

NFPORS Conference Call
January 21, 2004

Participating in the call were Russ Berry, Peter Bedker, Bob Lineback, Mike Van Hemelryck, David Donovan, Brandon Brown, Pat Moore, Sandy Gregory, Tricia Roller, and Chris Pharr.

Items to discuss included requirements for the dashboard and the Quality Assurance tool. Two decisions were made on the QA tool last time, but we did not finish the discussion. Hard/soft, application, etc. of the rules needs to be decided. The Management Dashboard is a complex subject; members of the UG were to review it before the call today.

A suggestion was made after the last call that action teams be formed to work on specific issues that need more in-depth discussion. This team would produce a report (in advance of the next call) and make a presentation of their findings with recommendations for changes at the next month's call. This would leave time for the entire UG to discuss less complex issues. This suggestion was accepted.

A round robin where suggestions, questions on process, what's on your mind, what has come up, etc., can be aired will become a part of every call. A discussion of the items brought forward can take place immediately, be deferred to the next meeting, or assigned to a committee.

Russ discussed the role of the UG. He does not want to drive the group or slow it down, but the system has requirements already in place and we can't afford for the group to address every item. Many of these things have already been discussed and are in progress. If you see a decision is needed, communicate it to the group and ask for immediate feedback. Use the group as a communications forum. Let us know the direction you are going.

Round robin discussions followed:

Russ is finalizing the requirements for the DOI Community Assistance module; the contractor has the requirements and will have some mock-ups within days. Meeting with Mary Anne Sanford tomorrow to go over and recapture the progress made in the last few months toward doing away with FASTRACS and developing a SmokeTracs module to integrate with NFPORS.

David described major dashboard issues. The dashboard is a draft with an original goal of getting information quickly; it is based on BRIO technology, however, shortcuts have been taken. David discussed the need for real time reports, integrating the DCT with the dashboard, ad hoc reporting capability, the Stoplights and the HTML used for formatting. The performance measures reports should be available within the next few weeks.

Russ discussed consistency of the reports since the lock down. Report definitions should help clarify report contents. He discussed the complexity of producing reports and the pitfalls leading to production of inconsistent data.

The scope of the dashboard includes two audiences – high and the ad hoc report producers. Should the dashboard provide service to those extremes?

Requirements after the Healthy Forests Restoration Act were discussed. (<http://www.fs.fed.us/projects/hfi/>) and click on Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 link for entire text.) The HFRA wants us to account for treatments done under the Act. Peter discussed the four requirements to be met and ways to deal with them. We can deal with three of them, but there is no objective for controlling epidemic disease and insect infestations. The new database (ESOPA) coming on line for the FS April 1 was explained with the changes that will be made to NFPORS to accommodate the required use of the ESOPA database.

Discussion followed on whether to identify HFRA at the project or treatment level, or both. The UG decided to set up the first Task Group to make a recommendation. This needs to be done by the end of February as a decision must be reached quickly. The group will meet within a week. Peter, Tricia, Mike and Pat will meet to discuss the issue, i.e., whether a business rule is needed, if the treatment or project level should show HFRA, whether there should be a mix of NEPA in a project, etc. Peter will chair the group and set up a schedule for meeting.

The process to be used for determining acres moved to a better condition class has been resolved. Peter will send the write up to the group as an attachment to these notes.

Bob asked several questions about guidance on the projects entered for FY2005. Russ will ask Alan to provide the guidance on the NFRA and on the priorities of DOI for FY2005 projects. Bob and Russ discussed the NPS conversion from FASTRACS to NFPORS and the problems they are encountering with incorrect data. He will send Russ some specific information on the problem

Pat: QA CARs are still a problem. Most folks feel the maps take too much time and are not user friendly.

Sandy: There are still issues with the fire wall and training. (Russ is setting up hands-on training in Phoenix. He volunteered to do more in Albuquerque or Reno on February 10 or 11.) Sandy will get someone from Nevada IT to talk with Russ and he will hook them up with Dave to answer questions on problems with the fire wall. Russ will meet with Tommy and Dave to discuss the issue and options for making the web based training work better.

Peter: Discussed the need for objectives for the UG. Maybe after the next call, we will have a better sense of what should be on the agenda, etc.

Dave: There are some things that can be done with the firewall. He will work with IT to make some changes that will let folks access the training.

A second Task Group was set up to make some recommendations on the Quality Assurance Report, hard versus soft requirements, specific needs of their agencies, etc. Russ, Sandy, Bob, Dave, Brandon, Pat and Ted Tower will be members of the group. Russ will also ask Alan Fitzsimmons to participate as well as Tim McGrath. Sandy will chair the group. Their recommendations will be transmitted to the UG by the February meeting. If you want to serve on this group, contact Sandy (Sandra_Gregory@NV.BLM.gov). The group will convene by the week of February 9. Bob will create an Excel grid for the group to use and send it to Sandy.

Send your comments to Russ on ways to improve the UG.

Next meeting: Feb. 18.