



**National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG)
Smoke Committee (SmoC)
Monthly Activity Update – April 2012**



SmoC NEWS:

HYSPLIT Trajectories as part of NWS Spot Weather Forecasts

A webinar about the use of HYSPLIT trajectories was held April 23rd for Subject Matter Experts (SMEs). Computer issues prevented recording, however, all slides are available. Robyn Heffernan (NWS), Pete Lahm (FS), and Stu Hoyt (FS) are investigating ways to circulate information to potential users for both wildfires and prescribed burns so they know about the availability of the HYSPLIT trajectories with the Spot Weather Forecasts. There have been 219 trajectory requests through April of this year, with SC, TN, GA, TX and FL in the south eastern US being most active along with MI and WI also becoming active.

2012 Wildfire Smoke Response and Coordination Efforts

- **Wildfire Air Resource Advisors:** Anthony Matthews and Gary Curcio are compiling a tool box of information for people who get called to be Wildfire Air Resource Advisors. Pete Lahm has compiled 10 volunteers to work in this capacity during the western wildfire season. It is easier if a Wildfire Air Resource Advisor is listed in the Resource Ordering Status System (ROSS).
- **Monitoring Cache:** A list of available smoke monitors available for deployment across the country is being developed when the 15 unit national cache is depleted. North Carolina EBAMs are ready for deployment. Some units are available at PNW and Missoula Tech Center.
- SmoC also discussed the recent Denver wildfire which resulted in fatalities and the Florida wildfire that required the shutting down of major highways due to smoke and where one-hr particulate matter concentrations of 407 microgram/m³ were measured.

Interactions between SmoC and other NWCG Committees

- **NWCG Fuels Committee:** There will be a joint SmoC and Fuels Committee call May 10th.
- **NWCG Risk Management Committee:** Pete Lahm met with George Broyles (San Dimas) and Joe Domitrovich (Missoula Tech Center) and discussed NWCG business, fire line personnel exposure issues, documents related to PM standards, monitoring, samples, and the SmoC online training course. They will be joining a SmoC call in the future.
- **Wildland Fire Institute (WFI):** Deb Fleming joined a SmoC call to talk about the WFI. Currently they are working with branch groups to define the role of what a 'Dean' will be, what they do, what extent they collaborate with other committees, etc. Most people are at NAFRI and at the Training Branch. Board of Directors is trying to figure out the most important things to do first—10-yr Implementation plan. The Planning group is looking at the different skill sets that fire planners need- most of these are directed toward the methods of planning, not as much technical fire topics. Smoke could be tied into a handful of elements of WFI proposed schools so perhaps a core smoke class is needed. Curriculum will be determined after defining the role of the Dean and validating the content areas. There will be leeway in editing/re-organizing this structure (the fireball slide). The learning content management system (LCMS) is being used internally to build courses from which content from many areas could be drawn upon. At some point all the NWCG courses will be housed within the LCMS system, but that does not preclude from using other resources such as university. SmoC will continue the dialogue with the WFI.

Communication and Messaging

- Talking Points SmoC submitted to the National Multi-Agency Coordinating (NMAC) Group were rejected on the grounds that air quality is not part of their mandate however other agency-by-agency efforts to use the talking points are occurring.

Contact: Pete Lahm, SmoC Chair, US Forest Service // 202-205-1084 // plahm@fs.fed.us, pete.lahm@gmail.com
For additional information on SmoC go to: <http://www.myfirecommunity.net/Neighborhood.aspx?ID=279>



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Upcoming Rules, Regulations, and Policies

- Particulate Matter National Ambient Air Quality Standard Rule: Proposal 6/12 and final 6/13.
- Ozone Standard: Final Rule expected end of 2013.
- EPA Smoke Policy – Latest estimate is that one will be released by the end of 2012
- EPA High wind Exception Event Guidance is available. Wildfire guidance for the Exceptional Event Rule (EER) has been given low priority and is not expected in the near future.

Visual Range/PM2.5/Air Quality Index Discussion Paper

Susan O'Neill is wrapping up final edits on the discussion paper. There was discussion about how the advisory levels change across states. In some cases this may be warranted (for example, an arid state could realistically have different advisory ranges from a humid state), but in other cases this may not be warranted (for example, between two neighboring arid states).

