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In Memory of Danny Gomez

~ Randall Baker, Fuels Forester, Northern Pueblos Agency



Danny Gomez

Danny Gomez came to work at the Northern Pueblos Agency (NPA) in March of 2003. He had previously worked for the US Forest Service for approximately 15 years at various locations throughout the Western U.S. Previous jobs had included Timber Sale Administrator and Acting District Ranger.

Danny was initially hired at NPA to fill the Agency's Supervisory Forester position. This position provides administrative forestry support to the eight northern pueblos of New Mexico

which includes Nambe, Picuris, Ohkay Owingeh, Pojoaque, Santa Clara, San Ildefonso, Taos and Tesuque. Total land mass is approximately 260,000 acres. Of those acres, approximately 107,190 acres are woodland forests and 87,000 acres comprise timber lands.

The Agency's Supervisory Forester position had been vacated almost three years prior to Danny's arrival. A backlog of work had accumulated, and organizational momentum had been lost for the forestry program. Upon his arrival, the staff consisted of

one Timber Sale Forester, two Forestry Technicians, an office clerk/budget technician, a “detailed” Fire Management Officer, an assistant FMO, four Fire Techs, a twenty-person Hot Shot fire crew, and an AD firefighter program consisting of approximately 100 militia members. Danny jumped into the work with both feet. He had to overcome a steep-learning curve. He started immediately to revitalize the Forest Development, Woodlands, and Forest Health programs. This involved picking up the reforestation program in the aftermath of the Cerro Grande fire. He administered a contract that coordinated the planting of approximately 700 acres of commercial forest lands on the Santa Clara pueblo.

Concurrently with the FMO, Danny was directly involved in maintaining the Hot Shot crew. He provided over site and guidance to get the crew certified within the last year of its trial tenure. He was successful and met the deadline even though he received this task at the tail end of the certification deadline. He was also tasked with getting 5 Forest Management Plans updated and 8 Alternative Fire Management Plans approved. As a team player, Danny also participated in direct fire suppression efforts when called upon. He was a member of the fire suppression’s program fondly known as the “B team,” meaning that he was not always the first to be called but he was always willing and able to “backfill” the fire fighter’s roster when needed. Danny found his true calling in the world of firefighting by getting qualified as an Inter-Agency Resource Representative. This job assignment successfully married Danny’s administrative talents with his strong desire to help the front-line fire fighters.

During the summer of 2003, just 90 days after having arrived on scene as the Supervisory Forester, the forestry

staff, office staff, and fire staff were beginning to gel. What had been a fragmented and disconnected program for the previous three years now had renewed purpose and momentum. What a difference the forestry program staff witnessed under the steady guidance of the new leader.

During the summer of 2003, the Agency experienced a dual impact from wildland fires when the Ensenbado fire scorched Taos Pueblo and the Molina fire encroached upon the Nambe Pueblo. In addition to his normal duties, Danny assumed the Awarding Official’s Technical Representative (AOTR) responsibilities for the Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) project at Molina. He was able to get Nambe Pueblo’s irrigation ditches and their reservoir cleaned out and the denuded hillsides stabilized by coordinating project work with multiple federal, state, and private entities.

This experience served Danny well as seven years later, 2011, brought another dual impact from wildland fires. The Las Conches fire greatly impacted the Santa Clara reservation causing detrimental downstream effects. Three additional Pueblos were impacted by the subsequent flash flooding. In addition, the second fire to strike in 2011 was the Pacheco fire, which negatively impacted the watershed above the Nambe Pueblo. Additional responsibilities were assigned to Danny as he was tasked as the AOTR to oversee the BAER program for three Pueblos and one Burned Area Rehabilitation (BAR) program. He provided Subordinate Awarding Official’s Technical Representative (SAOTR) duties for the BAER program for a fourth Pueblo also. In addition to receiving additional BAER duties, he became the lead, Timber Sale Officer/ administrator for a salvage sale on approximately 350 acres as a result of the Las Conches

fire. His favorite task however was not the administration of the timber sale contract but simply to paint the trees to be cut for salvaging. He proudly (and gladly) wore the “black and blue” colors of a timber-sale- tree- marker who worked in a burned-over forest.

Danny also provided support during the beginning stages of the Agency’s Hazardous Fuels Reduction Program. This program steadily grew under his tutelage and became the largest funding vehicle at NPA among all the Forestry/fire programs combined. On average, approximately \$1 million flowed to the eight Pueblos for fuels reduction on an annual basis. Danny would assist with the administrative documents to ensure the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) was current and all projects had a Categorical Exclusion (CATX). On occasion, He would also pick up a drip-torch and assist on prescribed (Rx) burns as needed.

During Danny’s 10-year stint as Supervisory Forester, the BIA experienced dwindling budgets to his Tribal Priority Allocation (TPA) account and fire program. However, the workload seemed to continue to increase in spite of these budget cuts. He would convene monthly forestry/fire/fuels staff meetings to seek creative ways to get the field work done in a more efficient and economic manner. Cooperation among the staff was always engendered by Danny as he had a way of leading by example, being the first to offer his help where needed.

