



President Declares Major Disaster for Idaho Following Destructive Northern Idaho Windstorm

As 2015 drew to a close Idaho received a Presidential Disaster Declaration – the first since 2011 for an historic windstorm that left tens of thousands of people without power for days on end. The unprecedented November 17th event caused havoc in Benewah, Bonner, Boundary and Kootenai counties. The weather service reported wind gusts measuring as high as 101 mph in Bonner County. Electric Cooperatives serving individuals and businesses in the four county area including Kootenai Electric Coop, Northern Lights, Inc., Inland Power Coop and Clearwater Power Coop, sustained significant damage to infrastructure. Complete power restoration took more than a week, during which time citizens, businesses and agencies worked to find alternate resources for heating, cooking and lighting. "The quick response was made possible by the whole community, utility providers, state, county, city, tribal officials coming together during this event and working to address every issue this long term power outage presented," said Jay Baker, Northern Idaho Area Field Officer.

Applicant briefings with FEMA Region X began January 7th.

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Wildfire Unmet Needs Committee (WUNCCIL) serves Clearwater, Idaho and Lewis County Residents

On Monday August 10, 2015 more than one hundred lightning strikes started fires throughout the Clearwater Valley. More starts happened the next day as attempts were made to get the majority of the fires out before they grew even bigger.

Several of these fires took off near Kamiah, Elk City and Orofino, Idaho. The steep, tinder dry canyon sides and gusty winds combined to make fighting the fires especially



challenging. Smoke filled the valley making it difficult to breathe. Fires in the Woodland area and above Highway 64 were visible from downtown Kamiah. These fires burned down to the highway and to the river in places. Then "Windy Friday" came. These wind-fueled wildfires leveled at least 75 homes, several home-based businesses and multiple outbuildings, most of them near Kamiah.

Some residents didn't have time to get anything from their houses, and lost everything. Some were asleep as the fire crossed several canyons more rapidly than anticipated,

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Greetings and Happy New Year,

In 2015 we experienced significant emergency related events across our state. From the devastating summer wildfires in northern and north central Idaho to the windstorm in late November that prompted the state's first Presidential Disaster Declaration for public assistance since 2011. These events reinforce the importance of cultivating resilience throughout the state and maintaining strong working relationships with our partners in emergency management. Our communities and our citizens depend on our ability to prepare for, protect against, respond to and recover from all the hazards we face.

One of the things we learned during these events is the importance of damage assessments. It can be difficult to quantify what occurred and what was broken, especially when disasters occur across multiple jurisdictions. The importance of the assessments becomes clear during the recovery phase, when funding opportunities require a clear understanding of expenditures and estimated costs of repairs. For example, a request for a presidential disaster declaration must be submitted within 30

days of the event. I'd like to thank the county emergency managers and other applicants in the impacted areas for their incredible efforts in helping to compile the required information in a short period of time.

2016 brings a great opportunity to build capabilities and relationships during the June 7-10 Cascadia Rising Functional Exercise. Seismic analysis shows that the Pacific coast has significant threat of a major earthquake. While this earthquake would most likely leave Idaho's infrastructure intact, we would see impacts from evacuees and our state would be supporting our neighbors with our resources. The list of participants include fifty counties across three states, FEMA region 10, multiple federal agencies, active duty and national guard military, three state EOCs, British Columbia and Public Safety Canada along with numerous tribes, private sector entities, hospitals and utilities.

Idaho's EOC at Gowen Field in Boise, nine northern counties, along with the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, and a number of public health districts will participate. A majority of the non-participating counties will be providing assistance in the form of subject matter experts, evaluators, and controllers. The exercise will provide the opportunity for Idaho to test multiple capability areas such as situational awareness, operational coordination, public information, and mass care. This will be the first major exercise testing the recently updated Idaho Emergency Operation Plan.

Going forward in 2016, IBHS will continue building upon our strong working relationships with counties, tribes and industry stakeholders throughout the state. I look forward to what we will accomplish together, and wish each of you and your families a safe and prosperous 2016.

