

Natural Background Task Team (NBTT)

Portland, Oregon

May 30-31, 2000

Final Notes, 8/2/00

Attendees: Sam Sandberg, Patti Hiram, John Core, Mark Fitch, Darla Potter, Carl Gossard, Robert Wilkosz, Fred Greef, Mike Ziolk, Jim Russell, Brian Finneran, Ralph Sampson, Rose Lee, Kevin Mckernan, Ken Evans, Mark Wagoner, Lara Autry, Shelley Nolde, Amy Mignella (speaker phone), Elvis Graves (speaker phone), Pete Lahm (speaker phone - Briefly) Marc Pitchford (speaker phone - very briefly).

Key Decisions:

The “Charge”, or “Mission” for the Natural Background Task Team is to:

1. Develop methodology to classify smoke emissions (forest/range/cultural/agricultural) into broad categories.
2. Develop optional approaches for describing the contribution of smoke to natural background visibility conditions.
3. Establish methodology for tracking and apportionment of smoke emissions (into the established categories) and progress toward the goal.

[This is with the caveat that we need to build in “reality checks” to our work; test our methodology and re-evaluate.]

Task 2 (Natural Conditions) Group:

Deliverable: One recommended approach for describing the contribution of smoke to natural background visibility conditions, accompanied by an array of other possible approaches with their pros and cons.

Audience/ultimate users of the deliverable: States and tribes in consultation with Federal Land Managers (FLM’s). [Plan is for task team results to go to FEJF who sends them to WRAP (governing board and other forums) who distributes them to states and other entities]

Key points for the group to consider:

1. Identify, develop &/or “vet” optional approaches. Use existing work, such as the Leenhouts paper, the Sandberg, Peterson and Leenhouts paper, Fred Greef’s paper, etc.
2. Ensure that agricultural burning is included
3. Include/consider various federal and state laws which affect implementation.

Task 1 (Classification) Group:

Deliverable: The final deliverable is not yet determined, but it could be 1) a process matrix, similar to the one(s) developed during the express team process (where you look at every possible combination of key criteria); or 2) a key for

determining what category of smoke a certain type of fire or source might fall into. For example, some of the items to be considered could be: 1) whether a fire is intentional or unintentional, 2) the condition of the ecosystem, 3) the management response to the fire, and 4) land use.

Audience/ultimate users of the deliverable: States and tribes in consultation with Federal Land Managers (FLM's). [Plan is for task team results to go to FEJF who sends them to WRAP (governing board and other forums) who distributes them to states and other entities]

Key points for the group to consider:

1. Need to include cultural burning (Defined by 3 meeting participants as: 'Cultural burning is classified by individual tribes through resolution, rule, or ordinance established by the tribal council as necessary for traditional, cultural, and/or religious use and is 'natural.'")
2. May need more than the two categories of "natural" and "man-made."
3. This project needs to correlate tightly with the Natural Conditions task.

Task 3 (Tracking) Group:

Deliverable: A methodology for tracking and apportionment of smoke emissions (into the established categories) and progress toward the goal.

Audience/ultimate users of the deliverable: States and tribes in consultation with Federal Land Managers (FLM's). [Plan is for task team results to go to FEJF who sends them to WRAP (governing board and other forums) who distributes them to states and other entities]

Key points for the group to consider:

1. This is implementation of task 1.
2. Need to consider being compatible with other tracking systems and task team work

Process for Doing the Work

1. Small groups will flesh out each of the three components of the mission, and report to the entire task team on June 28 and 29, 2000 at the Fire Emissions Joint Forum meeting in Denver (Executive Tower Inn). Fred and Carl will work with Pete Lahm on the FEJF agenda to ensure that members can participate in the discussion on Wednesday and not have conflicts with other task team commitments. Small group members are:
 - a. Natural conditions – Fred Greef (lead), Kevin, Robert, Brian, Amy (?) & Sam
 - b. Classification – Sam Sandberg (lead), Mike Z., Mark Fitch, Ken Evans
 - c. Tracking – Jim Russell (lead), Mark Fitch, Carl, Mike Z.