Northern Pueblos Agency (NPA) Management recognized Danny’s ability to get things done and enrolled him in the Leadership Training program in 2010. During his participation, he volunteered to update and prepare a Regional BIA *New Employee Handbook*. This handbook was endorsed by the Southwest Regional Director and copies were

printed for all employees in the Region. During routine discussions about BIA policy Danny was able to reference many answers by looking into the new handbook. As a joke, we called Danny on his day off to ask a “planted” question, knowing that the answer was in the handbook. His response, “I think page number such and such of the handbook addresses that question.” He was correct. Not only was Danny a good administrator and field forester, he had an ability to arrange the office décor and furniture in a very efficient and “Feng Shui” way. He initiated and set-up a little “history” cabinet. This was a glass cabinet which was destined to be a collection of “things of interest” found while out in the field. The Forestry employees would bring in old bottles, a unique rock or an old forestry tool and Danny would place it into the Forestry section of the “History Cabinet.”

Upon moving into our new building, Danny was instrumental in having a small, unused room reserved for a fitness training center. He wanted our employees to have a safe place to conduct physical training. He volunteered to get the center furnished and acquired training equipment to from various outside sources. Many of these items were at no cost to the BIA. In addition, He initiated a process to get a Wellness Program started at NPA. Every year, Danny volunteered to participate in a 5k run in Albuquerque. This was a fund-raising event for treating cancer. He would invite us all to participate.

The Smoke Signals staff would like to extend their deepest sympathy to the family, friends and coworkers of Danny Gomez. He was an extraordinary man.



Rowdy Muir, Fire and Aviation Safety Team during the Beaver Creek fire near Sun Valley, Idaho, 2013.

What We Already Know

~ Rowdy Muir, Agency Administrator Representative, National Interagency Hotshot Committee

Editor's note: This article was written several months before the investigation report was completed and released.

On the evening of June 30, 2013, the news confirming that nineteen hotshots had died on the Yarnell Hill fire shocked not only the fire community but the whole nation. I know there were others like myself who were wondering how something so tragic could happen to nineteen hotshots.

In 1994, after the South Canyon fire fatalities, people were asking the same question. Many were convinced that the investigation report would tell a

story of some unrealistic, freakish event that claimed the lives of fourteen wildland firefighters. Yet nothing came out in the report that was unusual, phenomenal or bizarre. It wasn't an act of God. Instead, the reality is that as a culture we read about things we were familiar with—things we should have already known.

I anticipate the same realization when we find out what happened to the Granite Mountain 19 on the Yarnell Hill Fire once the investigative report is published. My bet is the report won't tell us anything new has happened. We will once again find out something we already know.

Make no mistake, the investigation report is valid and essential to a learning culture—perhaps even more so if it is predictable. The content will likely focus on LCES, human factors, situational awareness, values, crew cohesion, bowls, chutes, chimneys, down drafts, column collapse, point protection, tactics, strategies, independent action, WUI, structure protection and downhill egress. All topics we've heard before and have had many discussions about. Yet for a small amount of time, topics that were not remembered.

Gordon Graham says this *“there are no new ways to get into trouble.”* This rings true for the wildland fire culture. I don't think there will be anything that will happen which is so new or different from what has happened in the past. Somewhere down the line, we'll see that we've made the same mistakes as before.

I appreciate the honest openness of Darrell Willis (Cofounder Granite Mountain Hotshots) in his interview with the news media found at <http://www.investigativemedia.com/granite-mountain-hotshot-crew-founder-darrell-willis-describes-last-moments-of-crew-at-deployment-site/>. What he shares gives me a lot of personal mental anguish. No one has all the answers to all the questions. But the following are some things we already know:

LCES

In the news conference with crew co-founder Darrell Willis he mentions that *“one of the most emphasized things we do is to establish LCES.”* Yet, in the same sentence he mentions that *“there are points during the day that we didn't have [LCES] in place.”*

How many times have we heard that said? If we don't have LCES in place then there is something wrong. Even if it's only for a moment—one might bring to the attention of others the need to establish LCES. LCES

needs to be continually monitored throughout the shift. If they are not in place, then we don't engage until they are in place.

Tactics and Strategy

In the same interview with Darrell he talks about the crew abandoning a tactic of anchor and flank to address some independent action (to do point protection on the structures). Most agree that independent action is critical to the success of catching many wildfires. What we need to learn from this is that when we change tactics and strategies that are working, we need to evaluate the risk vs. gain. We need to think things out before we engage in another tactic. Someone might ask, *“Why are we leaving something that's working to take the risk of something that may not work?”*

Downhill through Bowls, Chutes, and Chimneys

Eric Hipke, the only survivor from the uphill run that proved fatal for others at South Canyon, may tell you that the there is only a 1 in 14 chance of outrunning a fire burning up hill. Anytime we commit to any type of downhill egress, the option of successfully going back up the hill in an emergency is *“slim to none.”*

This is partly because it is so difficult to measure how long it takes to get back up, and then over or through these geographical barriers. We should reevaluate any type of downhill operation, knowing that the only way to safety is back up the hill.

