

# Meeting Minutes of the Subcommittee on Disaster Reduction

1 June 2017, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., White House Conference Center Lincoln Room

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

## Co-chairs

David Applegate (USGS)

Jack Meszaros (OSTP)

## Designated Representatives

**ASPR** Darrin Donato

**BLM** Georgette Fogle

**CDC** Mollie Mahany (T)

**DHS** Erin Walsh (T)

**DHS/FEMA** Roy Wright

**DHS/USCG** Jim Small

**DOD** Al Johnson

**DOE** Patricia Hoffman

**DOT** Sheila Duwadi

**EOP/OMB** Michael Clark

**EOP/OSTP** Jack Meszaros

**EPA** Greg Sayles (T)

**FERC** Marsha Palazzi

**HUD** Dana Bres

**NASA** Craig Dobson

**NGA** Kerri Dugan

**NGB** Steve Mason

**NIH** Aubrey Miller (T)

**NIST** Steve Cauffman (T)

**NOAA** Mary Erickson

**NPS** Marcy Rockman

**NSF** Greg Anderson

**State** Fernando Echavarria

**USACE** Tony Niles

Dimitra Syriopoulou

**USAID** Sezin Tokar (T)

**USCB** Laura Furgione

**USDA** TBD

**USFS** Matt Rollins

Carlos Rodriguez-Franco

**USGS** David Applegate

**USNRC** Edwin Hackett

**USPHS** Estella Jones

## Other Attendees

**DHS** Mitch Erickson (T)

**DHS/FEMA** Nick Shufro

Andy Goldblatt

Eric Soucie

**DHS/USCG** Wendy Chaves (T)

**DOI** Jason Steinmetz

**EOP/NSTC** Afua Bruce

**EPA** Brendan Doyle (T)

**HHS** Skip Payne (T)

**NASA** Gerald Bawden (T)

**NGA** Brian Cameron

Christina Roy

**NGB** Chet Guyer

Vince Johnson

**NIH** April Bennett

**NIST** Marc Levitan (T)

**NOAA** Gerry Bell (T)

Dave DeWitt

John Murphy

**NPS** Ann Hitchcock (T)

**NSF** David Mendonca (T)

**USACE** Lauren Knapp

**USCB** Rob Sienkewicz

**USDA** Glenn Bethel (T)

**USFS** Mike Cherry

Michael Mattfeldt

**USGS** Jonathan Godt (T)

Kris Ludwig (T)

Alice Pennaz

**USNRC** John Nakoski

**USPHS** Tracy MacGill (T)

**STPI** Chris Clavin

Rob Rozansky

**SDR Secretariat**

Bret Schothorst

Barbara Haines Parmele (T)

## Agenda

10:00 Welcome, Introductions, and Approval of Minutes

10:05 Co-chairs Report

10:15 Briefing: NOAA 2017 Hurricane Season Outlook

10:35 Briefing: NOAA 2017 Summer Heat Outlook

10:55 Briefing: U.S. Forest Service 2017 Wildfire Season Outlook

11:15 Roundtable Discussion: Agency Hazards-Related S&T

Budgets

11:55 Close and Next Actions

## Handouts

- June Meeting Agenda
- Draft May Meeting Minutes

## **I. Welcome and Introductions**

National Science and Technology Council (NSTC) Subcommittee on Disaster Reduction (SDR) Co-chair David Applegate (USGS) called the June meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. in the White House Conference Center Lincoln Room, and participants introduced themselves.

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

The draft of the minutes for the May monthly meeting was approved with no changes. After the meeting, Rob Sienkiewicz of the U.S. Census Bureau was added as a May meeting attendee before the minutes were finalized.