2. Workshop is planned for September 26 and 27 in Denver, with a purpose of involving lots of stakeholders in the discussion of the tasks. If consensus can be reached, that's great. If not, the task team will take the input and go from there. Jim Russell agreed to take the lead on the agenda, and content thereof. Fred and Rose both said they're interested in participating in the workshop planning, but cannot take the lead. It was hypothesized that spending \$50,000 on the workshop is possible, especially if we have to hire professional meeting planners and facilitators to carry it off. Fred will talk with Pete about available funding. The tentative plan is to have Day 1 be top-notch presentations to bring people up to speed on the issues, and Day 2 be small group work to have discussions and provide feedback on the tasks. Some potential speakers are: Marc Pitchford and/or Tom Moore (Fred will contact); Bill Leenhouts (Fred will contact); Tribal representative (Rose will follow up); and legal framework (Carl will work with Lara to get a speaker) . Potential invitees include: Air Directors, FLM's (Regional/State Directors), EPA, Tribes (276 in the west); environmental reps, agricultural reps, state foresters, and industry or trade groups.
3. After the workshop, the task team will meet in Portland on October 24 and 25 to work with the workshop results and develop their preliminary report to the FEJF, which we hope will be a consensus recommendation.
4. The draft report will be circulated to FEJF members, WESTAR, wildland managers and other interested parties for comment (**by whom?**) .
5. The final draft report (**drafted by whom after incorporating comments from step 4???**) will be posted on the website by Thanksgiving at the very latest, so that the FEJF will have time to review before its meeting in early December (assuming there is one).
6. FEJF approves the final report at its December meeting.
7. All recommendations go to the WRAP and to the EPA (Lara Autry's workgroup) by December 31, 2000. Recommendations (on the classification of smoke into categories) will be sent to the Ambient Monitoring and Reporting Forum by December 31, 2000.

Below are meeting notes by Robert Wilkosz of Idaho (with some edits by Shelley and Fred)

NBTT is part of FEJF; this is the fourth meeting

- ❖ List Server: bmjenkins@ucdavis.edu
 - Fred Greef will follow up on list server access for interested parties. (A bulletin board on the WRAP website is another option for group communication)
 - Not an open list server; Brian Jenkins must first be called or e-mailed to allow access.

Objectives (see final agenda)

1. Formalize membership and objectives of Task Force.

2. Ensure everyone has same understanding of goals and requirements of Regional Haze Rule (with regard to fire).
3. Ensure everyone has enough understanding of relevant aspects of fire management.
4. Decide whether to proceed with workshops on another venue to achieve objectives.
5. Outline the workshops (or alternate venue) and assign responsibilities for next steps.

Fred Greef

- ❖ Legal authority of this group per Regional Haze Rule.
- ❖ April 1998 Interim Policy
 - Page 1, Purpose: Promote use of fire on wildland.
 - Scope: All wildland and prescribed fire to achieve land management objectives.
 - FEJF Scope: Similar to Regional Haze Rule, but also want to fully address agricultural burning.
 - Elvis Graves: Glickman made recommendations to Carol Browner already.
- ❖ Preamble to Regional Haze Rule originally:
 - Page 118: EPA believes states must understand fire emission visibility impacts.
 - Catastrophic wildfire risks.
 - Natural fire vs. man caused fire.
 - Some prescribed fire effects offset what would be expected from catastrophic.
- ❖ Question: Do 309 states need to determine “natural background”? This question ended the Sacramento meeting in confusion.
- ❖ Conditions: See definitions of Natural Background/Baseline/Current in the Regional Haze Rule
 - Washington has begun defining reasonable progress in decisions already.
- ❖ Marc Pitchford, co-chair of Ambient Monitoring & Reporting Forum (WRAP)
 - Deadline December 31, 2001: Define natural background?
 - The 309 states need this for SIPs due 2003.
 - Baseline period monitoring ends 2004.
- ❖ ESA – Endangered Species Act.
 - Mandates protection of species; this occurs via ecosystems. Prescribed fire is a pertinent tool, but sometimes there are conflicts between various land management goals and interests.
- ❖ State land management regulations and trustee mandates
 - Fire is part of land management scheme.

Lara Autrey, EPA (National Conditions Guidance Document)

- ❖ EPA is developing guidance and has specific instructions from Congress that EPA is not to set policy within the guidance document. EPA may set policy, but it must be in some other format.
- ❖ Charter: Draft by spring 2001; final is due early fall, 2001.
 - Must also put out interim reports.
- ❖ Someone asked Lara about Executive Order 13144; April 22, 2000; Greening the Government through Eco- Management. She said she is looking forward to learning more about it.

General Clarification

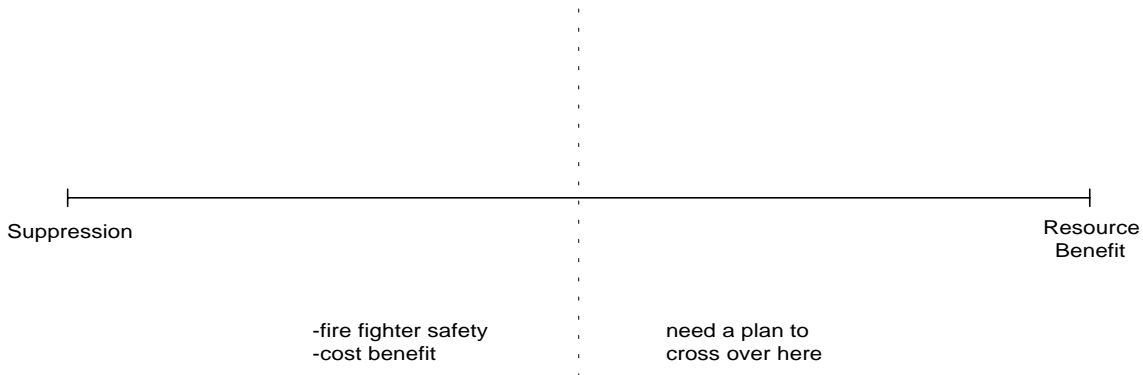
- ❖ Marc Pitchford’s charge is to develop a model that states may use to determine what natural background is for each Class 1 area.
- ❖ FEJF has been asked to provide a definition of natural vs. man-made smoke.