The Value of Situational Awareness

In an interview with Juliann Ashcraft <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v2OQk2Jc7T4>, she mentions the text she received from Andrew about how *“things are getting wild,”* and how *“Yarnell was looking to burn.”* She acknowledges that those words weren't *common language* for Andrew. It was a *different scenario*

which she hadn't heard from him before. Her situational awareness told her that something was different.

Why is it that Andrew didn't recognize the same awareness? Many of us recognize changes in our surroundings, and have *“situational awareness.”* However, even though we are aware of our surroundings, we sometimes fail to take intelligent action based on what we observe. We get caught up in the moment and sometimes our field of focus narrows, and we don't rely on someone else to help us with our blind spots.

We need to recognize that when the slightest thing changes we need to adjust. When I first learned to ride bulls, I was taught that when a bull makes a move you need to make a counter move equal to the bull's move. If you made a move that was too extreme or not equal to the bull's move, it was much harder to react to the next move the bull made. In most cases, if you can't make counter moves equal to the bull, the consequences are you got thrown off. It takes many years of practice to be able to compensate for either over-aggression or the lack of equal aggression.

I find this to be true with situational awareness. We need to be able to recognize the change and make decisions to equalize the change. Sometimes we either overreact to the change or ignore it; the consequences are the same. We become out of balance.

Weather and the Collapse of Columns

In discussions with personnel who were on the Dude Fire, I found out that no one really recognized the collapsing column that brought about what they thought was a weather event with rain, hail and strong down drafts.

I am currently the District Ranger on a district that had 3 fatalities related

to a similar weather event. I was on an incident in Utah a few years ago in which a homeowner had me come look at his residence which had burned down. He wanted to know why.

He couldn't understand why the front of the yard where he had parked a truck and tractor was still green and the vehicles untouched. The front of the residence would have been the head of the fire being pushed down valley from down drafts. One would have thought all his property would have been lost. In reality the weather event caused spotting way ahead and down valley of the main fire and when finished, the fire consumed the residence from the back side because the fire took a normal route of burning uphill.

The Yarnell Hill fire had experienced some of the same types of weather events throughout the day. Those events were broadcast by radio to those on the fire line.

Whether what happened was caused by a column collapsing, a frontal passage, or the buildup of clouds which resulted in down drafts, fires that experience these types of weather occurrences should make us mindful that there is really no main or head of the fire. An established fire can, and will come from all directions once down drafts occur.

WUI and the Values at Risk

The days of “anchor, flank and pinch” were the days of firefighters being out in the woods chasing fire that didn't have much in the way of “values at risk.” The only “values” we were asked to watch out for were ourselves. It's rare anymore to have a fire that doesn't include many different “values at risk” that need protecting. The perception of these “values” takes away from the real mission, and that is again, to protect ourselves as we are the real and primary “value at risk.”

Our training curriculum is fairly narrow and focuses on the mission of wildland fire. Keep this in mind: you are truly the only “value at risk.” We are truly the only value that needs to be protected. And yes, I would say the protection of others falls into the category of “we.”

No one would ever downplay the value of other lives at risk. Somewhere in our culture, our perception changed and we took upon ourselves the responsibility of structure protection. This has never been our mission or our responsibility.

I believe when we get into a WUI situation we really need to evaluate our thought process. This situation gets our adrenaline pumping, and blurs our ability to make sound and rational decisions. Especially if we are familiar with the community or know who lives in the houses. It's much harder for us to disengage when we have an emotional attachment to the structures in addition to the people who inhabit them.

I know all too well the emotional aspect. When I was in Florida in 1998, working in around various communities, I grew to know and like the people in those communities. As time moved on the aspiration of trying to save every home in every community became a personal challenge and obligation. On one occasion, we were being run over by fire and doing the best we could to save structures. During the heat of the battle I recognized my shortcoming and pulled everyone out of the situation. The need to reassess the situation is obvious now—yet for that small moment I was caught up in an unrealistic task. Pulling back was the best move I ever made. The perception is real. Don't think for a moment you can't get caught up in it.

Values and Crew Cohesion

All decisions are based on values. I believe we should share our personal

values with our co-workers and team members. The more we share our values, the more cohesive we become. If we know and understand the values of our team members, we can appreciate and accept their decisions more easily. I find this to be critical in our quest to become better team players.

Teams, as a group, also have shared values. We make decisions based on what our team's values are. If we accept the team values, then the team reaps the rewards or pays the consequences as a team. If we only navigate by our own values, then the rewards or consequences are only ours.

There are a lot of rewards in being on a team that succeeds or excels. We see this in the film story of the 1980 US Olympic Hockey team winning gold or Shackleton's crew navigating their way home through the Antarctic. We see it in our modules, crews, sections, and staffs.

Each individual had to give up some personal values for the team to be successful; some personal and team values don't mix. The reality is when decisions are made as a team, when there is a consensus that “this is what we are going to do, or not do”—a team owns the decision and the team may lose. Our value system can compromise our situational awareness.

There are no new ways to get into trouble.

Our culture has been here before and I'm quite certain we will be here again—an acknowledgment that may or may not help us heal depending on how we choose to process the information—the “what we know.”

If we take what we already know and put it to good use, it will help us come to the full understanding of the real, tangible, human values at risk.