Applegate shared sad news of the passing of the distinguished SDR Co-chair emerita, Margaret Davidson, after a long battle with health issues. Margaret was an inimitable life force whose passion for disaster reduction was peerless. She never stopped looking for ways to bring agencies together with communities, states, and the private sector to make collective progress toward a better and more disaster-resilient world. In a note that was included in the meeting folders that went out to the National Ocean Service last week, where Margaret was the NOAA Senior Leader for Coastal Inundation and Resilience, Russell Callender wrote: "Margaret was the greatest visionary I ever had the pleasure to meet—and she was a visionary who took action. When she spoke of “now,” she meant two to three years down the road because she was always thinking that far ahead of the rest of us." That acknowledgment can be found here:

<http://oceanservice.noaa.gov/aa-updates/margaret-davidson-052417.html>.

SDR Co-chair Jack Meszaros (OSTP) also added the following special tribute from Benjamin Friedman, the Deputy Under Secretary for Operations at NOAA: “Under the authority outlined in the Department of Commerce *Department Administrative Order 201-6, Official Flags of the Department*, I am directing NOAA facilities and vessels to fly the NOAA Service Flag at half-mast on Thursday, June 1, to honor the life and legacy of our colleague Margaret Davidson, who passed away on May 23.” He continued in the tribute: “For more than three decades, Margaret was instrumental in advancing coastal resource management in support of American communities. She established NOAA's Coastal Services Center as a customer-focused organization to integrate science into coastal decision making at all levels of government. She played many leadership roles during her career at NOAA, establishing relationships that reached far beyond her home at the National Ocean Service.”

Margaret’s obituary that appeared in the local Charleston, South Carolina, *Post and Courier* newspaper can be read here: <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/charleston/obituary.aspx?n=margaret-adelia-davidson&pid=185638941>. Another wonderful tribute penned by former SDR Chair Bill Hooke is located at: <http://www.livingontherealworld.org/?p=1632>. And the full clip of Margaret in action that was showed at the meeting, speaking at the University of Rhode Island on coastal resilience issues in all her glorious irreverence, can be viewed here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Waota3s4hzM>. SDR members were asked to keep her family, friends, and endless network of colleagues in their thoughts as the SDR honors her memory by remembering the brilliant legacy that she leaves behind.

Sezin Tokar (USAID) and Mollie Mahany (CDC)—Co-chairs of the SDR International Disaster Risk Reduction (IDRR) Working Group—and colleagues offered a top-level report out on the 2017 UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction Meeting, which was held May 24-26 in Cancun, Mexico. The “Cancun High-Level Communique” document that came out of the meeting and a video of the official U.S. statement given at the Global Platform by Ms. Liz Warfield, USAID Mission Director to Mexico and Head of the U.S. Delegation, can be viewed here: <http://www.unisdr.org/conferences/2017/globalplatform/en/programme/statements>. Also of note and following up on the outcomes of the Global Platform, the working group is seeking to organize a meeting with UNISDR over the coming months to receive a special presentation on the details of the proposed

reporting process for the Sendai Framework indicators. More information on that meeting will be shared with SDR members as it becomes available.

Meszaros shared several updates related to new National Security Council (NSC) representation on the SDR and other NSTC groups, the upcoming U.S. Group on Earth Observations (USGEO) plenary this fall October 23-26, 2017 (<http://www.earthobservations.org/geo14.php>), and recent activities of the SDR Technology and Innovation for Disaster Preparedness (TIDP) Working Group. Please contact Meszaros ([Jacqueline\\_R\\_Meszaros@ostp.eop.gov](mailto:Jacqueline_R_Meszaros@ostp.eop.gov)) for more information on these items.

Applegate added that the SDR.gov website (<http://www.sdr.gov/>) will undergo a makeover in the coming weeks to make it more mobile-friendly as part of a U.S. Government mandate for all public-facing websites. Many thanks to NOAA for undertaking this effort, which hosts the site as part of its contribution to the Subcommittee. We encourage SDR members to offer up any ideas concerning new content or features you'd like to see added to SDR.gov to the SDR Secretariat ([bret.schothorst@mantech.com](mailto:bret.schothorst@mantech.com)).

