p>Building and Budget Update</p> | <p>Budget</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No additional expenses were incurred beyond the monthly building expenses. - All uncommitted MNICS coop funds will roll over into the FY22 on July 1, 2022. - Anticipated facility expenses include the elevator repair, air handlers, sprinkler system, and annual fire extinguisher inspection. - Task Force approved allocating a \$5,000 line item to the MNICS coop funds for MNICS annual meeting guest speaker expenses. <p>Building Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Waiting on the contractor to identify dates for the elevator repair. - The radio shop deck repair will be completed when NPS crews are available. - The security systems are working well. - Task Force approves cleaning carpets at the Minn. Interagency Fire Center (MIFC) before staff return from telework. - A new entry door card reader has been ordered to replace the faulty card reader and will be covered under warranty. - The entry door can be code programmed to allow entry without an access card. Multiple codes can be set, allowing each training session to have an individual one-time use code. - The MIFC roof replacement remains on the U.S. Forest Service schedule. A date has not been identified for replacement. - The Task Force approves contracting out the necessary identified repairs for the MIFC roof, and requests a new estimate. Brian Wise will work with Nelson Roofing for an updated estimate. Brian Wise also will reach out to the U.S. Forest Service engineer to inquire if repairs will impact MIFC’s priority on the Forest Service replacement list. - Kevin Carlisle will coordinate the roof repair contract through the state purchasing system. |
| <p>Burning and Campfire Restrictions</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Superior National Forest held a restrictions discussion on July 6, 2021, and determined there is no immediate need to implement restrictions. The Chippewa National Forest is also discussing lifting their current campfire restrictions. - The National Park Service plans to follow DNR restrictions when they are implemented in the adjoining counties. - DNR will likely add Lake of the Woods and Koochiching Counties to the current restrictions – no date has been identified. Last week the DNR Northeast Region was considering to add the counties of St. Louis, Lake and Cook to the current restrictions. |



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| Burning and Campfire Restrictions cont. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - White Earth is not interested in pursuing any further restrictions. The Tribe is not interested in placing the entire reservation on the same restrictions because conditions vary throughout the reservation. The enforcement of the fireworks restrictions created an enforcement hurdle for White Earth. - Leech Lake will most likely follow the Chippewa National Forest decision on campfire restrictions. - Cory Berg plans to connect with Grand Portage July 6, 2021 to discuss what decision they will make if Cook County implements burning restrictions. |
| MNICS Annual Meeting Planning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leanne Langeberg shared updates from the June planning committee meeting. - Kevin Carlisle will proceed with working on bids for a Duluth Meeting. - Task Force discussed the dates and layout of the scheduled meetings. The group feels the current schedule of Monday – Board of Directors, Task Force, Incident Management Teams and Weather meeting, Tuesday – Working Team Meetings, and Wednesday – General session, is working and will continue to follow this schedule. - The group discussed the need for ideas on presenters and how to plan out the General Session. Currently, the Task Force supports an all-day session Wednesday and release but remains open to revisiting the need for including a half-day Thursday general session meeting. - Leanne Langeberg notify the planning committee about the presenter ideas that the group can reach out to for meeting presentations. Suggestions include the Eastern Area SMEs, State Climatology, and Wildland Fire Lessons Learned center contacts. |
| Out-of-state assignment memo | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DNR - Out-of-state mobilization priority will be given to members supporting incident management teams and other commitments and the Eastern Area priority trainees. - FWS – There are a few stations in severity in the northwest corner of the state, and an additional engine and crew will be positioned at Agassiz National Wildlife Refuge. - The agency plans to start sending resources out after local needs are met first. - BIA – Agency is in a similar position as FWS, making slow movement toward making resources available for out-of-state assignments. - The agency remains uncertain where NMAC and Eastern area will be for name requests/severity requests as unable to fills (UTFs) continue to happen. - FS – Agency plans to maintain minimum staffing levels and release resources when local minimum staffing levels are met. - Aviation Resources – Pressure to release aircraft resources is building as needs pick up out west. Dan Olds with DNR was able to coordinate a 215-T to come online in July if Minnesota is still in need of the aircraft. - Task Force agreed to extend the MNICS Type 3 Incident Management Teams one additional rotation which would be the last extension before the fall rotation begins. Task Force also recognizes that MNICS personnel support other Incident Management teams which may result in ad hoc team coverage for MNICS teams. - Mike Mackey will work with Tasha Woodwick to draft a memo to send to the Incident Commanders. |



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| Agency Updates | <p>BIA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agency saw wildfire occurrence pick up over the Fourth of July weekend. - Red Lake continues to be the driest area for the BIA, missing out on many recent precipitation events. - The agency does not expect to be releasing many resources. White Earth may release a few engines to support needs. - Casey Olson from the Great Lakes Agency is working on plans to fill the operations position. - Carl Crawford will act for Cory Berg during his scheduled leave July 7 – 11. <p>DNR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Division of Forestry will be holding in-depth discussions on July 7, regarding the next Commissioner’s order for restrictions. - DNR is continuing to bring in a few out-of-state engines to support areas. - DNR is anticipating to continue the existing compliment of aircraft. - Pat Coughlin is retiring and will be taking about a month off. Joe Theisen has been hired as replacement worked for DOT. <p>Forest Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National leadership council met with eight western governors about the national wildfire crisis. The minimum wage for a GS-03 wildland firefighter will now start at \$15.00 per hour, and other recruitment incentives are also being considered. - The Chippewa and Superior National Forest submitted another severity package and will reevaluate severity needs again in a couple of weeks. - COVID response - the undersecretary is looking to implement a phased-in return to work approach beginning October 1. Until then, maximum telework remains in place. - The agency is starting to feel a lot of pressure to start sending qualified personnel out west. <p>Fish and Wildlife Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Asst. Fire Management Officer (AFMO) selection will be submitted July 6, 2021. - The agency is working on a wildfire severity package that is set to expire on July 10. - A couple of larger prescribed burns are being planned for Glacial Ridge that may involve aerial or drone style capacity ignitions. - In August, the agency is planning to post three GS-06/07 wildfire positions in Minn. as part of the workforce transformations – six positions will be posted in the zone. <p>HSEM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to monitor public safety needs throughout the state. <p>NPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conditions are dry in the Park. Kurt is still observing smoke rising up from the most recent fire. |



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Agency Updates Continued.

MNCC Coordinator

- Mike is holding off on his EA IMT availability for another couple of weeks.
- Two new operations dispatching staff have started, one is a full-time permanent filled position.
- Conversations are beginning to pick up to move forward with filling the aviation dispatcher lead position and possibly converting the position to a full-time position based on workload. Mike plans to talk more with Darren Neuman about the cert. It appears more likely that the position will be filled with a trainee.
- Mike Mackey requested adding a discussion topic to the August agenda about the MNCC organization chart, seasonal positions, and parameters for funding the positions to the August Task Force agenda.
- Mike will forward a copy of the NMAC letter that includes information on the COVID checklist to all Task Force members.
- Mike requested a letter addressing the increased lodging rates in the Grand Rapids area and government rates not being honored. Task Force agreed the letter should come from either the Forest Supervisor (Chippewa or Superior National Forest) or the Regional Forester.

Public Information

- Coordinated a media interview with KARE 11 focused on current conditions and the role of the MNCC and NEK Cache in preparedness and mobilizing resources and equipment. The story aired Friday, July 2.
- Will be on rotation with Eastern Area Gold Team July 7 – 22.

Next meeting August 5^h – 09:30 p.m. – hosted on Webex.