Standing Rock Agency Sends Crews and Overhead to Western Wildfires

~ Steven Ipswitch, Fire Management Officer, Standing Rock Agency



Standing Rock firefighters

On June 20th, Standing Rock Agency sent a Type 2 Initial Attack (IA) crew to the West Fork fire in Colorado, and another Type 2 IA crew to Craig, Colorado on June 23. The crews returned on July 4th and 5th respectively. The Agency also sent an Operations Section Chief trainee to the Royal Gorge fire in Colorado on June 12. From July 7 through 20, a Helicopter crew member was assigned to Ute Mountain Helitack in Colorado.

On July 30th, the Agency sent a Type 2 IA crew to the Butte Cabin fire on the Missoula Ranger District of the Lolo National Forest in Montana. This was a Type 3 incident, and the crew spiked out for most of the assignment. “Spiking out” means that the crew stays in a “spike camp,” closer to the fire, rather than in the main camp near the incident command post. Spike camps keep travel time to a minimum, helping crews be more effective and reducing the chance for travel-related accidents. The crew returned on August 7.

On August 9, a Type 2 IA crew was mobilized to the Pony Complex in Idaho, where they were assigned to structure protection. On August 11, a Helicopter crew member was mobilized to a second helitack

assignment at Warm Springs Agency, Oregon.

Standing Rock Agency is a unit in the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and provides wildland fire protection for tribal trust land throughout the Standing Rock Reservation in Sioux County, North Dakota and Corson County, South Dakota. Standing Rock Agency is a new member of the South Dakota Firefighter’s Association, and also an Associate Member (the membership status offered to Federal agencies) of the North Dakota Firefighter’s Association.

The Agency provides hand crews, engines, and overhead to support wildland fires and other incidents throughout the United States on an annual basis.

Pueblo de Cochiti Burned Area Emergency Response

~ Ryan Weiss, Water Resources Consultant for Cochiti Pueblo
~ Phoebe Suina, Project Management Consultant for Cochiti Pueblo

The Pueblo de Cochiti sits at the mouth of Peralta Canyon, one of the watersheds that burned during the Las Conchas fire of 2011; which, at the time, was New Mexico’s largest wildfire, burning over 156,000 acres. Post-fire conditions in Peralta Canyon included hydrophobic (water repellent) soils, and intensified surface water and storm water runoff, resulting in debris flows, flash floods, erosion, and sedimentation. This ash- and debris-laden runoff affects water

quality as it drains into the Rio Grande.

Since the Las Conchas fire, the lives and homes of community members downstream from the burn area at Cochiti have been at risk from post-fire flood hazard. To address this hazard and subsequent risk to the community, Tribal Administration, with support of Tribal Council, sought assistance at the local, state, regional and federal level. They worked in collaboration with many agencies

to repair damages from post-fire floods during 2011 and subsequent monsoon seasons, and to mitigate ongoing risk to lives, property, infrastructure and the unique cultural and natural resources at the Pueblo de Cochiti.

Among the many collaborators with the Pueblo was the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Staff from the National Interagency Fire Center, Southwest Regional Office and Southern Pueblos Agency worked with the



2012, Peralta Canyon flood near Kasha Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument.

~ Photo by Weiss

Pueblo’s Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Tribal Administration, Tribal Council and technical consulting staff to coordinate a Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER). The goals of the BAER were to identify

and characterize the post fire impacts, and mitigate the threats to health, safety, life and property. The BAER process was vital to the Pueblo in identifying areas of traditional cultural significance that were adversely impacted by

the Las Conchas fire, determining the need for resource protection, and monitoring for treatment effectiveness.

Additional treatment specifications that were integral to the BAER



Cochiti Hwy-Bland Canyon road crossing on September 13, 2013.

~ Photo by Weiss



Cochiti Hwy-Bland Canyon road crossing - downstream of culvert crossing.

~ Photo by Weiss

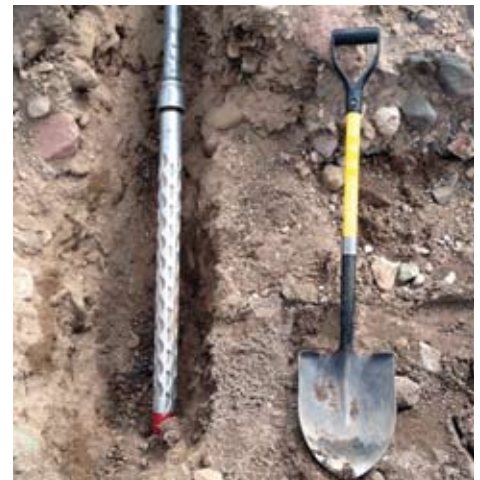


Henat Kotyiti after Las Conchas fire.

~ Photo by Preucel

success at the Pueblo included structure protection and channel cleaning, storm patrol, implementation leader and early warning system. Structure

protection was implemented through sand bag and K-rail installation to divert flood flows and debris flows away from critical property and infrastructure.