Thanks,
Brad

Brad Richy
Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security
Direct Line: 208.422.3001
Admin Asst: 208.422.3035



This newsletter is the official newsletter of the Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security. This quarterly publication is intended for the use of the State of Idaho's emergency management community, legislators, government officials and others who are interested in learning about Idaho's emergency management techniques and procedures.
C.L. "Butch" Otter, Governor

Brad Richy
Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security
208-422-3001

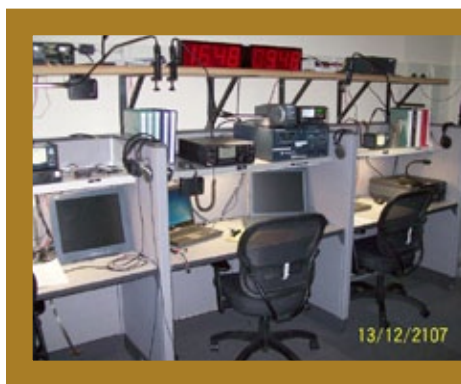
Elizabeth C. Duncan, editor
(208) 258-6595

Blake Holgate, design editor
(208) 863-8464

A TALE OF TWO EXERCISES

October and November were busy exercise months for the Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security's (IBHS) Radio Operations Program Axillary Communications Services (ACS), Emergency Support Function #2 (ESF-2).

Nationally each October the American Radio Relay League (ARRL) sponsors a Simulated Emergency Test (SET) exercise through its Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) organization. All HAM radio operations are encouraged to participate; the IBHS Radio operations makes a point to annually take part in this event, mainly because it is a great training opportunity.



The Idaho ARES leadership wanted to take advantage of this year's SET exercise to help prepare for the Cascadia Rising 2016 full scale exercise in June of 2016 in which radio will be seriously called upon to perform as if it were a real disaster. Saturday 17, October starting at 1600 Zulu (0900 MST) IBHS, ACS was on the air! The scenario was very much like a real world event. Each area was asked to activate their local HAM radio operators, then deploy them, and ask them to submit a report once they had reached their deployment location. All that seems somewhat simple - that is unless you have never suffered through death by a thousand ICS forms. As the old saying goes "no job is complete until the paperwork is complete" and this was a classic example. An ICS-217A form (Communication Resources Availability) had been pre-planned and made available listing frequencies and call signs of

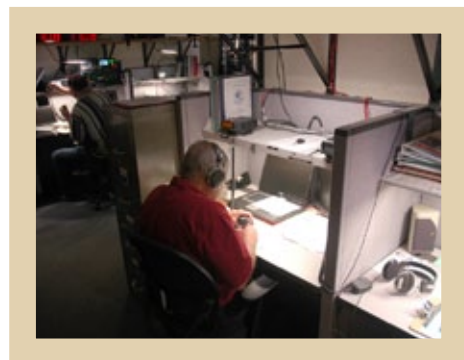
control locations and networks. Deployed HAMs as well as network control stations and operators were asked to send and receive canned messages using the ISC-213 form (Message Form). (Note: Remember you only have 30 words to get your message across.) At the same time IBHS net control was asking all deployed HAM operators to also submit a Situational Awareness Report (SITREP). And, finally each operator no matter where they were, was asked to maintain an ICS-309 (Communications/Activity Log), which we had intended to be the building blocks for our AAR (After Action Report). As the IBHS was activating the HAM operators, deploying same, sending and receiving the canned messages, all the while maintaining the paper blizzard, Boise, IBHS Net Control, was concurrently relaying all of that message traffic and activities to Latah County EOC Radio Ops which was playing the role of a distant higher tasking authority. I have the pleasure to report that we had several non-RACES or ARES HAMs join the exercise, which was wonderful news. Also, we had 13 members of our local ARES/RACES team participate - again outstanding news. And possibly the best news of all, we learned a lot. We do have areas of improvement to work on but overall it was a resounding success. To my surprise the paperwork matched up, which is even better news.

