

MINUTES

NORTHERN GREAT PLAINS INVENTORY & MONITORING NETWORK BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Conference Call

9:00-10:00am MT, December 16, 2003

Members Participating

Ruthann Knudson
Bill Supernaugh
Andy Banta
Phyllis Adams
Dan Licht

Also in Attendance

None

Members Absent

none

Call Purpose and Background

To discuss 1) admin support for the I&M Program and, 2) the integration of I&M and Fire Effects.

Licht stated that administrative support for the I&M Program has been a constant challenge in large part because of confusion about whether the I&M Program was a “park-based” program or a “regional” program. Licht stated that since inception of the I&M Program in FY 2000 it has transferred \$5,000 annually to the host park for administrative support (first Theodore Roosevelt NP, then Badlands NP, and now Mt. Rushmore NMEM). There has never been an itemization or breakdown of how these funds were to be spent by the host park, just a oral agreement between the I&M Coordinator and the host park that it was for “admin support.” There has never been a direct transfer of funds from the I&M Program to the NEKOTA pool.

In FY04 the \$5,000 for admin support will be between Mt. Rushmore MEM and Badlands NP because of workload issues at Mt. Rushmore NMEM. Existing clerical staff at the park do not have the time to take on more work, whereas, a part-time administrative person at Badlands NP is wanting more work. Therefore, the I&M Program will transfer \$2,000 to Mt. Rushmore NMEM for miscellaneous admin support

and \$3,000 to Badlands NP for the clerk's time. The Badlands NP clerk will process travel and T&A for I&M Program staff (excepting Licht's T&A which will be done at MWRO because his duties are still split 70:30 between I&M and his Regional Wildlife Biologist duties). The Badlands NP clerk may also perform other duties (e.g., data entry) as needed.

Licht stated that he would like to resolve the issue of admin support. Although the I&M Program is currently limited to 3-4 people, it could grow several fold in the next few years and have significant recruitment needs. He stated that he has not been doing his recruitment through NEKOTA in part because he was told by NEKOTA Personnel that the I&M Program was a "regional" program. Adams stated that the fundamental question here was whether the program was "park-based" or "regional."

There was discussion about the Exotic Plant Management Team (EPMT) and FIREPRO programs, and how they got their administrative support. It was understood that there was a formula for FIREPRO to pay into the NEKOTA pool, but no payments had been made as of yet. Licht thought that EPMT was primarily being supported by the 3 host parks with no direct transfer to NEKOTA. Banta stated that he thought some funds were transferred from EPMT to Theodore Roosevelt NP for admin support (the host park of the EPMT Coordinator).

It was proposed by the Board that the I&M Program should pay directly into the NEKOTA pool just like any other park unit. Knudson stated that Agate Fossil Beds NM pays about \$2,000 to NEKOTA and Banta stated that he paid about \$9,000. Knudson recommended that the I&M Program pay \$2,000 to NEKOTA in FY04 for admin support (plus the money already targeted to Mt. Rushmore NMEM and Badlands NP). Licht felt that he could afford that and that such an arrangement paves the way for when the I&M Program expands.

Adams pointed out that there were two issues. One was the transfer of money for admin support and the other was to make sure admin people at the parks were aware that they should support the I&M Program. It was decided that Licht would draft some notes from the conference call and share with Board members for review. Supernaugh would then distribute to all the Superintendents prior to the January NEKOTA meeting. The Board's recommendation would then be discussed at the January meeting in the presence of all the Network Superintendents and administrative staff.

There was discussion about integrating Fire Effects and I&M Vital Signs monitoring. Licht stated that for the past several months he had been in discussions with Cody Wienk of the Fire Effects program in regards to coordination and integration. He stated that Steve Fancy, Jim DeCoster, Mike Debacker, and others had been consulted, and that Amy Symstad was working on the science aspect of integrating the programs. All the Board members fully endorsed the concept of integration. Licht said he would continue working with Wienk on the details and that a recommendation would be made to the Technical Committee at the January meeting and then to all the Superintendents the following day.

Action Items

* It was agreed that Licht would prepare minutes of the call and distribute for review. Bill Supernaugh would then distribute to Superintendents in the Network.

* Licht will continue to work on integrating Fire Effects and Vital Signs monitoring.

Followup

Drafted by: Dan Licht
Drafted on: 12/16/2003

Finalized by:
Finalized on: