

# Natural Background Task Team

Denver Meeting: October 24 and 25, 2000

Prepared by Rebecca Reynolds Consulting

## Participants:

Darla Potter (Co-Chair NBTT), Carl Gossard (Co-Chair NBTT), Pete Lahm (Co-Chair FEJF), Coleen Campbell (CO DPHE), Ken Evans (Phelps Dodge), Mark Fitch (AZ DEQ), Dennis Haddow (USDA FS), Dave Jones (Air Policy Control District, CA), Shelly Nolde (USDA FS), Jim Russell (USDA FS R6), Sam Sandberg (USDA FS/Research), Mike Ziolko (ODF), Rebecca Reynolds (Consultant)

**Tuesday October 24, 2000**

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## Boise Meeting Closure

1. **NBTT Task Focus** – Carl Gossard (see Handout of “the box” diagram)
  - Agree on what we are to accomplish
  - Need to review our core beliefs and determine how we will work through this process given our core beliefs
  - Know that if we don’t do the work someone else will.
  - Clean Air Act: maximize clean air.
  - Political Reality: people want clean air.
  - Physical Reality: fire is going to happen, there will be smoke.
  - Core Beliefs: we all have them.
  - Need to find areas of agreement: understand.
  - Trust.

What will result from the workshop?

- A recommendation of what will be counted or not counted against the natural background level on an annual or decadal basis for the Class I areas under Regional Haze (visibility only!). Smoke Management Plans will be in place and every source of emissions will be included in the local county (APCD), state, or regional.
- Implications of work...Slippery Slope?
  - No legal authority to use the classification any other way.
  - “Natural” as identified in the RHR is being used by NBTT and nothing more...

Note: Perspective from many is that the process and results is one of equity between the various user groups who depend on fire meeting their business, resource management, cultural, or any other objective that is based on using fire in the environment.

Carl/Darla/Rebecca are to flesh out the “box” for use at the January Workshop

2. **Revisit Task 2: 2064 Visibility Goal** – Darla Potter (see Handout)
  - The group reviewed the recommendations and approved as written.
  - Sam offered to write an official white paper on NBTT progress regarding “2064 visibility goal” work to be offered to Lara Autry’s (EPA’s) working group on Natural Conditions.
3. **Revisit Decision Process for Policy Maker’s Workshop** – Darla Potter (see Handout)

- Placeholder Oct. 30
- Nominees Nov. 24
- Select Dec. 5-7
- Staff Pre Work Dec. 15
- Inform Policy Makers
- Let nominees know for both workshops, progress like they are both going to happen.
- Pre work for staffers only - Dec. 15
- Finalize Policy Makers workshop Jan. 26 (NBTT Mgmt. Team stay over to discuss)

#### 4. **Beta Test** – Group Discussion

- Lacking historical data to actually put numbers to page.
- Instead, we should focus on “ have we asked the right questions”.
- FEJF - Emissions Task Team should run the numbers for 10 years back, as possible.
- Baseline – retrospective.
- Methodology for forward thinking.
- Beta Test is that we can make these determinations with a reasonable amount of data collection for future tracking. The definition can be used retrospectively, with some assumptions, to estimate relative contribution to past natural condition.
- Darla will prepare a proposal and circulate to NBTT for review. Work into prework framing as necessary.

**Decision Tree Review & Comment** (see notes below)

**Wednesday October 25, 2000**

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#### **Senior Staffers Meeting Agenda Review**

**(times are with questions unless otherwise noted)**

**Draft Agenda based on comment from NBTT** (Rebecca will do a revised draft for distribution)

**Day 1 – January 24, 2000**

#### **1:00 pm**

- Welcome (Lahm) 5 minutes
- Keynote (TBD) 20 minutes
- Co-Chairs’ Comments (Gossard) 10 minutes
- Facilitator Framing (Reynolds) 20-30minutes
- Visibility (Haddow) 15 minutes
- Regulatory Context: WRAP Process (Hayslip) 15 minutes
- Role of Fire Panel (Agee, Omi, Quinn, moderated by Sandberg) 1.25 hours

#### **4:00 pm**

- Introduction to Exercise/Process (Reynolds) 5 minutes

Introduce Classification Method: Decision Tree

- Assumptions and Definitions (Potter) 10-15 minutes
- NBTT Background (include matrix/tier, all boxes must be tracked, one event = one classification, no mixed classifications) (Sandberg) 15 minutes

