

Meeting Minutes of the Subcommittee on Disaster Reduction

09 July 2015, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., Teleconference and WebEx Only

Italics indicate absent members. "T" indicate members participating via teleconference.

Co-chairs

David Applegate (USGS)
Margaret Davidson (NOAA)
Tamara Dickinson (OSTP)
Dennis Wenger (NSF)

Designated Representatives

BLM *Edwin Roberson*
CDC *Mollie Mahany*
DHS Mary Ellen Hynes (T)
DHS/FEMA *Roy Wright*
DHS/USCG *Robert Thomas*
DOD *Al Johnson*
DOE *Patricia Hoffman*
DOT *Sheila Duwadi*
EOP/OMB *Michael Clark*
EOP/OSTP *Tamara Dickinson*
EPA Brendan Doyle (T)
Stephen Clark

FERC *Marsha Palazzi*
HUD *Dana Bres*
NASA *Craig Dobson*
NGA Patricia Allen Aquinas (T)
NGB *TBD*
NIH *Aubrey Miller*
NIST Steve Cauffman (T)
NOAA Margaret Davidson (T)
Laura Furgione (T)
NPS Marcy Rockman (T)
NSF Dennis Wenger (T)
OPHS *Estella Jones*

State *Fernando Echavarria*
USACE *Steven Cary*
Dimitra Syriopoulou
USAID Sezin Tokar (T)
USDA *TBD*
USFS *Elizabeth Reinhardt*
Carlos Rodriguez-Franco (T)
Matt Rollins (T)
USGS David Applegate (T)
USNRC *Steven West*

Other Attendees

DHS Mitch Erickson (T)
Meredith Lee (T)
DHS/FEMA Doug Ham (T)
Kathleen Boyer (T)
Kaitlyn MacMichael (T)
EOP/NSC Josh Barnes (T)
Eric Letvin (T)
EOP/OSTP Tim Stryker (T)
Hannah Stafford (T)
EPA Keely Maxwell (T)
Gregory Sayles (T)
Ed Washburn (T)

HUD Danielle Arigoni (T)
NOAA Paul Schlatter (T)
NSF Jacqueline Meszaros (T)
Bob O'Connor (T)
USACE Tony Niles (T)
USDA Glenn Bethel (T)
USGS Kris Ludwig (T)
Charlie Mandeville (T)
Geoff Plumlee (T)
Teresa Stoepler (T)
USGCRP
Amanda McQueen (T)

USNRC John Nakoski (T)
Brett Rini (T)
USPHS Tracy McGill (T)
STPI Chris Clavin (T)
Chloe Holzinger (T)
Zoe Petropoulos (T)
DRI/WRCC
Kelly Redmond (T)
SDR Secretariat
Bret Schothorst (T)
Barbara Haines-Parmele (T)

Agenda

10:00 Welcome and Introductions
10:05 Report from the Co-chairs and Approval of Minutes
10:10 Update from National Security Council/MitFLG on Resilience Indicators
10:30 Update from HUD on the National Disaster Resilience Competition
10:40 Briefing: U.S. Forest Service 2015 Wildfire Season Outlook
11:00 Presentation: Drought in California: Past, Present, and Future
11:30 Discussion: Federal S&T Activities for Western U.S. Drought
11:55 Close and Next Actions

Handouts

- July Meeting Agenda
- Draft June Meeting Minutes

I. Welcome and Introductions

National Science and Technology Council (NSTC) Subcommittee on Disaster Reduction (SDR) Co-chair David Applegate (USGS) called the July meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. and participants introduced themselves. The July SDR meeting was held via teleconference and WebEx only due to last-minute scheduling conflicts at the White House Eisenhower Executive Office Building (EEOB).

II. Report from the Co-chairs and Approval of Minutes

The June monthly meeting minutes draft was approved with no changes.

