



Project Charter

Geographic Information System Standard Operating Procedures on Incidents



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1.0 – Project Overview

1.1 – Identification

The name of this project is Geographic Information System (GIS) Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) on Incidents Project (GSTOP) hereinafter referred to as the GSTOP Project.

The name of this team is the Geographic Information System (GIS) Standard Operating Procedures on Incidents Project (GSTOP) Project Team hereinafter referred to as the Project Team.

1.2 – Project Background

This project is chartered by of the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG). The NWCG was formed to expand operational cooperation and coordination of federal and state wildland fire agencies.

Presently, there are no GIS SOPs for wildland fire incidents. This absence of SOPs has created data management problems for incidents management teams especially during team transition periods. The GAO Report (GAO-03-1047) *Geospatial Information, Technologies Hold Promise for Wildland Fire Management, but Challenges Remain* stated “...other geospatial data standards are needed to achieve consistency in the geospatial data used to support wildland fire management.”

The study “Investigation of Geospatial Support of Incident Management” was conducted during the summer of 2002. This study found that, “although geospatial data may be easily stored in common electronic formats, respondents recognized an absence of formalized protocols for the transfer of GIS data generated during incidents. This may hinder the adoption of GIS as a more comprehensive tool for long-term fire, fuels, or other management purposes.” Primarily, this analysis identified and documented the valuable use of GIS data and GIS products on incidents and the need for standard protocol during incidents.

1.3 – Purpose / Business Need

This Charter’s purpose is to document agreement between the Department of the Interior’s (DOI) Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), National Park Service (NPS), the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) U.S. Forest Service (USFS), the Intertribal Timber Council, Research and the National Association of State Foresters (NASF) concerning and authorizing the GSTOP Project.

This Charter authorizes the development of guidelines for GIS standard operating procedures on incidents. This project will coordinate with the Incident Base Automation project.

GIS standard operating procedures are needed on incidents for the following reasons: to provide people with all the safety, health, environmental and operational information necessary to perform a job properly, to ensure that production operations are performed consistently to maintain quality control of processes and products, to ensure that processes continue uninterrupted and are completed on a prescribed schedule, to serve as a training document for teaching users about the process for which the SOP was written, and to serve as an historical record of the how, why and when steps in an existing process so there is a factual basis (not hearsay) for revising those steps when a process or when technology changes.

1.4 – Project Scope

The GSTOP project is responsible for:

- Developing and recommending GIS SOPs guidelines for incidents to the NWCG. As a minimum this would include:
 - Naming conventions and structure (e.g. Folder and file)
 - Standard map product definition
 - Minimum Essential Data Sets
 - Data sharing and archiving procedures
 - Incident team transition procedures
 - Minimum GIS expectations on an incident
 - GIS symbology identified
 - Documentation and metadata procedures
- Coordinating with others in the interagency wildland fire community regarding the need for GIS SOPs including infrared interpreter, field observer, and fire behavior specialists.
- Coordinating with other Geospatial organizations regarding GIS SOPs for incidents including National Incident Management System (NIMS), Homeland Security, and all risk incident support activities.
- This project will not address information technology issues (e.g. including networking, software, and hardware.)

1.4.1 – Project Objective

The project will examine typical GIS operating procedures on incidents and provide a recommended guide (both paper format and in digital format) of geospatial standard operating procedures to the NWCG.

1.4.2 – Outstanding Issues

Currently, the GIS Technical Specialist (GIST) is not an ICS position, but red carded under the NWCG's Technical Specialist Guidelines. This may inhibit the implementation and compliance of NWCG GIS SOPs.

1.5 – Sponsorship & Ownership

- Lead agency: United States Fish and Wildlife Service
- Primary Stakeholders: United States Department of Agriculture, United States Department of Interior, National Association of State Foresters
- Department Stakeholders: Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Park Service, and United States Geological Survey
- Sponsors: The National Wildfire Coordinating Group

1.6 – References

Burchfield, James A., Theron A. Miller, and Lloyd Queen. *Investigation of Geospatial Support of Incident Management Final Report*, November 25, 2002. The Bolle Center for People and Forests at the University of Montana and the National Center for Landscape Fire Analysis at the University of Montana.

Friedman, Kenneth Ph.D. *Ten Reasons for Writing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)* 1996. Department of Journalism and Communication, Lehigh University, Bethlehem, Pa.

GAO Report GAO-03-1047 – *Geospatial Information, Technologies Hold Promise for Wildland Fire Management, but Challenges Remain*. September 2003.

1.7 – Terminology

Acronyms Used within this Charter:

- NWCG - National Wildfire Coordinating Group
- GTG – Geospatial Task Group
- IRMWT – Information Resource Management Working Team
- GIS – Geographic Information System
- SOPs – Standard Operating Procedures
- GIST – Geographic Information System Technical Specialist

2.0 – Project Approach Section

The approach is that the GSTOP project will work with many wildland fire cooperators to develop reasonable GIS standard operating procedures on incidents. All effort will comply with and conform to the principles and the standards of the NWCG.