We agreed the next step was - how the State and region were going to talk between one another and FEMA Region X Headquarters. We developed an ICS-217A form (Communication Source Availability) and scheduled our private exercise between Washington EOC, Oregon EOC, FEMA Region X Radio Ops and Idaho. Well that, as we discovered later was going to be our first hurdle. Private, does not exist in the world of HAM radio, and we learned that in spades. However, we found that to be not a bad thing in fact just the opposite. Our plan was on 12 November 2015 at 1600 ZULU, we would come up on a specific frequency on 60 meters, make contact and then work through all of the bands one at a time.



Flawless planning right? Well not so much, we had failed to take into account HAMs are snoopy! What happened was they found us and they too wanted to test, which again was not a bad thing. So we accommodated the non-state EOC players who gave us great intelligence on the quality of each of our signals on each band in areas away from the known, EOC geographic location, outstanding information. At the conclusion of our PRIVATE little exercise we had learned a great deal and we continue to sort out what it is we really learned. We have several areas for improvement and the good thing is we are addressing those now rather than during a real disaster. There has also been a major positive outcome from this. We now have regularly scheduled regional partners meetings. Today, FEMA Region X - Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington, are working toward a common goal: Cascadia Rising 2016, a common communications operating picture, and information sharing.

Bob Wells
Special Assistant



Ruppe Retires After Distinguished Service

Congratulations to Debi Ruppe, North Central Area Field Officer on her retirement last month.

Until her retirement, Debi was the first and only person to hold the position as North Central Area Field Officer, having created and established the position in that region. Debi was presented with twenty daunting disasters during her tenure during which she played a crucial role in resolving the declarations for the counties she represents. Debi came in to the position just prior to the 1996 floods which produced some of the most severe damage in Northern Idaho in the history of Idaho emergency management. Debi's retirement was preceded by her incredible support to the jurisdictions impacted by the wildfires of 2015 that caused significant destruction across the north central Idaho region. Debi demonstrated her depth of knowledge through her involvement with planning, training and exercising in the North Central Area. Her ability to understand the unique dynamics of the different counties in the area allowed her to

assist emergency managers in developing plans, identifying training needs and designing exercises that effectively served the needs of the local emergency managers and responders. We wish you all the very best Debi!



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Idaho Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (IDAVOAD) Conference

Theme: Access and Functional Needs

The IDAVOAD is the state chapter of the National VOAD and is the forum where organizations share knowledge and resources throughout the disaster cycle to help survivors and their communities. VOAD's role is to bring organizations together and enable them to understand one another and work together during times of disaster preparedness, response, relief and recovery.

After a busy fire season, the Idaho Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (IDAVOAD) annual conference was held on September 20, 21 and 22, 2015 at Camp Ida-Haven near McCall, Idaho. The theme for the conference was



Access and Functional Needs. More than fifty participants from a diverse group of agencies attended the conference. Among the attendees were volunteer agencies, state and regional VOADs, county emergency



management, health districts, and state and federal organizations. Also attending were participants from throughout the Northwest as well as a Volunteer Agency Liaison (VAL) from FEMA headquarters.

The focus of the two day agenda was to provide the participants information to utilize disability and access and functional needs inclusive practices. Representatives from American Red Cross, Idaho Office for Refugees, Intermountain Fair Housing Council, the Boise Rescue Mission and Hope Animal Assistance Crisis Response were among the presenters. Information provided included Disability Inclusive Emergency Management, Language Guidelines for Emergency Management, the Fair Housing Act and Emergency Shelters, as well as a comparison of Federal and state Laws regarding Service and Assistance Animals.

An exercise held the last day of the conference addressed Multi-Agency Resource Centers (MARC's), what they

are and how they benefit disaster victims, communities and the participating organizations. The exercise provided the participants the opportunity to evaluate current plans.



The conference was a huge success in helping all the participants understand the importance of addressing the inclusion of Access and Functional needs throughout emergency management.