- Questions (moderated by Reynolds) 20 minutes
- Introduce and do “Blue/Green dot” process (Reynolds) 30 minutes (turn in finished exercise before you leave)

### **5:30 pm adjourn**

## **Day 2 – January 25, 2000**

### **8:00 am**

- Welcome Back (Gossard?) 5 minutes
- Questions from Previous Day’s Work (Reynolds) 15 minutes
- Instructions for Breakouts (Reynolds) 20 minutes

### **9:30 am**

- Breakouts (facilitated by assistants) 2.5 hours

### **Noon – 1:00 pm lunch**

- Breakouts (classify) 1 hour

### **2:00 pm**

- Concurrence Presentations – based on “Blue/Green dot” exercise (Reynolds or ?) 15 minutes
- Breakout Reporting (8 groups: facilitators w/ group leads) 1.5 hours
- Close: Product Available (date), Linkage to Policy Makers for Phase II, Thank you (Gossard? Lahm?) 5 minutes

### **4:00 pm Adjourn**

## **Discussion & Assignments for Senior Staffers Meeting on January 24**

Note: All speakers (including FEJF/NBTT persons) need to have a page of talking points to Darla **November 30** for December meeting review!

### **1. Welcome** Pete, Carl, Darla

- Inclusivity (NBTT/FEJF history)
- WRAP increasing/expanding membership
- Time line for process/product
- Logistics and introduction

### **2. Keynote**

Felicia Marcus may not be available; others: Dianne Neilsen – Utah DEQ, Jim Souby – WGA, Pete will handle. No white paper is required from keynote speaker.

Talking Points (Pete will get to keynote presenter):

- Respect for the breadth of the topic, consensus building.
- Topic that covers a lot of different views, appreciation of this, open to learning.
- Fire is out there, EPA acknowledges this in the preamble to the RHR.
- Importance/Relevance of fires in 2000.
- 2 step process that is of high concern to WRAP senior staff and policy makers.

- Product that we will walk away with, important role they have to play in this process.
  - Striving to build consensus at senior staff level that will be followed up by policy makers and the WRAP. Minority viewpoints will be carried forward. Product is not dependent on consensus.
  - Regional viewpoint and nature of this task with national implications.
- 3. Co-Chairs Comments** Gossard
- Thank keynote, intro. Reynolds
- 4. Facilitator Framing** Reynolds
- Challenging Topic – NBTT hard work, strategies to this point, welcoming your input, NBTT challenge is HOW to get others involved.
  - Core Values – open, appreciate others, and learn about them.
  - Box Frame (poster), Ground Rules, Agenda, NBTT Resource People
  - Pre Work – important to have read.
- 5. Visibility** Haddow, Neutral Presentation
- Will cover understanding why smoke is important to visibility impairment (smoke → light scattering), IMPROVE program (briefly), and what is there to protect? (20 slides maximum)
  - A one or two page paper should be developed to hand out at the workshop with references. **The white paper should be presented for duplication to Darla by January 10<sup>th</sup>.**
- 6. Regulatory Context/ WRAP Process:** Clean Air Act → GCVTC → RHR → WRAP → FEJF → NBTT (you are here) → FEJF → AMRF → WRAP (states & tribes)  
 Primary: Dick Hayslip SRP, Secondary: John Kennedy EPA, Alternate: Pat Cummins WGA  
**(Choice hinges on who does keynote, Pete will handle.)**
- Stress the objective of determining whether the smoke emissions count or don't count against the natural background (natural and anthropogenic). [Not Good/Bad]
  - Need one page white paper that references the storyline. **The white paper should be presented for duplication to Darla by January 10<sup>th</sup>.**
  - Jim Russell will call Janice Peterson to let her know she doesn't need to do this presentation.
  - Presentation with clarifying questions.
- 7. Role of Fire Panel** (Sam Sandberg, moderator)
- A one or two page paper should be developed to hand out at the workshop with references. **The white paper should be presented for duplication to Darla by January 10<sup>th</sup>.**
    - Native American Cultural – Phil Omi CSU, 2<sup>nd</sup> Steven Pyne ASU (Pete)
    - Agricultural – Robert Quinn, Eastern WA University (Pete)
    - Wildlands – Jim Agee Univ. of WA (Jim)
  - Check availability for March meeting in Phoenix.
  - Panelists should be sent the same background material that will be sent to position paper preparers (listed under #9).