Applegate relayed a reminder to mark calendars for the University of Colorado Boulder's Natural Hazards Center 42nd Annual Workshop, which will take place July 9-12, in Broomfield, Colorado. The SDR will host a session at the workshop, following up on previous listening sessions in recent years by the SDR-led U.S. National Platform that solicited multi-sectoral perspectives on the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) Hyogo and Sendai Frameworks. The SDR session is scheduled for Monday afternoon, July 10, in the 3:30-5:00 p.m. timeslot. Ideas for discussion items shaping the session include recent SDR activities and reports from its task forces and working groups as well as plans for implementation of the Sendai Framework and outcomes from the recent Global Platform meeting. More information on the SDR workshop session is available at: <https://hazards.colorado.edu/workshop/2017/schedule>.

Aubrey Miller (NIH) also passed along information on a session he's helping to organize at the Natural Hazards Center Annual Workshop, which will be held on Sunday, July 9, from 11:00-3:00 p.m. The goal of this meeting is to bring together the directors of hazards and disaster centers focused on the social sciences, public health, risk management, and engineering to strengthen collaboration and promote disaster science and education. Organizers are hoping to work through advancing a unified strategy for research, funding, policy, and practice. In addition to directors of centers and institutes, they have also invited program officers from the National Science Foundation, NIH, CDC, and the new Director of Disaster Science at U.S. Health and Human Services to present updates on their organizations and funding. Please email Miller ([miller.aubrey@nih.gov](mailto:miller.aubrey@nih.gov)) with any questions on the session.

### **III. Briefing: NOAA 2017 Hurricane Season Outlook**

Applegate introduced Gerry Bell, Lead Seasonal Hurricane Forecaster with NOAA's Climate Prediction Center, who briefed SDR members on the 2017 hurricane season outlook. NOAA annually issues seasonal hurricane outlooks for the Atlantic, the central North Pacific, and the eastern North Pacific Ocean basins.

According to Bell, with a 70 percent likelihood of occurrence, near- or above-normal seasons are predicted for all three regions in 2017. The Atlantic outlook predicts similar probabilities that the season will have near-normal (35 percent) to above-normal (45 percent) hurricane activity (11-17 named storms, 5-9 hurricanes, 2-4 major hurricanes), while the Central Pacific outlook anticipates equal likelihoods of near-normal (40 percent) to above-normal (40 percent) hurricane activity as well (5-8 tropical cyclones). The 2017 Eastern Pacific outlook also predicts the same probabilities of near-normal (40 percent) to above-normal (40 percent) hurricane activity (14-20 named storms, 6-11 hurricanes, 3-7 major hurricanes).

Bell noted in his briefing that the outlooks are not a seasonal hurricane landfall prediction and do not imply levels of activity for any particular location. He added that hurricanes are not just a coastal event and can impact millions in many different ways. While hurricanes are ultimately a weather phenomenon, the regional conditions that control the number, strength, and duration of hurricanes often last for months and seasons at a time and have strong climate links.

For all three hurricane basins, the 2017 outlooks reflect predictions for the following factors: 1) a weak El Niño or El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO)-neutral (no El Niño or La Niña); 2) near- or above-average ocean temperatures; and 3) average or weaker-than-average vertical wind shear. Bell also stressed that preparedness should remain consistent regardless of the season outlook, noting that it only takes one storm making landfall in the U.S. to make for a catastrophic year. SDR members were encouraged to reach out to Bell ([gerry.bell@noaa.gov](mailto:gerry.bell@noaa.gov)) for more information on his briefing.

#### **IV. Briefing: NOAA 2017 Summer Heat Outlook**

Applegate introduced Dave DeWitt, Director of NOAA’s Climate Prediction Center, who discussed the 2017 summer climate and heat outlooks.

For the upcoming months of June, July, and August, above average temperature probabilities are likely across the south (45 percent likelihood in west Texas) and up and down both coasts (45 percent in central Alaska and 55 percent in northern Maine), while the central and northern Plains see equal probabilities for near-normal temperatures (33 percent in central South Dakota). Regarding the precipitation outlook, most of the country should see equal probabilities of near-normal precipitation levels, with the exception of above average precipitation in the middle of the country from the northern Rockies extending south into the central and southern plains to Texas (40 percent likelihood above median precipitation in Montana, Wyoming, and Colorado and 35 percent in central Texas).