Peralta Windmill pressure transducer/early warning system flood state gage installation.
~ Photo by Weiss, 2013

Channel cleaning ensured that debris deposited from the flood was cleared from ephemeral channels and flood-protection structures, in order to maintain conveyance and integrity of structure protection after storm events. These treatments minimized damages to infrastructure at the Pueblo de Cochiti housing area, Cochiti Golf



Peralta Canyon low-water crossing.

~ Photo by Weiss, 2012



Peralta Ridge early warning system precipitation gage - completed installation ~ Photo by Weiss, 2013



Peralta Ridge early warning system precipitation gage - tipping bucket. ~ Photo by Weiss, 2013

Course, Kasha Katuwe-Tent Rocks National Monument and key flood prevention structures throughout the area.

The Pueblo responded to numerous flash floods that required flood deposited debris, rock and sediment to be removed in order to maintain channel conveyance, culvert conveyance



Peralta Windmill early warning system flood stage gage enclosure. ~ Photo by Weiss, 2013

at road crossings, and proper function of flood prevention structures. Several rain events caused substantial and occasionally permanent damage to roads, requiring the Storm Patrol to oversee the emergency evacuation of the Cochiti Golf Course and the Kasha Katuwe -Tent Rocks National Monument. They coordinated events with the Pueblo de Cochiti Administration, and the staff of the golf course and the National Monument staff.



Peralta Canyon ash layer in floodplain ~ Photo by Weiss, 2013



SP-90/Cochiti Hwy-Bland Canyon road crossing - downstream of culvert crossing. ~ Photo by Weiss, 2013



SP-90/Cochiti Hwy-Bland Canyon road crossing - upstream of culvert crossing. ~ Photo by Weiss, 2013

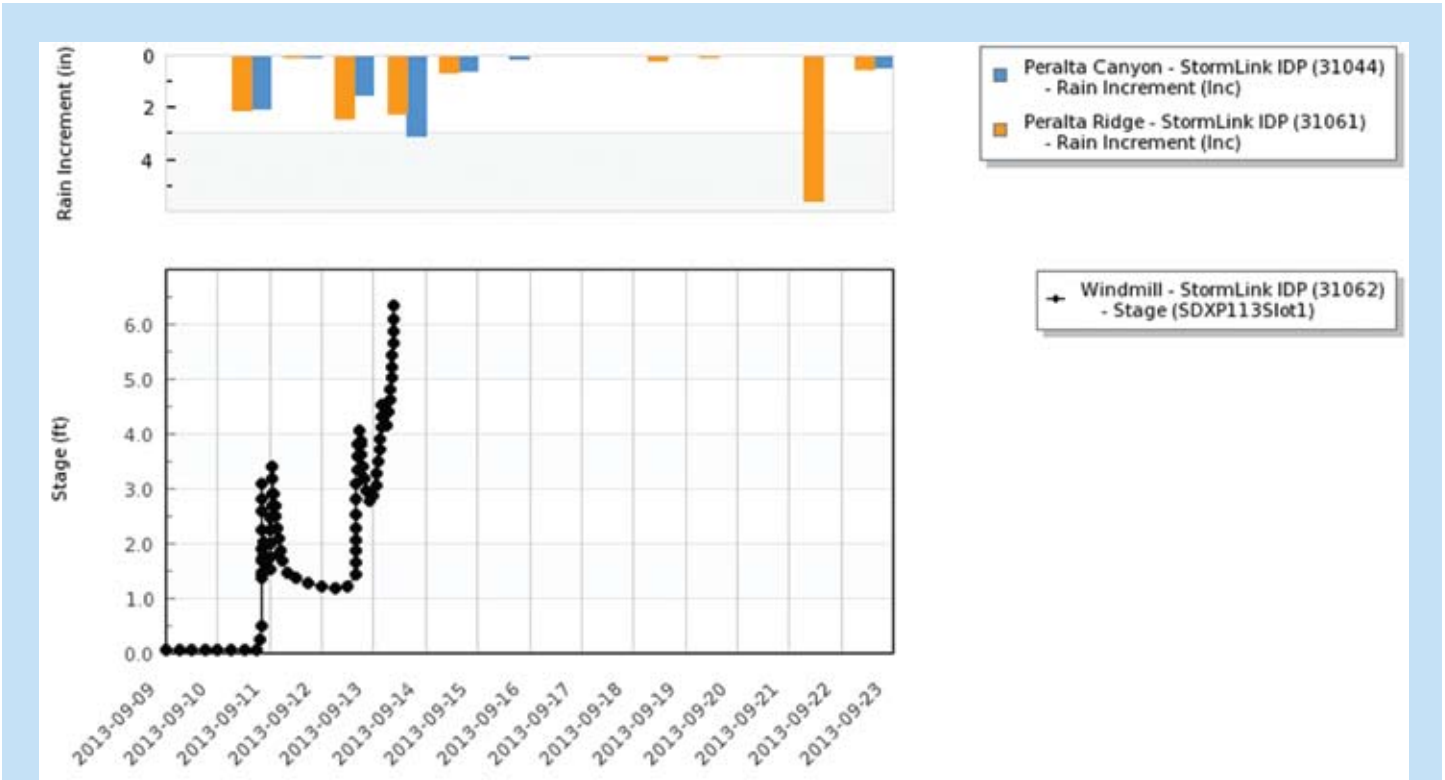
Because of limited resources at the pueblo, the request to fund an implementation leader to coordinate and oversee the implementation of BAER was crucial to ensure successful

coordination and oversight of the BAER project. Integral planning, coordination and oversight on a watershed-scale throughout the burn areas impacting the Pueblo de Cochiti was implemented to ensure

that work across jurisdictional boundaries was completed in a timely manner. Coordination occurred with the Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Bureau

of Reclamation (BoR), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Forest Service (USFS), National Park Service (NPS), NM Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (NMDHSEM), NM State Land

