



# NWCG Smoke Committee Information Sheet



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## Background:

The National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) is an operational group designed to coordinate programs of the participating wildfire management agencies. The Smoke Committee (SmoC) has been established by NWCG to provide interagency leadership, coordination and integration of air resource and fire management objectives to support overall land management goals. Air quality is critical to human health and welfare. Fire is an important disturbance process in many wildland ecosystems. SmoC strives to support successful management and utilization of wildland fire while appropriately addressing smoke impacts, to public health, welfare and safety.

## Objectives:

- Improve communications and understanding of the air quality rules and regulations pertinent to wildland fire management.
- Develop consistent recommendations for wildland fire management which account for the air quality impacts of planned and unplanned ignition for NWCG and Committee member agencies. Provide a forum for open discussions on air quality issues associated with smoke from planned and unplanned wildland fires to promote coordination and collaboration between agencies, programs and partners.
- Assess and advance technical products and training to build wildland fire management field capabilities to address the air quality impacts of planned and unplanned ignitions and meet environmental rules, regulations, guidelines and concerns specifically focused on the interface of air quality and wildland management.
- Improve communication and understanding of the role of fire in the ecosystems of the United States and how land management agencies address air quality issues in planning and operations.

## Membership:

Members are from the Bureau of Land Management, Fish & Wildlife Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, US Forest Service, National Association of State Foresters (eastern and western representatives), National Association of State Foresters, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and National Association of Clean Air Agencies (NACAA). Other subject matter experts and stakeholders contribute as needed.

## Subcommittees:

- **Smoke Managers Subcommittee** works to provide relevant technical, administrative, and organizational information and feedback for operational smoke managers, forecasters and modelers.
- **Technical Smoke Topics Subcommittee** address technical issues eg. Emission inventories and monitoring.
- **Training Subcommittee** advance training in wildland fire.

## Activities:

**Policy:** SmoC tracks and develops interagency strategies for addressing air quality regulations and the management of smoke from wildland fires addressing criteria pollutants and standards, greenhouse gas emissions and climate change. Examples of this include: General Conformity Rule revisions, Exceptional Events Rule, and the revisions of EPA Interim Air Quality Policy for Prescribed and Wildland Fire.

**Communications:** SmoC activities are communicated through:

- Briefing papers for inter/intra-agency distribution and posted on the web,
- Discussions briefing papers and postings of emerging topics to the public [www.myfirecommunity.net](http://www.myfirecommunity.net) “Air Quality and Fire Issues” neighborhood.
- The national smoke management website at [www.nifc.gov/smoke](http://www.nifc.gov/smoke).
- Periodic webinars on emerging issues or latest research in smoke management
- Participation in key interagency conferences and workshops



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**Training:** SmoC develops training materials for land managers (burners and line officers) and air quality regulators aimed at balancing land management needs, which includes the use of fire, while addressing air quality (public health and welfare) goals. SmoC has partnered with the University of Idaho developing a website (<http://www.cnr.uidaho.edu/smoc/>), which has interactive training on “Smoke Management and Air Quality for Land Managers” that reflects the latest in air quality regulations, and an online Workshop – “Effective Communication for Smoke Management in a Changing Air Quality Environment”. The website also hosts the “Smokepedia”; a glossary of smoke and air quality terms and acronyms. Other projects include revising the 2001 Smoke Management Guide for Wildland and Prescribed Fire and a smoke assessment of training provided by NWCG and other agencies. Future work will include revising RX-410.

### **Leadership** For more information please contact:

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### **Subcommittee leadership**

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#### **Smoke Managers Subcommittee**

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