DeWitt noted that several factors were considered when crafting the temperature and precipitation outlooks this year: 1) ENSO-neutral conditions are present; 2) equatorial sea surface temperatures (SSTs) are near-to-above average across most of the Pacific Ocean; and 3) ENSO-neutral and El Niño are nearly equally favored during the Northern Hemisphere summer and fall 2017. For more information on the summer climate outlook, please see the ENSO blog: <https://www.climate.gov/news-features/department/enso-blog>.

#### **V. Briefing: U.S. Forest Service 2017 Wildfire Season Outlook**

Applegate introduced Mike Cherry, Emergency Management Specialist from the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), who briefed SDR members on the 2017 wildland fire season outlook.

Currently, the U.S. is seeing more fire activity in the southwest in Arizona and New Mexico and in the southeast in Florida and Georgia, but as Cherry underscored, wildfires occur all over the nation throughout all times of the year – often times driven by local conditions. At the boundary of the Florida and Georgia line, a usually large wildfire is currently burning over 152,000 acres that has been active for several weeks, and the USFS expects to have personnel on that fire all the way into November. Cherry noted that when talking about a summer wildfire “season”, most people think of the western U.S. states, which is where the main impacts to acreage and populations from wildfires are typically seen.

Moving through the 2017 summer months, above normal wildfire activity is expected in parts of Florida, Georgia, southern Arizona, and central and northern California and Nevada. Below normal activity is anticipated in parts of the northern Rockies in Idaho and Colorado as well as the south central and southeastern U.S. states such as Missouri, Arkansas, Kentucky, and Tennessee. Individual products assessed by the Predictive Services Program of the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) to compile

the wildfire season outlook include the U.S. Drought Monitor and Seasonal Drought Outlook from USDA and the NOAA 90-Day Outlooks of temperature and precipitation. As Cherry noted, “Predictive Services was developed to provide decision support information needed to be more proactive in anticipating significant fire activity and determining resource allocation needs” (<https://www.predictiveservices.nifc.gov/outlooks/outlooks.htm>).

The issue of predictive analytics for disaster preparedness seemed to strike a chord with several agency members at the meeting, and OSTP offered to bring a small group together to explore setting up a potential SDR ad hoc working group on the topic of how we can better leverage data, tools, and products across the Federal interagency to anticipate the human impacts of disasters. Please email Cherry ([mcherry@fs.fed.us](mailto:mcherry@fs.fed.us)) with any questions on his briefing.

#### **VI. Roundtable Discussion: Agency Hazards-Related S&T Budgets**

Several SDR agencies participated in the discussion to provide OSTP and their fellow agencies with a quick overview of major changes in hazards-related S&T spending, both concerning programs within their agency and interagency work as outlined in the recently enacted fiscal year (FY) 2017 omnibus appropriations bill and in the President’s just-released FY 2018 request.

Agencies that volunteered to contribute included: DHS S&T, EPA, USGS, NOAA, FEMA, NIH, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Bureau of Land Management. If agencies are comfortable doing so, Applegate asked that SDR members provide a short summary (either in a Word document or PowerPoint slide) highlighting overall agency spending amounts and any significant variations of note for OSTP reference to the SDR Secretariat ([bret.schothorst@mantech.com](mailto:bret.schothorst@mantech.com)) at their soonest convenience.

#### **VII. Adjournment**

Applegate adjourned the SDR June meeting at 12:05 p.m. and noted that the Subcommittee’s next meeting will be held on Thursday, July 13, 2017, in the White House Conference Center Lincoln Room. He added that SDR leadership is moving the July meeting to the second Thursday of the month to avoid proximity to the Independence Day holiday.