Mary Marsh
Public Private Partnerships
Program Manager
State of Idaho Voluntary Agency Liaison (VAL)
(208) 258-6520
mmarsh@bhs.idaho.gov

New Southeast Region Area Field Officer

Mark Stephensen has accepted the position of Southeast Area Field Officer. Mark replaces Ken Fagnant who retired in late 2015. Mark has been with IBHS since June, 2007 and has held several key roles including Senior Mitigation Planner, Mitigation Section Chief and State Hazard Mitigation Officer. He has considerable EOC and HazMat training. Mark has been a Plans Section Chief in the IDEOC and a HazMat duty officer



for more than 5 years. Mark began his career with the State of Idaho in November, 1980 with the Idaho Department of Finance. He was a consumer credit investigator/examiner and conducted bank compliance and bank examinations for 20 years. In 2001, Mark transferred to the Idaho Secretary of State's office where he was Supervisor of the Corporations Division.

Feeley named North Central Area Field Officer



Robert Feeley has been selected as the North Central Area Field Officer, replacing Debi Ruppe who recently retired. As NCAFO, Robert will serve as the IBHS liaison to Latah, Nez Perce, Clearwater, Lewis and Idaho counties as well as the Nez Perce Tribe. This region was hit particularly hard with wildland fires this past season and Robert is eager to assist with regional recovery activities. He's been with the bureau close to 10 years, filling the role of Citizen Corps Coordinator, Public Affairs Officer and

FirstNet Program Manager. "Debi did a great job in this position and was a big help in getting me up to speed in a short period of time. There's a lot of institutional knowledge in the region as it relates to emergency management and I'm looking forward to tapping into that to help the bureau best serve the area." Robert is a University of Idaho graduate. Previously, he worked summers as a wild land fire fighter with the Nez Perce, Boise and Inyo National Forests.

Bonner County, ID received a PDM grant to purchase a 20-acre home site within the floodway of the Pack River, demolish the home, remove fill and restore floodplain/wetland functions.

The home and outbuildings were demolished, the foundations were removed, the septic tanks crushed and filled with sand, removal of the earthen fill from the access roads, final grading, and mulching of the site were accomplished in the late fall. Now flood waters inundate the area where the home and roads once existed.



Before Flooding



During Flooding

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toward their homes, and as officers knocked on their door, the fire was already lapping the back of their house. In one instance, the police had to break a door down to get the people out of the house in time.

Metal from trailer homes, cars, and even wood stoves twisted and deformed into scrap. The speed of fire was such that firefighters could not get ahead of it to make any kind of line to stop it.

Now a team has been formed to help those who lost everything. We are looking for both financial contributions as well as those who can help clear properties of burned vehicles, mobile homes, bad foundations and pads. That's step one. Then we will be looking for resources, both to cut existing lumber, as well as acquire building supplies. The process has started, and we appreciate everyone who's helped so far, as well as those who would like to provide assistance either in a financial or material way.

We are asking you to be a part of something big to help this community get back on its feet. In addition to cash donations that can be made through Idaho VOAD, there is a need for lumber, metal roofing, and other building supplies. We are also looking for people willing to donate the use of portable sawmills. We also need excavators, loaders, and dump trucks that can remove cement foundations and pads, and other burned debris, from properties damaged by the fires. If you know someone who can make these resources available please contact Sheryl White, Donations Coordinator at (206) 226-9682. The organization is willing to pay fuel costs. We hope to have all the properties cleared before spring so rebuilding can begin then.

