

BIA Northwest Region Fire Prevention and Education Team – September 2017



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Fire Prevention and
Education Team
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1. Introduction

Background

The BIA Northwest Region Prevention Team was ordered on September 12, 2017 to conduct prevention and education activities for the Agencies and Tribes within the Region. Nationally, the preparedness level was at Level 5 and the Northwest Region was experiencing extreme fire danger with multiple large incidents burning across the three states; Oregon, Washington, and Montana.

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2. Team Objectives

The team adhered to the Delegation of Authority to achieve the objectives outlined in the Delegation as:

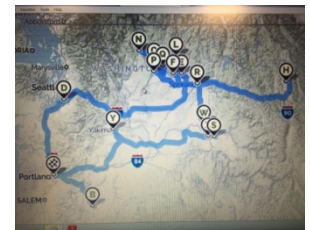
1. Conduct the work of the team with efficiency and effectiveness, with emphasis on the personal safety of team members.
2. Ensure the team adheres to all federal, state, and local laws, regulations and ordinances. These laws include; but are not limited to: state motor vehicle operations and regulations, cultural and archaeological protection laws, health and welfare regulations, and environmental protection and hazardous material laws.
3. Maintain sensitivity to local political and social issues related to public land management use.
4. Develop fire prevention recommendations tiered to the local human caused fire risks and hazards.
5. Firewise Communication Education; Ready, Set, Go.
6. Introduce children and young adults to the “Mapping Decision” a teaching technique that demonstrates the effects of human caused fire on local communities and Smokey Bear appearances.
7. Conduct community outreach by participating at local community events such as parades, fairs, or other community events by staffing Fire Prevention Education booths and set up fire prevention information boards at local public high foot traffic areas.
8. Utilize the Bureau of Indian Affairs 'WeTip", Arson Reporting Hotline, by posting signs on location where arson fires have occurred and throughout the community. If possible, establish informal meetings to explain the 'WeTip" campaign to local community groups and media to include local newspaper and radio stations.
9. Should a unique situation arise, provide the appropriate fire prevention educational information to the community (i.e. evacuation)
10. Develop and initiate substantial media coverage on “One Less Spark-One Less Wildfire”. Doing the right thing the wrong way.
11. Develop media information on the aspects of fire, in relationship to hazards of smoke, health issues, destruction of natural resources and wildlife.
12. Establish a record-keeping process to document the Teams activities, including: contacts made; information developed and distributed; projects completed; recommendations for further action; lessons learned; and
13. Maintain fiscal accountability.

3. Accomplishments

Objectives 1 thru 3: Team Efficiency, Effectiveness, Safety and Sensitivity

The Team was well assembled and worked very well together with each team member bringing unique experiences that added to the knowledge of the team. All team members worked hard to achieve the outlined goals and meet the needs of the Tribes while maintaining sensitivity to local political and social issues.

The team safely travelled over 2,500 miles across Oregon, Idaho, Montana and Washington all without incident. Prevention outreach and efforts included the following agencies: Warm Springs, Umatilla, Spokane, Flathead, Colville, Nez Perce, and Yakama.



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Objectives 4 and 5: Local Risks and Fire Prevention Recommendations; Firewise and Ready, Set, Go!

At each location, the prevention team met with the local prevention staff to address any specific issues or challenges that they are facing or experienced over the past season. The Confederated Tribes of Salish and Kootenai had recently experienced a highly visible large fire near one of their communities and faced the possibility of evacuations. In response, the prevention team conducted “train the trainer” program on the Ready, Set, Go! to the Agency FMO, Robert Nix, AFMO Merscalero Agency, Prevention staff and County Emergency Manager. Information and material on how to sign up for the Ready, Set, Go! program was left with the staff.

The forum was a learning experience for out-of-state resources as to a Prevention Team function. Terry Hodgkens, Fire Operational Specialist, Standing Rock IR, North Dakota asked several questions pertaining to prevention teams and the duties they perform.

While working with the Colville Agency, Moyer spoke with Lonnie Cawston, Fuels Manager, concerning showcasing a property after mitigation by the fuels crew. Cawston seemed receptive to the idea.

Local risks were also addressed in Objective 11; see summary below.

Objectives6: Introducing Children and Adults to “Decisions Mapping”

The team was able to present the “Decisions” skit at several locations allowing children and adults present to visually see the impact of a “bad decision” to play with fire and see how the entire community could be affected along with Smokey Bear appearances. This program was specifically requested at Colville Agency where they had experienced youth caused fires prior to the team’s arrival.



Spokane Agency

Boys and Girls Club – 16 children (ages 5-7), 5 adults

Colville Agency

Inchelium Elementary – 30 students (3rd& 4th grades), 5 adults

Keller Elementary – 30 students (3rd& 4th grades), 3 adults

Nespelem Elementary/Middle School – 50 students (3rd, 4th& 5th grades)

25 students (6th, 7th& 8th grades)



A copy of the props used to conduct the decisions skit was left with the Prevention Technician at Colville for future use.

