

Enchanted Circle Regional Fire Protection Association

Meeting Minutes April 10, 2017, Taos County Commission Chamber

Meeting was called to order by Chairman Craig Sime at 18:03 and introductions were made.

In attendance were: Deke Willis, Wheeler Peak; Bonnie Driskell and Russ Driskell, Rio Fernando; Chris Cote, Taos County Wildland; Joseph Godfrey, San Cristobal; Jim DeCastro, Mickey Richardson and Clark Wooldridge, SBR; Kathy Miller, Dixon; Robert Hagerty and Steve Brady, Carson; T. Scott Gibson, Eagle Nest; Jonald S. Lowe, Sr. and Patrick Kopepassah, Taos Pueblo; Kyle Sahd, BLM; Brent Wachter, NWS; Ron Burnham, Red River; Bob Coss and Craig Sime, Moreno Valley; John Murtaugh, Angel Fire; Jack Lewis, Carson NF (Questa RD); Ernie Lopez and Chris Romo, NMSF; Dominic Martinez, Taos Central Dispatch; Ray Gonzales, La Lama; Claren Martinez, Taos Dispatch Center; Loren D. Suazo, BIA; Marvin Roybal, Paul Mondragon and Ray Corral, USFS; Bobby Lucero, Taos County OEM; Mark Ortega, Questa/Taos County OEM; Mike Cordova, Taos County Fire.

Goals and Objectives

Chairman Sime expressed his appreciation for everyone making the effort to attend this meeting. He emphasized the goals and objectives of this meeting were to coordinate firefighting activities with other agencies in the Enchanted Circle region.

Fire Season Outlook

NWS presented a Fire Season Outlook explaining the connection between El Niño and La Niña. It has been an epic year for winds. The outlook called for:

1. Temperatures to be above normal for the coming months.
2. Fire activity to be normal or below normal.
3. Normal red flag activity.
4. Lots of lightning.
5. Increased downslope winds along the front range.
6. Monsoon rains will arrive on time or early, with healthy amounts of rain.

Dispatch Center Updates

USFS Taos Dispatch Center reported that they have moved into the Taos County complex and invited people to stop by. The official open house will be on 4/25/17.

They are currently open from 08:00-16:30 but as fire season approaches they will be adding longer hours and new personnel. They also are adapting to CAD system changes and have had some radio frequency changes with their system upgrades.

Pending IDOT changes will result in operations for the northern half on NM being coordinated from the Taos Center.

Taos Central Dispatch reported they have their new systems in place and are fully staffed with 14 personnel (12 dispatchers). Technical changes are expected to improve communications with Angel Fire. John Murtaugh asked about dispatching medical calls in Angel Fire and was

advised that a new software package was being purchased and would improve EMS responses and allow dispatchers to provide instructions to callers.

Red River dispatch was not in attendance.

Frequency changes were mentioned and a map with frequencies to use for Air to Ground Air Ambulance and MedEvac on Wildland Fire Incidents was distributed.

Agency Updates

New Mexico State Forestry has added new personnel in preparation for the upcoming fire season. Recent fire reports were mentioned briefly. Training for the IQS system was available to those needing it and a Smoke Management class would probably be available in the fall. It was also requested that agencies contact the NMSF PIO so reports could be submitted to the Governor in that manner.

Carson NF:

Two type 6's and a helicopter available. They are planning to do prescribed burning near Apache Pass this fall and intend to work closely with Moreno Valley. Next month there will be training opportunities for firefighters wishing to get experience working with other agencies on prescribed burns.

Bureau of Indian Affairs:

Three type 6's and are currently staffed but having difficulty filling additional positions due to the medical assessment requirement. They are working on training and pack tests. There will be a new FMO in place soon. Taos Pueblo has 2 type 6's and 29 personnel. They will be burning slash piles in the next few weeks. Cameron Martinez is the new Natural Resources Director and they are developing a new fire management plan. They intend to work on problems with communication/notifications to other agencies. Bob Coss asked if there was a fire on pueblo owned property was cutting a lock OK, or was the policy going to be wait until someone with a key arrived. He was advised that in the event of a fire, it would be OK to cut the lock.

Enchanted Circle Association:

Taos County Emergency Management currently working on several program updates.

Red River- type 6, type 2 crew. Initial attack.

Taos County-

Rio Fernando- type 6

Latir- type 6, 1800 gal. tender, 4 red cards

San Cristobal- type 6, red cards pending

SBR- type 6, type 3, 2 red cards, 5 pending

Carson, type 6, 8 red cards

Eagle Nest- type 6, tender, 10 red cards

Moreno Valley- type 6, 5000 gal. avail.

Angel Fire- 3 type 6's, 6 personnel

La Lama- type 6, type 3, initial attack

Questa- 3000 gal tender, 2-3 red cards

Aviation Assets

In the zone will come out of Santa Fe.

Extended attack

Northern NM T3 Team was addressed by USFS. As a result of standards being changed for T3 team, the number of qualified applicants has dropped significantly, lowering their numbers.

Coordination of Fire Restrictions

Ron Burnham asked that agencies try to communicate with each other when restrictions were being imposed.

Training

Red River is planning a 2 day class in Rope Rescue. Tentatively set for the 3rd weekend in May, this class is designed for departments who have a need for this type of training.

NMSF is working with Angel Fire on a S-212 class for Sawyers April 28, 29, 30. They will also do pack tests on 4/23 in Raton, and 4/27 in Cimarron. A RT-130 class will be offered in Raton on 4/23.

USFS will offer RT-130 in Taos at the Supervisor's Office on 4/12.

Other items

Taos Pueblo reported that the Deputy Director of Veteran's Affairs will be visiting the Pueblo on 4/21, arriving in a Black Hawk helicopter.

Next regular meeting is May 1, 2017 At Moreno Valley Val Verde Station.

Meeting adjourned at 20:35.