- The audience will be at all levels of understanding and the presentation should be tailored to this variety.
- The objective is to describe the role of fire in their respective areas in a neutral manner.
- Get a common baseline of information on these for participants – overview.
- Pete will discuss Omi & Pyne with Kevin and Rose and will ask speaker to coordinate with Kevin & Rose.

## 8. Decision Tree: Introduction & Background

- Relevance to Stake Holders (All)
- NBTT Background (with Decision Tree)
- Why we are here (relate to Keynote) Regional Haze
- Brief workshop participants about the need for tracking in the background discussion of the decision tree (Sandberg)

## 9. Position Papers (Part of Senior Staffer Pre Work)

It was decided that all stakeholder positions would be expressed by select authors in a one page paper to be distributed to all Senior Staffers in the pre-work packet (**all papers are due to Darla by e-mail no later than Nov 30<sup>th</sup>.**)

- One page limit.
- Objectives: Describe the issue and the decision to be made and any concerns you have as to how this may affect the stakeholder group you represent.
  - Industry – Terry Ross CEED (Pete)
  - EPA – Rich Damberg (Pete)
  - Agriculture – Manual Cunha (Dave)
  - Tribal – Dallas Massey White Mountain Apache (Pete)
  - Environmentalist – Environmental Defense Fund: Vickie Patton or Jim Martin (Pete)
  - Federal Land Manager – Jerry Williams (Pete)
  - State Regulator – Jolaine Johnson (Pete)
  - Private Rancher – Chas Erickson, 2<sup>nd</sup> Mark Wagoner (Pete)
  - Fire Protection (State) – Art Default, 2<sup>nd</sup> Jim Hubbard (Pete)
- Pete was given the license to change the authors depending on availability of those listed above.

What the authors will need in order to develop the position papers:

- NBTT and FEJF Assumptions
- Definitions (now called Glossary)
- Briefing & Placeholder
- FEJF Storyline, refer them to FEJF web site for more information.

## 10. Breakouts

- Approximately 8 groups anticipated
- How to configure – random, geographical area, stakeholder or mixed, wildlands/ag, calculated mix?
- We will consider using a calculated mix with wildlands/ag as first split. Review in December with nominee's list.
- Pete will take 1<sup>st</sup> attempt at assembling breakout groups from participant list.

## Decision Tree Comments (from Oct. 24 & 25)

**NBTT agreed the decision tree is the methodology to use from this point forward.**

### **Presentation Feedback**

- Create movable pieces – puzzle, felt, magnetic, etc. – blank boxes so breakout groups can modify the tree by adding boxes
- Make boxes/columns parallel, not so arrow-dependent, make portrait view.
- Get graphic expert to slick it up.
- Intro slide: visibility/air quality.
- Side by side presentations on 2 screens (rational on one and tree on the other) with 2 computer projection units instead of overhead
- Display a portion of the tree at a time with the accompanying rationale.
- Consistency necessary between tree and rationale to ease movement between the two
- Language: “emissions that may impact visibility”.
- Give EXPLICIT instructions in pre work as to what to do with the decision tree.
- Big “Box” on the wall in each room.
- Make clear in pre work: only one track on decision tree per event!
- Blue Dot/Green Dot exercise / see where consensus lies – if any.
- Decision Tree end boxes colorless, shape neutral, text neutral so as not to prejudge the resulting classifications, which may be inflammatory.

### **Content Feedback**

- “Natural” use this term in a number of ways (define each).
- What about...
  - Non-native wildland species not managed.
  - Ag? Add some language in rationale? Add another branch for Ag? Food & fiber, prescribed, open – trash, noxious weeds.
  - Need list of Ag questions, add Ag examples to rationale?
- Definition – “Prescribed” Wildlands and Ag or “Prescribed or Controlled Fire”.
- Separate key factors into primary and secondary.
- Explanatory slide behind each of key factors?
- Change “Ecosystems Desired Future Condition” to “Desired Future Condition of the Land”.
- Will there be fires that have a mixed classification? NBTT chose not to do this.
- Footnote decisions – more rationale.
- Decision tree to an appendix of FAQ’s.
- Human amenity value, change to “single purpose use/non-commodity” and give examples.
- All purposes are included on “Purposes/Objective” slide.
- Leave colorless – do pros and cons for each classification box. Leave without classification.
- Do a quick blue/green dot exercise to see where we have consensus, do this so we can review results that 1<sup>st</sup> night.
- Give results of blue/green dot exercise to facilitators to they know which direction to focus their breakout group.