2013 International Smoke Symposium

SmoC had discussions about location. Coalition of Prescribed Fire Councils recommended Washington, DC. Another suggestion was to have two conference locations linked virtually (east/west) as "Hubs". Mikel Robinson (IAWF) and Dick Bahr (NPS) will join a SmoC call in the future to discuss budget, location, conference virtual access and other organizational items. It is noted that many agencies are under tight travel restrictions. A Steering Committee will be pulled together. The National Weather Service and Coalition of Prescribed Fire Councils are interested and supportive of the Symposium.

SmoC Subcommittees:

Smoke Managers Subcommittee

- Smoke managers call May 8th. Will discuss the smoke Pocket Guide and EPA regulation updates.
- Smoke contact spreadsheet is posted on the SmoC MFC site and will continue to be updated.
- Approaching this group for participation in the steering committee for the 4-hour online Wildfire and Air Quality and Decision Making course.

Technical Smoke Topics Subcommittee

- The Official 2008 EPA National Emission Inventory (NEI) is available using Smartfire version 2— 11 states submitted at least partial data on prescribed/agricultural fire emissions. Briefing paper is in process. The Retrospective Emission Inventory Task Team is engaged on this topic as well as EPA's approach to the Greenhouse Gas Emission Inventory development.
- Smoke Management Guide work is proceeding.

Training Subcommittee

- Assembling a steering committee for the 4-hour online Wildfire and Air Quality Decision Making course.
- Developing a Phase 3 recommendations report based on the Smoke Assessment and IQCS Reports. Draft toward end of June. This will contain a vision of smoke training needs across ICS positions for both prescribed fire and wildfire as well as how to accomplish such training.
- Allen Deitz on next Subcommittee call to discuss NWCG training documents sponsorship.
- Cross-referencing NWCG official definitions with the 2001 Smoke Management Guide and Smokepedia for consistency.



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Round Robin:

- Claudia Standish has written up smoke pocket-guide materials in the incident management team orientation briefing package (on the SWICC website).
- Smoke Managers Contact List contains information about which states have a Smoke Management Program (SMP).
- WFDSS air quality portal introduced to RX490.
- NC forecasting office has developed a Superfog Matrix box—tool to alert forecaster on duty if conditions could be met for Superfog events.
- Gary Curcio to do a presentation to the fire weather subcommittee on mixing height methodology. Lower mixing heights could lead to less burning. Weather Service will need to do comparative study on how to obtain mixing heights.
- Estimated Smoldering Potential: Joint budget request for project between Fire Danger Subcommittee and SmoC. Jim Reardon has an idea for a project to facilitate this. Have been accepted as a priority applicant for the 2.5 year SMAP satellite project to build remote sensing capability launching in 2014. Could be a funding opportunity.
- Record low acres burned in Flint Hills, KS due to early green-up.
- BIA/White Mountain Apache Tribe representative is interested in being on SmoC call.

April Conferences and Webinars that SmoC Participated in

- 3rd Human Dimensions of Wildland Fire Conference, April 17-19, 2012, Seattle, WA
- Western States Air Resources Council (WESTAR) Spring Meeting – Pete Lahm and Dan Johnson
- Western Regional Air Partnership (WRAP) Meeting – Pete Lahm
- NW Smoke Management Meeting – Pete Lahm, Mark Fitch
- April 17, 2012 Webinar: Smoke Management: Preparing and Informing the Public (Lessons from SWA Fire Season 2011). Emily Irwin and Josh Hall (<http://www.iawfonline.org/webinars.php>)

Upcoming Conferences and Webinars

May 3, 2012 - On the Causes and Movement of Smoke-Induced Fog, by Gary L. Achtemeier
<http://www.iawfonline.org/webinars.php>

California Interagency Air and Smoke Counsel (IASC) Meeting May 2 -3, 2012.
<http://www.arb.ca.gov/smp/progdev/iasc/iasc.htm>

JFSP Consortium Meeting – Boise, Idaho, June 4, 2012

EPA International Emissions Inventory Conference, August 13 - 16, 2012, Hyatt Regency in Tampa, FL
http://www.epa.gov/ttn/chief/conference/index_papers.html

5th International Fire Ecology and Management Congress: Uniting Research, Education and Management, The Association for Fire Ecology, December 3-7, 2012, Portland, Oregon
<http://afefirecongress.org/>

4th Fire Behavior and Fuels Conference, February 18-22, 2013, Raleigh, NC,
<http://www.iawfonline.org/2013FuelsConference/index.php>

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