



Notes

May 2, 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, Shelly Greniger

Special Guest: Caleb Schreiber

DISCUSSION TOPIC	NOTES
Budget Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Task Force reviewed the monthly budget expenses. - The MNCC chairs and the electrical project were included in this month’s financial report. - MNICS co-op account is not subjected to any agency’s fiscal year spending cut-off because it is a revolving account.
Building Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The MIFC building roof replacement is scheduled to begin May 28 and expected to take three weeks to complete. The MNCC functional areas will relocate to nearby Minnesota DNR and Forest Service facilities or telework during the construction. - The MNCC dimmer switch will be installed during the roof replacement. - The MIFC elevator renovation and installation is scheduled to begin July 8.
MNICS Incident Management Trailers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Task Force approved \$4,000 of MNICS co-op funds to renovate two MNICS incident management team trailers. The Minnesota Department of Corrections will provide labor and MNICS will cover material costs. The upgrades will be completed by July 2024.
Dispatch Radio infrastructure upgrades	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Radio communication staff are working with MNCC to integrate the USDA Forest Service network into the Minnesota DNR network. The integration will increase network bandwidth, consolidate the VOIP systems at MIFC down to one, and set up interagency interoperability.
Fire Codes for DNR Fires	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minnesota DNR has established a pre-position fire code for Department of Interior staff that respond to wildfires non-federal and non-tribal managed lands.
Annual Meeting Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Wednesday evening social hour- appetizers, silent auction and guest speaker – was approved by the Task Force along with an additional \$1,500 added to the pre-approved MNICS meeting expense funding. The committee is also approved to proceed with booking guest speakers Olson and Draper for the general session presentations on Wednesday and Thursday. - The Task Force recommend planning the Thursday general session as a full day 8 – 3:30. - Topics the Task Force recommends adding to the general session agenda include presentations on BIA’s specialized air attack platform, an MNCC review of the 2024 WildCAD-e rollout, and possibly a presentation from NWCG on changes to fire training – positions, task books and evaluations. - The Task Force recommends replacing the agenda item for the Eastern Area Team and Complex Incident Management updates with the MNICS Type 3 IMT season highlights, and combining the Task Force round-table into their agency updates time slot. - Langeberg submitted a request to Paul Lundgren to reach out to Greg Smith, NASF Board Director, and ask if an NWCG representative could present at the MNICS Meeting on changes coming to national fire training.



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<p>Agreement Updates</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Schreiber reviewed comments the USDA Forest Service deputy director's submitted. - The agreement remains in an extension state, pending the final partnership signature from the National Park Service (NPS). The MNICS cooperative agreement will be implemented on May 6, regardless of signature status. - Glesener and Schreiber are finalizing the training and prescribed burning supplemental project agreement. - Franco will research who can officially administer the test for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's employees. - The contacts list will be replaced with a reference to Eastern Area Mob Guide Chap. 90. - Schreiber will grant Petrack and Franco access to the Pinon folder.
<p>Working Team Assignments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Glesener will write up the MNICS working team assignment for successional planning. - Petrack will write up the MNICS working team assignment to the operations working team to review and revise the Minnesota Fire Suppression field pocket guide, and to submit final edits to Leanne Langeberg, MIFC public information officer. - Task Force will consider a working team assignment to the Type 3 Incident Management Working Team to develop a career promotional recruitment booth highlighting the career path to interagency command and general staff positions and Type 2 IA hand crew positions during the 2025 Minnesota Wildfire Academy.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BIA – The BIA will not reapply for an additional long-term severity package after the current package expires. BIA released one on-call Fire Boss aircraft in Bemidji on May 1. The air attack platform is on contract through May. The agency is working on a radio infrastructure project to set up new repeaters and move towers. An invitation will be extended to Dave Pagle and Joe Theisen to meet with BIA to discuss the infrastructure requirements to move forward with interagency communications. The budget analyst started this week and is located at the Bemidji office. The Final BIA budget is progressing through the budget officer and is likely to include increased preparedness funding. - DNR – The fire training program welcomed Joe Meyer as the new ICS and operations advanced training specialist. Meyers joins advanced training specialists Nelson (prescribed fire), and Sande (aviation). DNR is working through a significant hiring effort to fill forester positions, which will significantly increase fire training needs. General Andrews's tracked vehicle operating (TVOP) course is complete and ready for training sessions. Burning restrictions are expected to lift for the southern area starting Monday for counties from Little Falls south. Larry Himanga has officially retired. An offer for the wildfire administration position was made, awaiting a final decision. - FWS – Darrin Franco accepted the West Zone Fire Management Officer role and will serve as the agency's Task Force representative. The prescribed fire season has arrived and burn projects will be conducted as weather permits. Additional out-of-area resources will support prescribed burning projects. The agency's budget is at the Washington Office. The agency is investigating the Mamre fire. - NPS – The lake is ice-free and park staff are preparing the boats. Voyageurs National Park plans to conduct burning and fuels management projects this summer. The park's fire staff assisted U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on a few prescribed fire projects. Work capacity testing is underway. Fire staff are also conducting weather station maintenance.



