

Notes from NFPORS Conference Call, April 21, 2004

The monthly NFPORS conference call was held on April 21 at 3:00 p.m. EST. Those calling in were Bob Appling, Brandon Brown, Sandy Gregory, Pat Moore, Susan Lee, Chris Pharr, Bob Lineback, Peter Bedker, Russ Berry, Ted Tower, and Mike van Hemelryck. Wendell Hahn and Doug Havlina graciously called in to brief the users group on Fire Regime Condition Class.

Discussion on FRCC: The new stratification process makes the FRCC process user friendly to NFPORS. It provides a cross walk to NFPORS requirements. A treatment unit less than a quarter section would require a "Stand FRCC" method. A stand scorecard assessment tool was developed for these smaller units. FRCC methodology provides "departure values" by comparing actual with reference condition. At the national fuels meeting in Albuquerque, a recommendation was made to use the actual FRCC measure (0-100) instead of using CCI, II and III. This would allow users to show improvement in condition class even though an actual change in condition class did not take place.

A recent science review gave good marks to the process and made some recommendations for changes to the process. The third national training session is scheduled in two weeks. Training has taken place throughout the west. Other resources are also using FRCC and some state and university personnel have been trained. Web based training is coming on-line and will provide certification for users. Right now the system is client-based, but there are plans for a web-based system in the future. In the long term, there could be integration between NFPORS and FRCC.

In answer to questions:

When will the changes to NFPORS happen? The changes to NFPORS for FRCC should be in time for FY05 data, but not FY04.

How does the process and methodology change in different ecosystems? Everything is stratified to the biophysical setting for that area. Alaska and the southeast have almost completed defining the vegetation types. There will be a workshop in the NE in May.

How do we convert from landscape to stand to actual project in NFPORS and then show a change in NFPORS to a small unit? Use the stand scorecard for small TUs and do a comparison to the landscape assessment. We need to get the message across that larger treatment areas should be used.

A URL is imminent (www.FRCC.gov) as well as Frames.gov so the use can be spread around.

How are private organizations responding? The process is under scrutiny as to how we implement it, but they are supportive of methods being used. More work with state foresters is needed.

There is still a need to resolve highly different ecosystems.

Is process applicable in highly altered wildland urban interface areas? No proof it won't work yet.

Action: Doug/Wendell to get recommendations to Russ on interface, etc.

Discussion on stewardship. Ken Cushing was not available for this topic. Ken feels that NFPORS should not be used to track stewardship contracts in accordance with the requirements of the Federal Register; but Peter says that NFPORS could easily be used to track the number of acres that are accomplished using Stewardship Contracts using the work agent. Peter reminded everyone that the Work Agent does not keep track of acres for each separate work agent. A separate treatment would have to be created to do that.

Peter will write up a simple briefing paper with options and send it to Janet Anderson Tyler and have her get it to the interagency fuels group for a decision. He will give two options. 1. Add Stewardship as a Work Agent and count all acres associated with the treatment as stewardship (with an appropriate footnote) 2. Use a pro-rating method that is based on PDC.

Russ presented a briefing on last month's activities: rolled out changes to NFPORS fuels module for collecting data under HFRA and funded by NFP. On schedule for mid-May roll out of non-NFP data collection using a new module. The reason for the addition of this module is to have accomplishments with a fuels benefit entered, even though they are not funded from NFP money. Russ is collecting fund codes to be used from each agency. He has the BLM but needs the others.

The Community Assistance module was rolled out. Training was held and things have gone well.

OMB300 sent to NBC about a week and a half ago.

Monitoring issue has come up. It will be the next "big deal." Recommendations will be sent to Russ on ways to see NFPORS improve providing monitoring of treatment units and some of the details of that monitoring, i.e., compare areas treated with those burning, for fire effects, etc.

Will we have another users group for CA, etc.? No. Anyone having issues should get on the calls to discuss them. We will rely on ad hoc committees and do business in a practical way.

The Round Robin closed the meeting.

Bob Lineback is interested in adding a field that reminds people to document interagency collaboration efforts. Peter says that we have this at the Project "Partner" list but the

definition of “Partner” is not used for real collaboration. The NFP calls for collaborative planning, not just participating in the work.

Sandy referred to the MOU of Understanding for Collaborative Fuels of January 13, 2003. She and Bob will try to get a definition and a recommendation for implementing it in NFPORS at the next meeting.

Sandy Gregory: Is there a way to see HFI and HFRA treatments in the dump? Peter reported it is being added and should be available in the next few days.

Ted Tower: The new CA module by and large works well but the WUI summaries are missing (they will be added soon) and the USE map has problems with the CARs. Many of them are missing. (If you enter these communities as Communities of Interest and they are actually CARs, they will show up as CARs if the names are typed in exactly as they appear in the Federal Register.)

Brandon Brown: Suggested that WUI/Other be indicated on the Field level portlet report after you say “more.” Chris Pharr took an SCR request.

Susan Lee: When you get an error entering treatments, the Types disappear. Bob suggested you go to another line and change or re-enter the information, then go back to the box and the words will be back.

Russ will develop an agenda for the next call. Please send him an e-mail containing any topic that should be discussed.

1. How to update CAR list. Need a process to implement over time since changes will be made frequently. A NASF memo defines how to develop CARs, etc. Russ will contact Don Artley to find out the status and bring a report to the next meeting.
2. How to get Districts added/changed. Need process defined for getting names changed.

The next call will be May 19, 2004.

Submitted by: Pat Moore