SDR co-chair Dennis Wenger (NSF) noted that International Disaster Risk Reduction (IDRR) Working Group planned to hold its July 9 monthly meeting at 1:00 p.m. via teleconference call as well. At Thursday afternoon's meeting, the working group: 1) discussed the proposal from the working group's June meeting to hold semi-annual listening sessions of the U.S. National Platform with non-Federal, multi-sectoral stakeholders; 2) contemplated nominations of U.S. government representatives from the IDRR to participate in the open-ended intergovernmental expert working group on progress indicators to measure implementation of the Sendai Framework; and 3) reviewed the recent activities of the UNISDR Science and Technical Advisory Group (STAG). Please contact the SDR Secretariat (bret.schothorst@mantech.com) for more information on the IDRR Working Group.

Wenger also encouraged SDR agencies to consider joining his agency in providing funding support to the University of Colorado Boulder's Natural Hazards Center to assist the institute with their mission to advance and communicate knowledge on hazards mitigation and disaster preparedness, response, and recovery and to foster information sharing and integration of activities among researchers, practitioners, and policymakers. In addition to NSF, regular Federal contributors in the past have included: Department of Homeland Security, Department of Transportation, FEMA, NASA, NOAA, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Forest Service, and U.S. Geological Survey. Please contact Wenger (dwenger@nsf.gov) for more information if interested in contributing to this important fundraising effort.

III. Update from National Security Council/MitFLG on Resilience Indicators

Applegate introduced Josh Barnes from the National Security Council (NSC), who updated the SDR on the in-progress work of the NSC in conjunction with the FEMA-led interagency Mitigation Framework Leadership Group (MitFLG) to develop a set of indicators of community resilience to hazards and the impacts of climate change. Barnes also discussed the efforts of OSTP and the NSC to spin up a rapid-turnaround task force to develop a package of drought proposals to the White House from across the interagency of Federal investments and policy/regulatory changes that could be put in place to address the potential that the Western U.S. drought could go on for several more years. SDR may be asked to play a role in the "Monitoring, Data, and Forecasting" element of the task force and perhaps the "Research" element as well in coordination with the NSTC Subcommittee on Water Availability and Quality (SWAQ). According to Barnes and his colleague Hannah Safford (OSTP), the most important action the Nation can take to mitigate these consequences is fundamentally and creatively rethinking and reshaping the way that we use and manage our water resources and building upon existing progress in the landscape. More information on this potential drought tasking will be made available to SDR members in the coming weeks.

IV. Update from HUD on the National Disaster Resilience Competition

Applegate introduced Danielle Arigoni from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), who updated Subcommittee members on the progress of her agency's National Disaster Resilience Competition (NDRC). Aligned closely with an associated education and technical assistance effort by the Rockefeller Foundation, the NDRC is designed to help states and local communities recover from past disasters while improving their ability to withstand future extreme events through strategic community

investments. HUD recently announced that 40 states and local communities will compete in the second and final phase, where each finalist is invited to propose specific projects that advance their community's comprehensive resilience plans as envisioned in Phase 1. Selected projects will be funded from a total pool of nearly \$1 billion of which \$181 million is set aside for projects in New York and New Jersey. The maximum grant award available at the end of Phase 2 for other eligible areas will be \$500 million and the minimum \$1 million. Please contact Arigoni (Danielle.M.Arigoni@hud.gov) or visit <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=NDRCFactSheetFINAL.pdf> for more information on the NDRC.

V. Briefing: U.S. Forest Service 2015 Wildfire Season Outlook

Applegate introduced Matt Rollins from the U.S. Forest Service, who briefed the SDR on the current wildfire situation in the Western U.S. and Canada, including in Alaska, California, and Washington, and provided a wildland fire outlook for the rest of the summer. Rollins also offered an update on the work of the SDR Wildland Fire Science and Technology Task Force (WFSTTF), which is in the process of incorporating final edits and getting clearance from OSTP on its final report and recommendations.