- Hand out a decision tree with classifications assigned (e.g. wildfire as “natural”) at the beginning of the breakout session as an example that can be used as a place to start discussion. Use majority result of blue/green dot exercise to classify the boxes for this purpose.
- Perceived by industry as inequity in how the tribal burning is classified, this perception will likely be shared by others, seems like special treatment. Where do you draw the line on historical?
- Inconsistencies between rationale and decision tree.
- Rationale needs to be written without conclusions.
- Need to make sure we give workshop participants PLENTY OF TIME for INPUT.
- Concern about our ability to cover all this in a workshop.
- Agenda: big learning curve for some, especially on prescribed fire.
- Permitted/Non-Permitted/ ??? , legal, unpermitted, unregulated.
- Use “fire emissions”, stay clear of “impacts”.
- Economic feasibility as dec. pt. after hazard reduction? Add “reasonable” to rationale.
- Replace “Permitted” with “SMP Burn Authorizing”.
- Add “Wild Non-Native Vegetation” e.g. cheat grass.
- Add to Ag and Wildlands “Legal non permitted regulated” e.g. smaller homeowner burns, no burn day.
- Add to Ag Tribal “Modern Economy” all three tribal options on both Ag and Wildlands.
- Delete on Ag Hazard Reduction, move HR’s two end boxes to come off “SMP Authorized”.
- Add Ag box off Controlled Burn “Nuisance and Pests”.
- Stamp “DRAFT” or “STRAWMAN” clearly and prominently on each page of decision tree, rationale, glossary.

### Glossary

- Example of what needs to be included in glossary - Non-Native Ag or Silvicultural Crop
- Look at entire tree, add glossary for words in all of the boxes.

Definitions – separate from assumptions. Turn into one comprehensive glossary, to which to add all decision tree terms. Assumptions will stand-alone. All to be reviewed, if there is time, by NBTT.

### Assignment: Content Team – Mike, Sam, Jim, Mark, Dave

- Clean up all of tree, rationale, glossary by Nov. 17
- Decision Tree, Rationale, Glossary (Ag review 1<sup>st</sup>) by Oct. 27
- Pete & Dave review, vet with Ag - feedback to content team by Nov. 3
- Start final review by NBTT Nov. 17
- One week later, provide written comment - Last chance for change Nov. 27

### Assignment: Ken and/or Dennis: power point person? – get names to Rebecca or Darla ASAP.

- Send draft decision tree & rationale to PowerPoint person Nov 17
- Send feedback for changes to PowerPoint person Nov 28
- Draft presentation to Darla no later than Dec 4 (am)
- Review presentation NBTT mtg. Dec 5
- Feedback for final changes to PowerPoint person Dec 8
- Final presentation to Darla no later than Dec 29

## Assumptions

Darla: Separate from Definitions, which will be incorporated into Glossary

- Start Final Review by NBTT Nov 17
- One week later, provide written comment – last chance for change Nov 27

## Tracking (AKA Task 3)

- Defer this task to FEJF Emissions Task Team
- Brief workshop participants about the need for tracking in the background discussion of the decision tree (Sandberg)
- Workshop participants need to know that all boxes in the decision tree, and the associated information, need to be able to be tracked in the future. This is especially important if they choose to “add a box” to the decision tree during their breakout sessions.
- Due to the complexity of tracking a classification for a given fire event the participants should be made aware that the NBTT is proposing to only track one classification per fire event.
- If discussions regarding tracking arise during the breakout sessions they should be noted in a parking lot to be passed onto the FEJF Emissions Task Team for consideration.
- Should a breakout group get done with their assigned decision tree task early – they should talk about elements of the tree that are or are not trackball within the current tracking systems that they are aware of in their program.

**Notes for NBTT December Meeting (“Dress Rehearsal”)** (Rebecca will develop an Agenda from these notes for distribution)

1. Review and finalize nominee list.  
Selection of Participants
  - First pass on nominations by Pete, Darla, Ken, Mike.
  - number received
  - representation\*Darla will ask Deb to provide a weekly update of responses and final response list by Nov 29.
2. Finalize January Workshop - Decision Tree (PowerPoint presentation), rationale, glossary, pre work, assumptions, storyline, position papers, agenda (all supporting), logistics, facilitators.
  - Desired Report Format (Coleen will send Rebecca a report prototype (express team))
  - Reporting Timeline
3. Policy Maker’s Workshop:
  - Design
  - Product & Associated Timeline
  - Planning Timeline
    - a) December 6/7 (NBTT breakouts at FEJF meeting)
    - b) Small Group Assignments
    - c) Mgmt Team Conference Calls
    - d) Post January Workshop Mtg (Jan 26, 8 am – 3 pm, NBTT Mgmt Team & others interested)