Office (NMSLO), and Sandoval County. The multi-stakeholder efforts truly maximized the use of resources and ensured that the pueblo could actively participate in post-fire recovery and rehabilitation. Implementation



Peralta Watershed Hydrograph and Hyetograph

~ Photo by Weiss, 2013



Cochiti Canyon after September 2013 floods

~ Photo by Weiss, 2013



Peralta Canyon flood near Kasha Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument road

~ Photo by Weiss, 2013



Peralta Canyon flood near Kasha Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument road.

~ Photo by Suina, 2013

team leaders interfaced with agency technical staff and Pueblo leadership to ensure that treatment specifications could be implemented and that long-term recovery was also considered for the time period after the BAER funds were expended.

Another BAER treatment specification that helped to ensure the safety of the Pueblo was the early warning system. This treatment consisted of a series of two satellite-telemetered gages to notify emergency staff at Pueblo of rain events on the upstream burn scar and consequent storm water runoff that would result in downstream floods. In collaboration with the US Forest Service, a rain gage was installed on the northern perimeter of the watershed where the most severe burn occurred,

thereby having the highest risk of generating fast response times for flash floods. This gage, in combination with a downstream stage-height gage, which monitored how high (stage height) above the Peralta Creek channel the storm waters were, alerted the Pueblo and their collaborators at the Kasha Katuwe – Tent Rocks National Monument of impending flood hazard. This system allowed sufficient time for Storm Patrol to coordinate emergency evacuations of community members and the hundreds of visitors to the Pueblo that hike at the BLM-Pueblo de Cochiti co-managed Kasha Katuwe – Tent Rocks National Monument each day.

The Pueblo de Cochiti enthusiastically engaged with multiple agencies in order to successfully implement a plan

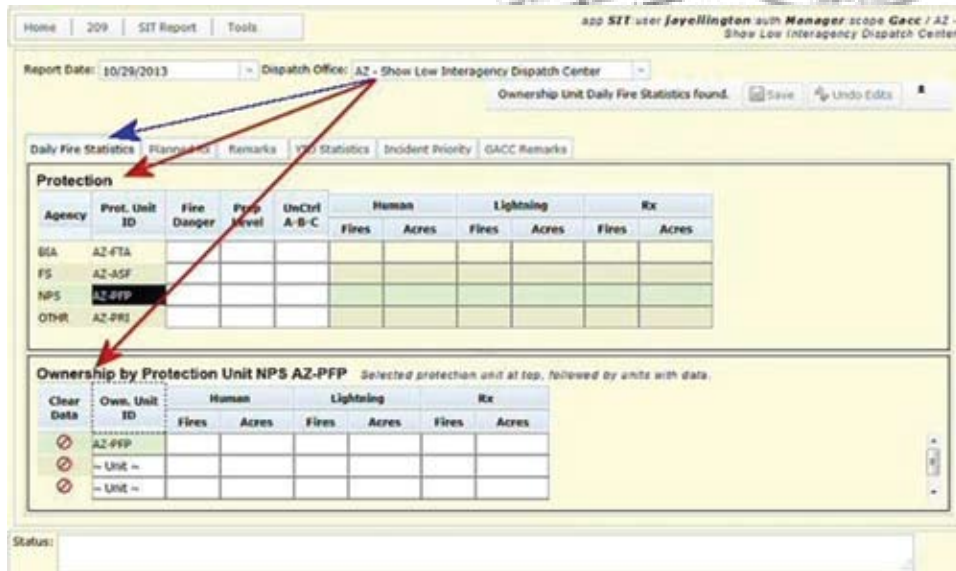
that minimized damage and other problems associated with post-fire emergencies immediately after the Las Conchas fire. The BAER plan and process enabled multi-stakeholder coordination and long-term rehabilitation planning for the many jurisdictions over the burned watersheds that drain to the Pueblo. Without the BAER, and the initial response of the National Interagency Fire Center, Southwest Regional Bureau of Indian Affairs Office and Southern Pueblos Agency, the Pueblo would not have fared the post-fire storms as well as they did. Furthermore, the Pueblo would not have had the resources to ensure the protection of cultural and natural resources for the most critical time period after the Las Conchas wildfire, and the ability to plan into the future for emergency response.



Wildland Fire's Situation and ICS-209 Program gets a Face Lift for the 2014 season!