2.1 – Project Deliverables and Quality Objectives

- Milestone 1: Determine and develop requirements for GIS SOPs
 - Deliverable 1: Project Manager will write a progress report and a communication plan and provide it to the Project's Executive Committee (by the end of January 2005)
- Milestone 2: Determine and develop standard digital symbolset to be used on incidents
 - Deliverable 2: Symbolset team lead will recommend a draft symbolset and provide it to the Executive Committee and Project Manager (by the end of January 2005)
- Milestone 3: Develop and produce draft GIS SOPs
 - Deliverable 3: Project Manager will provide draft GIS SOPs to Business Leader (by March 2005)
 - Deliverable 4: Business Lead provides the business community with the draft GIS SOPs for the 2005 fire season (by the end of the first week of April)
- Milestone 4: Ensure requirements are reviewed and tested by business community
 - Deliverable 5: Business Leader will distribute draft GIS SOPs to Business Community (by May 2005)
 - Project Manager will review business communities issues with GIS SOPs (by December 2005)
- Milestone 5: Finalize GIS SOPs
 - Deliverable 6: Project Manager will provide the Executive Committee with final GIS SOPs (by April 2006)

2.2 – Organization and Responsibilities

The project will be comprised of experts from a cross section of agencies and geographic areas. Individuals that work on this project will need good communication skills, knowledge of ICS, and the GIST position. Project Manager and the Business Leader will need the ability to influence NWCG members. This project will need a minimum of five team members that would include the Project Manager, Business Leader, and Team Leader.

- *Executive Committee – Geospatial Task Group*
- *Business Leader – Chair of the GTG or designee*
- *Project Manager – Project Manager is Susan E. McLellan – Florida Forestry*

- *Co-Project Manager - Team Leader Ken Bottle – USFWS, Colorado*
- *Project Team Members*
 - *Team member: Sean Triplett – BLM, Alaska Fire Service*
 - *Team member: Karen Folger – NPS, California*
 - *Team member: John Guthrie – USGS, Colorado*
 - *Team member: Luther Arizana – BIA, NIFC*
 - *Team member: Ed Delaney – NPS, NIFC*
 - *Team member: Miranda Miller – FWS, Texas*
 - *Team member: Emmor Nile – Oregon Department of Forestry*
 - *Team member: Dave Wischer – Washington Department of Natural Resources*
 - *Team member: Victoria Smith – BLM, California*
 - *Team member: Ann RysSikora – USFS, Montana*
 - *Team member: Joe Appleton, Kern County, California*
 - *Team member: Elise Bowne, USFS, Colorado*

2.3 – Reporting, Oversight, & Review

NWCG standards will be followed for reporting, oversight, and review of the GSTOP Project.

2.4 – Dependencies

Products from the GSTOP will be integrated into the Wildland Fire Enterprise Architecture and will be used in the Incident Base Automation Project.

2.5 – Plans for Support Activities

The GSTOP project would ensure that the GIST Training and Fire Incident Management Tools (FIMT) Tools would be in compliance of NWCG.

A potential product would be that the GIS SOPs could be integrated into an existing NWCG handbook if appropriate.

2.6 – Project Facilities and Resources

Project will require a conference room during project meetings and equipment needs include: a projector, 2 laptops, and basic office supplies.

2.7 – Project Control

- Project Manager will provide quarterly reports to the Executive Committee.
- Project Team will meet a minimum of three times during the project for duration of three days each time. Conference calls and net meetings will be used as a substitute for travel whenever possible.
- Symbolset sub team will meet a minimum of three times during the project for duration of three days each time. Conference calls and net meetings will be used as a substitute for travel whenever possible.
- Executive Committee will meet a minimum of four times during the project.
- The Project Team will use best management practices to log and control project actions.
- Project will be coordinated with Incident Based Automation liaison.

2.8 – Quality Assurance and Control Activities

- A test plan will be developed to ensure that SOPs are well written and useable.
- It is the intent that the field will use the draft SOPs during the 2005 fire season. After the 2005 fire season, the SOPs will be reviewed and revised as needed.

2.9 – Project Schedule

Project Schedule Table

Activity	Resources	Assigned Responsibilities	Estimated Completion Date
1	Susan E. McLellan, Sean Triplett, John Guthrie, Luther Arizana , Ed Delaney, Miranda Miller, Emmor Nile, Dave Wischer, Victoria Smith, Ann RysSikora, Joe Appleton	Determine requirements for GIS SOPs by communicating with business community	January 31, 2004
2	Ken Bottle, Karen Folger, Luther Arizana, Elise Bowne, John Guthrie, Sean Triplett, Emmor Nile	Determine standard digital symbolset to be used on incidents	January 31, 2004
3	Susan E. McLellan, Sean Triplett, John Guthrie, Luther Arizana , Ed Delaney, Miranda Miller, Emmor Nile, Dave Wischer, Victoria Smith, Ann RysSikora, Joe Appleton	Create draft GIS SOPs that include a standard digital symbolset	April 1, 2005

4	Susan E. McLellan, Sean Triplett, John Guthrie, Luther Arizana , Ed Delaney, Miranda Miller, Emmor Nile, Dave Wischer, Victoria Smith, Ann RysSikora, Joe Appleton	Ensure requirements are reviewed and tested by business community	December 31, 2005
5	Susan E. McLellan, Sean Triplett, John Guthrie, Luther Arizana , Ed Delaney, Miranda Miller, Emmor Nile, Dave Wischer, Victoria Smith, Ann RysSikora, Joe Appleton	Finalize GIS SOPs	April 1, 2006

2.10 Project Cost Estimate

Projected Cost

Total Indirect Cost (contributed salary)	\$154,800
Direct Cost	\$103,900
Total Cost	\$258,700

* It is intended that all travel cost associated with the project would be covered by the GSTOP Project, not the participating team member's home office. The standard NWCG split among agencies will be used to fund this project.

3.0 - Approval Section

This Charter is effective as of the date of signature by the Chairman of the NWCG, the GSTOP Project Manager and Business Leader. The Charter may be revised upon recommendations of the GSTOP Business Leader, Project Manager, or IRMWT with the concurrence of the NWCG.



 Chair, National Wildfire Coordinating Group

Date: _____ 10/20/04