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Objectives 7 thru 10: Community Outreach and Education; WeTip, One Less Spark and Aspects of Fire

In addition to contacts made at the local schools, the team conducted community outreach promoting several fire prevention messages to adults and kids that included: Defensible Space, One Less Spark, Smokey's 5 Rules, Campfire Safety, One Less Spark and campfire safety. The team staffed fire prevention booths at the following locations:

Nez Perce County Fair, Lewiston, ID – Over 400 contacts made including adults and children. This was Smokey's debut at the Fair.

Central Washington State Fair, Yakama, WA – Over 700 contacts made including adults and children

Pendleton Roundup, Pendleton, OR – Provided over 1200 Smokey prevention items for local staff for distribution.



Objectives 11: Develop Media Information

A media disk was developed by the team to address a variety of human caused issues that the Tribes/Agencies face. This media disk includes a variety of media formats from Public Service Announcements, Posters/Flyers, Social Media Messaging that tribe programs can utilize and personalize for future use.

Objectives 12 and 13: Record Keeping and Fiscal Accountability

The ICS-214 Unit Log was utilized to document the team's daily activities, accomplishments and number of contacts made for the duration of the assignment. A daily safety briefing was conducted to discuss the planned activities and assigned tasks. After Action Reviews were held at the end of completed assignments to discuss accomplishments, challenges and where improvements could be made.

The budget spreadsheet was utilized to track and document all expenditures for the team including travel, per diem, overtime, and supplies. The total estimated cost of the team is \$40,000.

4. Capacity Building

The assignment afforded training opportunities for several individuals:

Kenneth Jaramillo, Southwest Region, Albuquerque, NM: PETL(t)

Gary Peters, Yakama Agency, Toppenish, WA: PETM(t)

Rylee Chino, Mescalero Agency, Mescalero, NM: PETM(t)

5. Observations and Recommendations

Observations

A lot of great work is being done by the local prevention staff within the Region. When the team arrived, several large fires were burning throughout the region and conditions were at extreme. Despite the current conditions, the numbers of human caused fires on Tribal lands were low compared to the interagency partners. The prevention education and outreach being conducted by local staff should be commended for their efforts as they are having a visible impact with the reduced number of human starts.

Prevention teams are typically brought on prior to or at the onset of extreme conditions, the length of the fire season in the Northwest Region provided a unique opportunity for the team. The team was able to capitalize on the severity of the fire season with the extreme conditions and smoke in the air, the messages delivered to the public were well received and the Agencies that hosted the team were thankful for all the efforts of the team and appreciative of the help especially since it has been a long season.

Recommendations

The Bureau should continue to increase its pool of qualified resources. The team recommends continuing to include agency and interagency trainees with future teams. Capacity building is tantamount in creating a well prepared and trained force to respond to current and future wildfire education and prevention needs.

The team recommends for future prevention booths at the Yakama State Fair to have a bilingual team member due to the high population of Spanish speaking migrant workers. The team also recommends having more wildfire prevention materials available and an appearance by Smokey Bear, if possible. Many children were unfamiliar with Smokey Bear and the prevention messaging.

Phillips, PETL recommends Jeff Moyer and/or Kenny Jaramillo make a presentation on Indian Country protocol and prevention team challenges at the P-410 training to be held in Boise, October, 2017. It is also recommended, the “Decision Mapping” program be presented for use by prevention teams as an additional youth education tool.

6. Acknowledgements

The BIA Northwest Region Fire Prevention Team acknowledges the following individuals and Agencies for assisting in completing our assignment:

National Office

Samuel Scranton Deputy Director- Fuels Management
Dalan Romero Director of Operations

Northwest Regional Office

Stanley Speaks, Regional Director
Bodie Shaw, Deputy Regional Director
Dale Sebastian, Supervisory Regional Forester
Darron Williams, Regional Fire Management Officer
John Szulc, Assistant Regional Fire Management Officer

Colville Agency

Joseph Holford, Acting Superintendent
Ike Cawston Jr., Fire Prevention Officer
Ike Cawston, Fire Management Officer
Lonnie Cawston, Fuels Management Officer

Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes

Peter Plant, Agency Superintendent
CT Camel, Fire Prevention Officer
Ron Swaney, Fire Management Officer

Nez Perce Tribe

Daniel Largo, Superintendent
Kip Kemak, Fire Prevention Officer
Jeff Handel, Fire Management Officer

Spokane Tribe

Daniel Largo, Superintendent
Grant Denison, Fire Prevention Officer
Blaine Kieffer, Fire Management Officer

Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs

Floy Anderson, Superintendent
Tony Holliday, Fire Prevention Officer
Trey Leonard, Fire Management Officer

Yakama Nation

David Shaw, Superintendent
Gary Peters, Fire Prevention Officer
Don Jones, Fire Management Officer

Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation

Michael Jackson, Superintendent
Jeffrey Casey, Fire Operating Specialist