

Operating Guidelines

Southern Rockies Science Delivery
and Outreach Project

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I. General Provisions

These Operating Guidelines are to provide direction for operations of the Southern Rockies Science Delivery and Outreach project(SRME), funded by a grant from the Joint Fire Science Program(JFSP). The project was initially funded in 2010.

Overall Purpose

The purposes of the Guidelines are to ensure processes are identified that guide operations of the SRME project.

Project Mission

The SRME project mission is to;

- facilitate communications between the fire management stakeholders and the science/research community within the SRME,
- facilitate communications with other similar consortia,
- accelerate awareness of and application of science information by managers.

Project Management

The Principle Investigator, Co PI's, and Project Manager implement the program according to grant awarded by JFSP. Federal Funds from JFSP are managed through the Colorado Bureau of Land Management.

A Steering Committee will review the strategic direction, project funding decisions, and operating procedures and budgets. The Steering Committee also evaluates annual program performance. The Steering Committee supports the project by working with the Principle Investigator, Co PI's, and Project Manager to help implement the program, and by interacting with stakeholders to determine outreach needs and increase awareness of program accomplishments.

Funding

Program funding is from a JFSP grant, and from contributions of partners. JFSP Funds will be managed by the Colorado Bureau of Land Management through a federal formal agreement with The Nature Conservancy of Colorado. Individual Partners will manage funds through their normal fiscal procedures.

Guideline Revisions

These Operating Guidelines are intended to be used as guides rather than firm policy statements. The Guidelines are dynamic and may be updated from time to time, and at a minimum of once every three years, and as necessary to improve effectiveness and performance.

Program Structure

The Southern Rockies Science Delivery and Outreach project (SRME) is managed by a 10-

person **Steering Committee** (hereafter the “Committee”). Committee members volunteer to 2-year renewable terms. The Committee reviews program priorities and direction, budgets, plans and reports, and general review of program operations. The Committee members’ labor and travel costs are provided by their employer/agency.

II. The Steering Committee

Committee Composition

The Committee consists of five members from the science/research community and five members from the management/science user community. Members should have backgrounds in management or research, and expressed interest in the management of wildland fuels or a closely aligned field..

The Committee should represent the diversity of thought, philosophy, opinion, and approach inherent in the agencies. To do so, it is important to assure that the gender, ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity of the Committee reflects that within the agencies and our society at large. The Committee will strive to:

- Work within our organizations to assure that we maintain a diverse Committee
- Actively seek candidates for Committee service who are willing to serve and represent the diversity of their agency
- Seek advice from beyond the Committee when we lack diverse representation

In addition, Committee members should possess the following characteristics to be effective Committee members:

- Experienced in dealing with fire management or research
- Understands land managers information needs regarding fire science
- Understands the capabilities and limitations of science
- Experienced working in an interagency context
- Ability to evaluate science proposals to meet land manager's information needs
- Ability to help formulate strategic direction for a regional program

Committee Member Term

In the initial year of the project, 5 committee members will serve one year terms, 5 members will serve 2 year terms. Thereafter all terms will be two years. In the event that a member can no longer participate due to retirement, illness, or reassignment, the Committee will seek immediate replacement. Members cannot serve more than two consecutive terms.

Committee Meetings and Teleconferences

The Steering Committee conduct a minimum of one meeting per year, and conference telephone calls once every other month. More frequent communications are encouraged as needed. While it

is recognized that Committee members have full-time jobs with busy schedules and that membership on the Committee is considered collateral duty, Committee members should actively participate in the annual meetings and at least 75% of conference calls. When members cannot participate in scheduled meetings or conference calls they should indicate their positions on key agenda issues to another Committee member (proxy), or to the Program Manager, who can convey that position to the participants.

Chair and Vice Chair

The Steering Committee will have a chairperson and vice chairperson elected by the membership of the Committee. The two leadership positions will be from different functional areas, research/science and science user.

Chairperson

The chairperson will be elected to a two-year term by simple majority of the Committee, to begin serving on or about August 1. The chairperson may be re-elected by the Committee for one additional term, unless the Committee elects to have the Chair serve for a longer term. Selection will be by consensus.

Vice-Chairperson

The vice chairperson will be elected to a two-year term by simple majority of the Committee, to begin serving on or about August 1. The vice chairperson may be re-elected by the Committee for one additional term, unless the Committee elects to have the Vice Chairperson serve for a longer term. Selection will be by consensus.

Ad hoc Committees

The Committee may establish ad hoc committees to support SRME functions. Such committees may be given direction to include the purpose, duration and composition of the committee and other appropriate information. Travel and out-of-pocket expenses of ad hoc committees will be borne by the members employer.

Committee Decision Process

Consensus decision procedure

The Committee operates by consensus (all members agree with or can support the decision). However, it is inevitable that members will miss meetings and/or conference calls. In the event that decisions must be addressed without full membership, the following guidelines apply:

(a) Major decisions such as project theme for the year: Committee members who know in advance that they will not be available for the decision should express their position in writing (e.g., via email) to the rest of the Committee and should assign their proxy vote to another Committee member. Consensus is the preferred decision process. Decisions will be relayed to absent members.

(b) Minor decisions such as rescheduling a conference call: If a simple majority (six members) is present and in agreement, the minor decision can be made and

relayed to the absent member(s). If a simple majority is not in agreement, the decision will be deferred until absent members have expressed their views/positions.

Non-consensus decision procedure

In the event that consensus cannot be obtained on an issue, the Committee may defer the issue for further discussion and negotiation. If the issue cannot be deferred, the Committee may elect to use a 7/10 majority on major issues and a simple (6/10) majority on minor issues. If a decision is not made by consensus, the process used and minority opinion will be documented in the meeting minutes.

Committee Member Expectations

Committee members are expected to both represent their agencies interests and needs, and to act as a collective interagency body responsible for crafting and directing an effective program.. Expectations include:

- Travel to and participate in Committee meetings
- Participate in organizing meetings
- Participate in discussions and decisions on conference calls
- Approve program performance measures, and review annual performance
- Brief home agency directors and staff
- Solicit ideas from agency clients regarding research and science delivery needs
- Review the annual operating budget
- Participate in program activities such as field or program reviews
- Review annual program of work
- Recruit individuals to participate in SRME activities, on Ad hoc Committees, and replacement members for the Steering Committee.

III. Reporting and Documentation

Project Documentation

A separate file of each project will be maintained by the Program Manager. The file will include the original proposal, all relevant correspondence, project evaluations, copies of reports and publications, and other relevant information.

Fiscal Records

Official contractual records will be maintained by The Nature Conservancy in accordance with grant requirements, grants and agreements standard operating procedures, and in accordance with the TNC/CO BLM Agreement.(need real title!)

Program Reporting

- 1) Annual Progress Report. The SRME will prepare an Annual Program progress report. The Annual Report should be completed and available not later than June 30 each year. The report is intended for general circulation. When available, it will be forwarded to JFSP.
- 2) Specific JFSP reporting requirements are provided with the grant award. The grant documentation should be referred to and reports generated as required.
- 3) Periodic reports. As events and projects are completed a fact sheet or similar report will be prepared and distributed as appropriate.