Rollins noted that current wildfire activity specifically in Alaska and western Canada has been much higher than average for this time of the year, with the number of acres burned in Alaska so far in 2015 already being the second highest ever recorded for an entire year. Rollins also passed along a video of the ongoing and unique Paradise Fire in the temperate rainforest Olympic National Park on the Olympic Peninsula in Washington state, which can be viewed at: <http://wildfiretoday.com/2015/07/09/how-fire-spreads-in-the-olympic-rain-forest/>. The video depicts the extremely dry conditions of the rain forest – 2015 has been the driest year on record for the area since 1951 – that allow the fire to quickly climb up the lichen and moss on trees and drop burning embers to the ground or onto an adjacent tree branches where it can continue to spread.

To close his presentation, Rollins went over some of the primary decision support and technology tools that have been provided by the U.S. Forest Service to its state and local partners during the 2015 wildfire season, including:

- Integrated fuel mitigation online tools;
- Wildland fire risk (both strategic and tactical);
- Line-officer and administrative unit resources;
- Public awareness and communication services;
- Active fire mapping;
- Operational, fine-scale weather and smoke forecasting;
- Situational awareness and firefighter safety; and
- Post-fire stabilization and landslide/debris flow forecasts.

Rollins also noted that his agency supplies scientists trained and certified as incident responders to active wildfire incident management teams, providing: geospatial and remote sensing specialists, incident meteorologists, fire behavior analysts, air resource monitors, and post-fire assessment and rehabilitation specialists to address landslide prediction, invasive species, erosion, and post-fire water quality. Wenger added that it might be useful to consider incorporating social science expertise into future wildfire incident management teams, and Steve Cauffman (NIST) stated that his agency works closely with the U.S. Forest Service during active wildfires analyzing the ignition of structures at the wildland-urban interface (WUI).

In response to a question from John Nakoski of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission regarding the future impact of wildfires on the energy sector and its associated infrastructure such as the electric power grid and nuclear power facilities, Rollins underlined that the changing climate is predicted to result in wildfires of greater frequency and intensity through factors such as increased temperatures, reduced

snowpack, and altered precipitation trends, which could markedly increase the probability of wildfire exposure to energy infrastructure. Reach out to Rollins (matthewgrollins@fs.fed.us) for more information about his briefing on the 2015 wildfire season.

VI. Presentation: Drought in California: Past, Present, and Future

Applegate introduced Kelly Redmond of the Desert Research Institute's Western Regional Climate Center, who provided a presentation to SDR members on the ongoing Western U.S. drought with particular emphasis on California and Nevada.

According to Redmond and for historical background, the average precipitation levels since 2011 for many parts of the Western U.S. were all well below normal, with the November through April winter precipitation season in 2013-2014 being the sixth driest for the state of California as a whole since record keeping started in 1895. The previous two winter precipitation seasons were also dry, making the 2011-2014 three-year average precipitation level for California the second driest that has occurred since 1895. Redmond also noted that this past winter left California water resources in a severely depleted state, and with California facing one of its most severe droughts on record and little relief in sight regarding predictions for the upcoming precipitation seasons. A drought state of emergency was declared in January 2015 directing state officials to take all necessary actions to prepare for water shortages.

In addition, Redmond highlighted that California also recently released a water action plan that prescribes management actions for the reliability, restoration and resilience of California's supply of water resources as the ongoing drought persists. The *California Water Action Plan* can be read at:

http://resources.ca.gov/docs/california_water_action_plan/Final_California_Water_Action_Plan.pdf.

Email Redmond (Kelly.Redmond@dri.edu) with any questions about his presentation on the Western U.S. drought in California and Nevada.

VII. Discussion: Federal S&T Activities for Western U.S. Drought

Due to time constraints, the roundtable discussion on Federal S&T activities for the ongoing Western U.S. drought was cut short. As discussed earlier in the meeting, Applegate reminded SDR members of the efforts of OSTP and the NSC to spin up a rapid-turnaround task force to develop a package of drought proposals to the White House that highlights Federal investments and policy/regulatory changes that could be put in place to address the potential that the Western U.S. drought could go on for several more years. Applegate reiterated that more information on this potential drought tasking will be made available to SDR members in the coming weeks.