- e) February NBTT Meeting (Feb 5 pm, Feb 6 8 am – 3 pm, Tempe)
4. Reporting Timeline
- January Workshop Report deadline – draft & final
  - Pework to Policy Maker Workshop participants – no later than Feb 15
  - March Workshop Report deadline – draft & final
  - Recommendation to present to FEJF – NBTT approval
  - Presentation to FEJF for approval – April
  - Presentation to AMRF from FEJF – by end of April

### **Logistic Items**

- NBTT members may be asked to be resource people at the workshops (save the dates on your calendar for both workshops), John Graves too
  - Shelley – on site logistics person at workshop
- NBTT final workshop preparation Jan 24 - 8 am (arrive on Jan 23)
- NBTT mgmt team mtg Jan 26, 8 am – 3 pm, debrief and plan policy maker wkshp
- NBTT member feedback needed before leaving workshop (esp policy maker wkshp ideas)
- When notify participants ask for flight info to coordinate shuttle?
- Need “War Room” for NBTT equipped with computers, printers, etc.
- Large Meeting Room & 7 Breakout Rooms
- Beverages (Coffee/Tea/Water)
- Name Tags (ribbons for NBTT Resource people)
- Registration – noon – 1 pm Jan 24 - need to identify those not on participant list – add to breakout groups
- Other Items: 2 screens, 2 tables for av equipment, flipcharts (2 big room, 1 each breakout group), podium lrg room, table for panel lrg room, sign in table, hand out table

### **Assignments**

**(see above notes for additional description)**

All NBTT members & John Graves - may be asked to be resource people at the workshops (save the dates on your calendar for both workshops)

All speakers - page of talking points to Darla by November 30

Carl, Darla, Rebecca – flesh out the “box” – due by November 30

Coleen - send Rebecca a report prototype (express team)

Content Team - Jim, Mike, Sam, Mark, Dave - clean up decision tree and associated documentation by Nov 17-

Darla - ask Deb to provide a weekly update of nominees and final list by Nov 29

Darla - prepare a proposal on the “Beta Test” topic and circulate to NBTT for review

Darla - Separate Assumptions from Definitions – add cultural burning assumption

Dave - Position Paper contact - Manual Cunha (Ag)

Dave – vet decision tree with ag community

FEJF – Emissions Task Team – tracking approach task deferred to this task team

Jim - Role of Fire Panel contacts - Jim Agee - ask about availability for March workshop

Jim - WRAP Process Presentation - contact Janice Peterson to let her know she will not be doing this presentation

Ken and/or Dennis – name of PowerPoint person to Rebecca or Darla ASAP

Pete - 1<sup>st</sup> attempt at assembling breakout groups from participant list.

Pete - Keynote contact for January Workshop - Felicia Marcus, Diane Neilsen, Jim Souby – provide Talking Points to keynote selected.

Pete - Position Paper contacts - Terry Ross (Industry), Rich Damberg (EPA), Dallas Massey (Tribe), Vickie Patton or Jim Martin (Environmental), Jerry Williams (FLM), Jolaine Johnson (State Reg), Chas Erikson or Mark Wagoner (Private Ranch/Ag), Art Dufault or Jim Hubbard (Fire Protection - State)

Pete - Role of Fire Panel contacts - Phil Omi (cultural), Robert Quinn (ag) - Pete talk to Rose and Kevin about Phil before contacting him - ask about availability for March workshop

Pete - WRAP Process Presentation contact - Primary, Dick Hayslip; Secondary (depending on keynote) John Kennedy or Pat Cummins

Pete – vet decision tree with ag community

Pete, Darla, Ken, Mike – 1<sup>st</sup> pass on participant selection from nominee list

Rebecca – Prepare agendas for December NBTT meeting and January Workshop for distribution to NBTT by 11/10.

Sam - prepare an official white paper on the NBTT progress toward the "2064 Visibility Goal" for fire to be offered to Lara Autry's EPA Natural Conditions Working Group  
Visibility, Regulatory Context, Role of Fire Panel presenters - white paper to Darla by January 10<sup>th</sup>.