~ James Silverstone, Intelligence Coordinator Eastern Area Coordination Center, Milwaukee Wisconsin

With much of the country carpeted in snow, you are probably not thinking about the 2014 wildland fire season. This period of low activity is the perfect time to roll out a new computer program. Those not familiar with the Situation/ICS-209 reporting system have probably read the Incident Management Situation Report (IMSR). Most of the information contained in the IMSR derives from the Sit/209 program. The program provides valuable information to fire managers, dispatchers and Coordinating Groups. The information aids managers in decision making, prioritizing incidents and the allocation of fire resources (crews, aircraft, equipment). This is



Screen shot from new Situation Report User Guide.

especially important during the higher Geographic Area and National Preparedness Levels and when competition for resources exists. There are two parts to the program. The daily Situation Reporting System is utilized by wildland fire

dispatch centers around the country to enter their daily fire and acre information. The Incident Status Summary commonly known as the 209 Reporting System is for reporting large fires (300+ acres – timber, 100+ acres – brush, grass).

The 209 reports can be entered by dispatchers or Incident Management Team Situation Unit Leaders (SITL).

The current legacy program was first rolled out in 1997. The average life for a computer program is five years, so the program has been very cost effective. The upgraded program meets new agency information technology and security requirements. The new Situation Reporting program is very similar to the old program but the new 209 program has several changes. The

Screen shot from new ICS-209 User Guide.

wildland fire community has been getting more involved with “all hazard” incidents such as hurricanes. One of the requirements for the new 209 program was that it be NIMS/FEMA compliant. FEMA provided some of the funding for the project.

Charlie Leonard, the Intelligence Coordinator at the National

Interagency Coordination Center has taken the lead in the upgrade project and is the main contact with the contract programmers. The Intelligence Coordinators at each of the eleven Geographic Area Coordination Centers have conducted beta testing of the program. A test version of the

new “Sit/209” program has been available for dispatchers and Situation Unit Leaders (SITL) to practice on for several months. Intelligence Coordinators have also been conducting live presentations and webinars. I recently put on a live training session at the Joint Dispatch Workshop between the Southern Area and Eastern Area in Louisville Kentucky in addition to my webinars. We have been getting a lot of feedback and users are excited about the new program. The new Sit/209 program will go live early in January, 2014. In addition an on line user guide will be available. Any questions on the new program should be directed to your Geographic Area Intelligence Coordinator. The program will be rolled out mid-January. As with any new major software development, there will inevitably be bugs and issues that will arise. All efforts are being made to minimize these prior to deployment. Coming soon to a computer near you!

Wallow Fire Restoration Project

~ Forest Resources Program. San Carlos Apache Tribe

As of June 10, 2013, the Forest Resource Program has hired 26 tribal members to replant the burned area of the Wallow Fire’s devastating imprint. Just like other communities, the San Carlos Apache Tribe has not recovered from the fierce 2011 Wallow Fire’s impact. The Wallow Fire is Arizona’s Largest Fire burning approximately 538,049 acres replacing the Rodeo Chediski’s 468,638 acres. The Wallow Fire burned approximately 9,200

acres on the San Carlos Apache reservation. Revenue generating activities such as fishing, hunting and camping have been negatively impacted since the Wallow Fire destroyed the north east tip of the reservation. Ashes from the fire were carried down by the rain to the Black River causing mortality to the fishes and other aquatic life. As slow ecological recovery progresses for Malay Gap, the Forest Resources Program made

plans to replant the Wallow Fire’s most destructive areas.

The restoration crew is staging in Malay Gap of the Forest Management Unit. Under rustic conditions of no electricity, water or plumbing, the crew is utilizing porta johns, tents and enclosed wooden structures for showers. The cooks: Beverly Phillips, Tasheena Duncan, Teresa Victor and Delphine Concha can cook gourmet meals over a camp fire for the crew of 38 people. Cooking great meals fills the hard working crew with happiness after a long day of arduous work. The crew



Left to right standing: Davidson King Jr., Corrina Long, Jade Miller, Jenifer Noline, Emma Brown, Lewis Miller, Jon Johnson, Paul Casoose, Zachery Taylor, Jonathan Rambler, Reynolds Belnap, Andrew Gambler, Derrick Kitcheyan, Norman Naltazan, and Loren Grant. Kneeling in the Front L to R : Duane Goode, Angel Kenton, Brianna Goode, Celeste Stevens, Kasheena Harris, Terry Brooks, and Daryl King.

is very thankful to the cooks for making their job more enjoyable.

The seedlings came from seeds that were picked from 1970's cone collection by San Carlos 10. The San Carlos 10 consisted of Keno Goode, Curley Bush Jr., Dale Hinton, Mitchell Antonio, Gary May, Gene Irving, Wayne Pike, and others. Cones were collected from Hidden Valley and Sky Line area of Malay Gap. The crew had to climb to the tops of tall ponderosa pine trees and whack the cones down. Once the cones were collected in gunny sacks, they were transported to the Ft. Apache Nursery in Eager, Arizona. The nursery waited for the cones to open and emit the seeds. Seeds were cleaned, dried and frozen for storage.