To close the meeting, Laura Furgione (NOAA) shared a service assessment on the California drought from her agency, which is located at: http://www.nws.noaa.gov/os/assessments/pdfs/drought_ca14.pdf. The report, titled *California Drought: 2014 Service Assessment*, was the first NOAA service assessment specific to drought and was drafted with the purpose of: 1) identifying resource management decisions that were affected by the current drought in California; and 2) assessing the use and effectiveness of NOAA forecasts, indices, monitoring data, and services that were available to Federal, state, and local decision makers and stakeholders.

VIII. Adjournment

Applegate adjourned the SDR July meeting at 12:00 p.m. and noted that the group's next meeting will be held on Thursday, September 10 in the White House Conference Center Lincoln Room. Please note the change in date as the meeting for September has been moved to the second Thursday of the month to avoid proximity to the Labor Day Federal holiday. Applegate added that the Subcommittee will not plan to meet in August per longstanding tradition.

IX. SDR 2015 Meeting Calendar

SDR meetings in 2015 will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on the dates listed below in the Lincoln Room of the White House Conference Center unless otherwise noted:

2015

- ✓ Thursday, January 8*
- ✓ Thursday, February 5
- ✓ Thursday, March 5
- ✓ Thursday, April 2
- ✓ Thursday, May 7
- ✓ Thursday, June 4
- ✓ Thursday, July 9*
- ✓ Thursday, August 6**
- ✓ Thursday, September 10*
- ✓ Thursday, October 1
- ✓ Thursday, November 5
- ✓ Thursday, December 3

* January, July, and September meetings shifted to the second Thursday of the month to avoid proximity to holidays. The January and July meetings will be held in Room 430ABC of the White House Eisenhower Executive Office Building (EEOB).

** August meeting subject to cancellation.

X. Agenda Items and Other Communications with the Subcommittee

Please send proposed agenda items and any other items intended for distribution to the full Subcommittee to the SDR Secretariat Bret Schothorst (bret.schothorst@mantech.com).

XI. Contact Information

SDR Leadership

David Applegate	Co-chair	703-648-6600	applegate@usgs.gov
Margaret Davidson	Co-chair	843-740-1220	margaret.davidson@noaa.gov
Dennis Wenger	Co-chair	703-292-8606	dwenger@nsf.gov
Tamara Dickinson	Co-chair	202-456-6105	tdickinson@ostp.eop.gov

Executive Secretariat

Bret Schothorst	703-388-0312	bret.schothorst@mantech.com
Barbara Haines-Parmele	703-388-0309	barbara.haines-parmele@mantech.com

XII. Summary of July Actions

Action	Lead	By When
The next SDR meeting will be held on Thursday, September 10 in the White House Conference Center Lincoln Room. The Subcommittee will not meet in August per longstanding tradition.	SDR Members	For Information
Anticipate more information in the coming weeks on SDR’s role in a rapid-turnaround task force to develop a package of drought proposals from across the Federal interagency.	SDR Members	For Information

Contact Dennis Wenger (dwenger@nsf.gov) to provide funding support to the University of Colorado Boulder's Natural Hazards Center.	SDR Members and Federal Colleagues	Standing
Contact Danielle Arigoni (Danielle.M.Arigoni@hud.gov) for more information on the National Disaster Resilience Competition.	SDR Members and Federal Colleagues	Standing
Reach out to Matt Rollins (matthewgrollins@fs.fed.us) with further questions about his briefing on the 2015 wildfire season.	SDR Members and Federal Colleagues	Standing
Email Kelly Redmond (Kelly.Redmond@dri.edu) with any questions about his presentation on the ongoing Western U.S. drought in California and Nevada.	SDR Members and Federal Colleagues	Standing
Contact OSTP Liaison Tammy Dickinson (tdickinson@ostp.eop.gov) if it would be helpful for OSTP to issue a letter to your agency or department requesting new (or re-affirmed) designation of official representatives. Ideas for other entities that should be represented on the SDR are also welcome.	SDR Members	Standing