#### **VIII. SDR 2017 Meeting Calendar**

SDR meetings in 2017 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:

##### **2017**

- ✓ Thursday, January 5
- ✓ Thursday, February 2
- ✓ Thursday, March 2
- ✓ Thursday, April 6
- ✓ Thursday, May 4
- ✓ Thursday, June 1
- ✓ Thursday, July 13\*
- ✓ Thursday, August 3\*\*
- ✓ Thursday, September 7
- ✓ Thursday, October 5
- ✓ Thursday, November 2
- ✓ Thursday, December 7

\* July meeting shifted to the second Thursday of the month to avoid proximity to the Independence Day Federal holiday.

\*\* August meeting subject to cancellation.

**IX. 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@mantech.com](mailto:bret.schothorst@mantech.com)).

**X. Contact Information**

**SDR Leadership**

David Applegate	Co-chair	703-648-6600	applegate@usgs.gov
Jack Meszaros	Co-chair	202-456-6020	Jacqueline_R_Mezzaros@ostp.eop.gov

**Executive Secretariat**

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

**XI. Summary of June Actions**

Action	Lead	By When
The next SDR meeting will be held on Thursday, July 13 in the White House Conference Center Lincoln Room. The July meeting has been moved to the second Thursday of the month to avoid proximity to the Independence Day holiday.	SDR Members	For Information
Contact Jack Meszaros ( <a href="mailto:Jacqueline_R_Mezzaros@ostp.eop.gov">Jacqueline_R_Mezzaros@ostp.eop.gov</a> ) for more information on items included in the OSTP Co-chair update.	SDR Members and Federal Colleagues	Standing
Send suggestions of new content or features for SDR.gov to the SDR Secretariat ( <a href="mailto:bret.schothorst@mantech.com">bret.schothorst@mantech.com</a> ).	SDR Members	Standing
Mark calendars for an SDR-themed session at the Natural Hazards Center 42nd Annual Workshop on Monday, July 10, in Broomfield, Colorado: <a href="https://hazards.colorado.edu/workshop/2017/schedule">https://hazards.colorado.edu/workshop/2017/schedule</a> .	SDR Members and Federal Colleagues	ASAP
Email Aubrey Miller ( <a href="mailto:miller.aubrey@nih.gov">miller.aubrey@nih.gov</a> ) with any questions on the session at the Natural Hazards Center Annual Workshop that will bring together the directors of hazards and disaster centers.	SDR Members and Federal Colleagues	ASAP
Reach out to Gerry Bell ( <a href="mailto:gerry.bell@noaa.gov">gerry.bell@noaa.gov</a> ) for more information on his 2017 hurricane season outlook briefing.	SDR Members and Federal Colleagues	Standing
An ENSO blog highlighting more information on the summer climate and heat outlooks can be found at: <a href="https://www.climate.gov/news-features/department/enso-blog">https://www.climate.gov/news-features/department/enso-blog</a> .	SDR Members and Federal Colleagues	Standing
Contact Mike Cherry ( <a href="mailto:mcherry@fs.fed.us">mcherry@fs.fed.us</a> ) with any questions on his 2017 wildfire season outlook briefing.	SDR Members and Federal Colleagues	Standing
Provide a short summary of any major changes in agency hazards-related S&T spending as outlined in the recently enacted fiscal year (FY) 2017 omnibus appropriations bill and in the President’s just-released FY 2018 request to the SDR Secretariat ( <a href="mailto:bret.schothorst@mantech.com">bret.schothorst@mantech.com</a> ).	SDR Members	Standing

Send additional disaster-related priorities from your agency for consideration in the new Administration to the SDR Secretariat (Bret.Schothorst@ManTech.com) on a rolling basis.	SDR Members	Standing
Send Dave Applegate an email (applegate@usgs.gov) if you are interested in contributing to the work of the SDR and would like additional documentation or an agency-specific letter.	SDR Members	Standing
Email the SDR Secretariat (bret.schothorst@mantech.com) to suggest external DRR stakeholder groups to invite to present at quarterly SDR meetings on behalf of the U.S. National Platform for UNISDR.	SDR Members	Standing