Carl, BLM-NIFC

In fire planning, the BLM maps their land according to different categories:

1. “A” polygons are ecosystems that cannot tolerate fire; or that did not have fire as the agent of change.
2. “B” polygons are those where unplanned fire would be harmful right now, such as ponderosa pine stands which have not experienced fire in a long time and are overloaded with fuel. (These areas are often high priority for hazard fuel reduction projects.)
3. “C” polygons are ecosystems where fire is good on the landscape, but there are constraints on fire use.
4. “D” polygons represent ecosystems where fire is good on the landscape and it is not restricted.

- ❖ Wildfire (unwanted, undesirable event)
- ❖ Prescribed Fire (management ignited)
- ❖ Wildland Fire Managed for Resource Benefit (a/k/a WFU or Wildland Fire Use)
- ❖ Agricultural Fire



Brian Finneran, Oregon DEQ

- ❖ Baseline: Natural Conditions

ENTIRE GROUP - Charges for Natural Background Task Team

- ❖ Develop methodology to classify smoke emissions (forest/range/cultural/agricultural) into broad categories.
- ❖ Develop optional approaches for describing the contribution of smoke to natural background visibility conditions.

- ❖ Establish methodology for tracking and apportionment of smoke emissions (into the established categories) and progress toward the goal.
- ❖ We need to test our methodology and re-evaluate (build in reality checks).

Task 2 (Natural Conditions)

- ❖ Existing work.
 - Leenhouts, Sandberg and Peterson article; (another Leenhouts pub is: <http://www.consecol.org/journal/vol2/iss1/art1/indes.html>) paper on WRAP webpage @ FEJF.
 - Fred's paper on WRAP webpage @ FEJF.
- ❖ The Task Team could examine those options for presentation at workshop or FEJF.
- ❖ Need to add/represent agricultural burning into options for natural background.
- ❖ Include/consider state and federal mandates in the discussion; plus pros and cons.
- ❖ Process Idea: Small group pares down (clarify) options for Task Team review; then present to policy group or workshop.
- ❖ Audience: Task Team results go to FEJF.
 - Before that, get involvement from FEJF members or from workshops, WESTAR, FLM wildland managers, and other air folks.
 - FEJF takes final to WRAP.
- ❖ Ultimate Users: States, tribes, in consultation with FLMs.
- ❖ Task Team Product/Goal:
 - One recommended approach, if we can get there.
 - An array of options with pros and cons also prepared.
- ❖ Process:
 - Small group developing options.
 - Entire Task Team review via e-mail or face-to-face.
 - Narrow to coherent few (≤ 5).
 - Take these options to a workshop for discussion and feedback.
 - Task Team reaches consensus.
- ❖ Small Group needs to look at:
 - Changes in goal? (Due to land use?)
 - Spatial nature of sources.
 - Time variability.

Task 1 (Classification)

- ❖ Audience:
 - Mark Pitchford's project.
 - Same as Task 2.
 - Include more than "fire" sources.
- ❖ Products:
 - Matrix (Sandberg).
 - Rule-base; key.
 - Intentional vs. non-intentional.
 - Ecosystem condition.

- Purpose.
- Management response.
- Land use.
- Test against Task 2.
- Include non-native or un-natural ecosystems.
- Final product could be the key itself (decision making tree), the categories.
- ❖ Small Group + Task Team:
 - Matrix.
 - Draft categories (options) to take to workshop.

Task 3 (Tracking)

- ❖ Tracking:
 - Our products need to consider being compatible with other tracking systems and task team work.
 - This is actually implementation of Task 1 (9 members of 15 voted yes today).

Schedule

- ❖ Small Groups:
 - Natural Conditions: Kevin, Rob W., Brian F., Amy, Fred G., and Sam.
 - Classifications: Mike, Sam, Fitch, and Kevin.
 - Tracking: Jim, Fitch, Carl, and Mike.
 - Task Team Review Meeting - Option: Could have meeting in conjunction with FEJF meeting in Denver, June 27-28; likely to be held that Thursday.
- ❖ Workshop: Denver, or Albuquerque on September 26-27 (Tue/Wed).

List Serve

E-mail Brian Jenkins at UC Davis: bmjenkins@ucdavis.edu