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<p>Agency Updates cont.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HSEM – The agency is close to making a final offer on the Region 3 (northwest) regional coordinator position. HSEM training coordinator Angela Packard accepted a new position with the State Fire Marshal's office. HSEM is conducting interviews for the four school resource officer positions. The standard operating guide for state agencies operating in the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) has been updated. The SEOC building construction is progressing. The NQC hosted an informational briefing for the qualifications review board, comprised of members from Minnesota State Fire Chief's Associations, HSEM, and Minnesota DNR, who certify the credentialing system. Taylor Schenk represents the DNR. EMAC coordination for the National Republican Convention is in progress and the current request is for additional police officers. HSEM has not received any EMAC requests for Oklahoma's recent tornado storm damage. - USFS – Greg Gulan accepted the Chippewa National Forest assistant fire management officer position and will report to the Minnesota Interagency Fire Center on May 19. No changes will be made to the current fire organization chart for the Superior and Chippewa National Forests. The Ely Tanker Base manager position was filled with a GS-09. The vacant East Zone assistant fire management officer and three assistant fire engine captains positions will be included in the next round of Forest Service fire hiring. The NEK cache manager, National Symbols cache manager and a supply technician position will be advertised soon, and all are expected to be filled by July 2024. The Superior National Forest plans to submit five proposals seeking \$25 million in fuels reduction and infrastructure funding. The funding will allow more partnership opportunities to complete the fire and fuels project work. Moose collaboration planning efforts include using fire and fuels treatments to mimic preferred moose habitat landscapes. The planning group identified three project areas, all within the Superior National Forest, and the project work and could create more interagency fire support opportunities. - MNCC – MNCC staffing is holding well, and the full-time aviation dispatcher will return from paternity leave in two weeks. During the roof replacement, the air desk will operate from the MN DNR Regional Office, operations will operate from the Chippewa National Forest Deer River office, and logistics will telework. MNCC will continue bringing in detailers through the week of the Academy. WildCAD-e naming conventions have improved and will hopefully correct the bugs dispatchers have reported. - <i>National Coordination updates</i> – Eastern Area Coordination Center Manager, Brendan Neylon, is retiring. Kingsley plans to coordinate a meeting with Jen Parish to discuss transition and integration. The WildCAD-e contract was upgraded to an eight-year contract and work on writing up the new contract will begin next year. MNCC has volunteered to help write the contract. The federal dispatcher position descriptions for fire do not meet OPM's requirements for the 0456 series, and the agency is looking at alternative series to reclassify dispatchers. There is a national push for the NICC to host all dispatch websites and Region 9 will test-pilot the website next year. The change will replace MNCC's portion of the MNICS website.

Next Task Force Meeting will be June 6, 2024, at the Minnesota Fire Academy – Minnesota North College, Itasca Campus.