Unfortunately the greenhouse's roof caved in. Later an explosion erupted, which lead to the closing of the nursery. But in October

2010 White Mountain Apache Tribe reopened its new "Native Plant Tribal Nursery and Restoration" green house. The greenhouse is



Seedlings



Otto Rustin, Supervisory Forestry Technician training the crew on operation and safety instructions.

operated by Daniel Kessay, Field Operation Manager and his crew. They inherited the task of taking care of seeds and growing the

seeds for restoration projects. They have many of San Carlos's seeds taken from prime ponderosa pine forest dated back to 1970 through

2000. It has been a long time since the seeds were collected but Mr. Kessay and his crew grew 45,890 seedlings.

These seedlings were transported to Point of Pines on June 6, 2013 for planting 459 acres. The seedlings have returned home and will be planted by the restoration crew. This is a huge historical event with seeds returning home to be planted in place of the Wallow Fire's devastating impacts. Volunteers assisted in the recovery process June 28 and 29, 2013.

For more information, contact Victoria Wesley or Sara Phillips (928)475-2326 extension 301 or 306.



Cooks Delphine Concha, Tasheena Duncan, Head Cook Beverly Phillips, and Teresa Victor

Southwest & Navajo Prevention Team Community Outreach Success!

~ Jim Hamley, Prevention Education Team Leader, Great Plains Region, Aberdeen, SD



Prevention Team, (left to right) Bert Shields, Jim Hamley, Smokey, Jim Rodriguez and Gwen Shaffer at Mescalero Apache Helitack Base.

The Southwest Regional Office requested a Wildfire Prevention Team on the 14th of June 2013. The Prevention Team was assembled and assigned to assist the Southwest and Navajo Agencies; their 14-day assignment began on June 17th and ended on June 30th.

This was the first BIA Fire Prevention Team that was sponsored by the Southwest and Navajo Region with Kenny Jaramillo, Prevention Specialist, Southwest Region, taking the initiative to address the needs of both regions. It was a unique assignment as it covered four

Prevention Team:

- **Jim Hamley**, Prevention Education Team Leader, Great Plains Region, Aberdeen, SD.
- **Bert Shields**, Prevention and Education Team Member Trainee, Rosebud Agency, Rosebud SD.
- **Jim Rodriguez**, Prevention and Education Team Member, Pine Ridge Agency, Pine Ridge SD.
- **Gwen Shaffer**, Public Information Officer, Mescalero Agency, Mescalero, NM.
- **Kenny Jaramillo**, Prevention and Education Team Member Trainee, Southwest Region, Albuquerque, NM.



Fire safety presentation to Summer school at Ute Mountain Agency.



Jim Hamley showing kids, the correct way to put out a campfire at Silver Lake, Mescalero Apache Boys and Girls club.



Reader Board



Sign at Mescalero Apache Agency



Smokey Bear at Nambe Falls park, Northern Pueblo Agency.

states. The team traveled around 2,500 miles. We were able to address prevention needs at 8 Agencies.

What we accomplished

The team prepared fire prevention materials to address the current wildland fire situation for each of the various Agencies.

We provided training to local Fire Departments and Law Enforcement Agencies who provide assistance with wildland fire suppression. That training included FI-110 *Wildland Fire Observation and Origin*.

Throughout our trip, we encouraged communities to report information about human-caused wildfires to authorities and/or the We-Tip Program through an aggressive signing campaign. We placed We-Tip posters and brochures in strategic places and got these messages out on Reader boards.

We worked with the local radio stations in Farmington and Pine Hill, NM, using radio to stimulate the local listening audience.



Jim Hamley, Radio interview, Farmington, NM.



Fire Safety presentation to summer school students at Ute Mountain Agency.



Sign over freeway, Mescalero Apache Agency.

These media contacts assisted us in getting our Public Safety Announcements (PSA's) out on the air and were instrumental in our live interview. We were able to introduce the team, and we spoke about the imposed fire restrictions, fire danger, and where the public could access more information on the internet.

The team promoted the Smokey Bear message "Only you can Prevent Wildfires" to over 400 kids with 8 different character

appearances and 6 educational programs.

The Northern Pueblos Agency Fire crew assisted us during the Office of Justice Services Law Enforcement Day held in the Nambe Falls Park, which was attended by over 100 kids.

Social Media was used to interact with the BIA Forestry & Wildland Fire Management Mescalero Agency Facebook page.



Prevention trailer, Burt Shields, Nambe Falls Park, Northern Pueblo Agency.

Both the Fire Wise and Defensible Space program elements were discussed at length with locals and tourist alike.



Thanks!

Thanks again to those of you who have submitted articles and photographs. Keep up the great work!

Submission Criteria

Please include the author's name, title and location, captions and high resolution photographs attached as separate jpeg files. The article submission deadline for "Smoke Signals" is as follows:

March 1
June 1
September 1
December 1

Please start submitting articles for the next issue of Smoke Signals as soon as you can! As soon as we have enough articles to fill an issue, we will produce one. Thank you!

"If a man does his best, what else is there?" ~ General George S. Patton (1885-1945)

Distribution

Please route this publication to your staff as well as to your Emergency FireFighters. Please make sure your seasonal fire employees have an opportunity to read Smoke Signals!

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Article Submission Checklist

- Author's name
- Author's title
- Author's agency/location

- High resolution jpeg photos
- Name of photographer
- Photo captions
- Names of people in photo and where they work

- Contact name, number, and email address