Sheryl White,
Donations Coordinator
206 226-9682

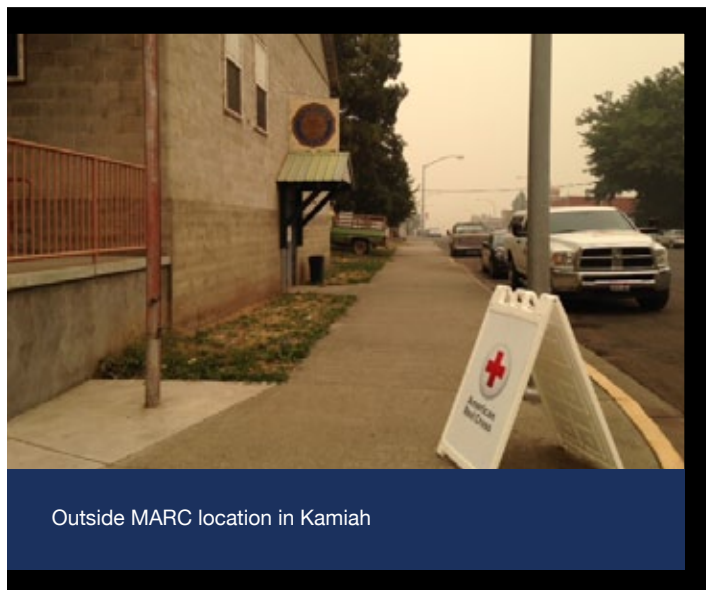
MARC Provides Assistance Following Summer Wildfires

A Multi-Agency Resource Center (MARC) is a single location where public, private, local and national disaster relief agencies come together to provide immediate assistance to those affected by an incident. The American Red Cross of Greater Idaho partnered with the Idaho Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (IDAVOAD) and other statewide and local partners to open a “one stop shop” for survivors of the Clearwater Complex Fire. The MARC was open in Kamiah for three days and representatives from government, nonprofit, faith-based and other local disaster relief organizations participated.

At the MARC, caseworkers were available to help individuals create personal recovery plans that included immediate disaster-caused needs such as cleanup of ashes, rent, cleaning supplies, groceries, and medicine. Other resources were available to provide family reunification and tools for communication to connect with friends and relatives as well as serving as a meeting place for families, friends and community members. Clients registered when they arrived, then went to each station to receive information, support, resources and referrals.

Because of the willingness of many agencies, organizations and communities to step up and work together when needed, over 100 individuals and families registered at the MARC in Kamiah to receive assistance. Those registrations also provided information that was valuable in implementing an Unmet Needs Committee which is still providing assistance on a case-by case basis to those affected by the fires.

The implementation of a MARC provides many benefits to the survivor. It’s a one stop location for several disaster



Outside MARC location in Kamiah

recovery assistance programs which saves time, money and emotional stress. It also prevents confusion and duplication of efforts. The benefits to the community include the opportunity to identify short and long term recovery needs and allowing the expansion of resources and partnerships.

Mary Marsh
Public Private Partnerships
Program Manager
State of Idaho Voluntary Agency Liaison (VAL)
(208) 258-6520
mmarsh@bhs.idaho.gov



North Central Information Network Quarterly Meeting

Dec. 8th - Quarterly meeting of the North Central Information Network at St. Joseph’s hospital in Lewiston, Id. NCIN members are Public Information professionals from the North Central Idaho region and include communications experts from both private industry and government. The group works collaboratively in coordinating timely dissemination of accurate information - enhancing public information resources for the region. Current NCIN members are listed in WebEOC (under PIER Team Contacts)

**Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security
4040 W. Guard Street
Boise, Idaho 83705**

PIOs prepare for Cascadia Rising 2016

The Idaho Public Information Emergency Response Team (PIER) gathered in early November for a Tabletop Exercise (TTX) at Gowen Field in Boise. A key objective for the Joint Information Center TTX was to prepare the group of state agency Public Information Officers (PIOs) to participate optimally in the June 2016 Cascadia Rising Exercise. The TTX included discussions on how the PIER team is activated, how the group can provide public information assistance to local jurisdictions, and the effective use of WebEOC across the spectrum of PIER team activities.

A new on-boarding document outlining what the PIER team is, including responsibilities and the Governor's Executive Order creating the team, is now available on WebEOC. The document can be used by new PIER team members to enhance understanding of the group's purpose and responsibilities and to provide information to state agency leadership on how and why the group functions. The Idaho PIER team is also working to enhance collaboration with regional PIO groups across the state.

