



## **Cumbria Wildfire Group**

### **STEERING GROUP**

**29<sup>th</sup> October, Thirlmere**

#### **Attendance**

Charles Ecroyd – CLA and Cumbria LAF (Chair)  
Duncan Taylor, Ali Croal – Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service  
Stuart Palmer – National Trust  
Martin Glynn & Marc Barendrecht – Rural Development Initiatives  
Abi Mansley – Countryside Access, CCC  
John Bruce – Forestry Commission  
Mark Eccles – LDNPA  
Robert Benson – Moorland Association  
Vicky Pearson – United Utilities

#### **Summary of the Meeting**

1. Everybody was welcomed to the meeting and brief introductions round the table. Jake Morley's apologies were noted. Thanks to Vicky Pearson for arranging the venue and to Charles Ecroyd for being Chair.
2. The summary notes of the full group's meeting (Penrith Rugby Club, 24<sup>th</sup> July) were passed.
3. The group had a long discussion about areas of activity and where to start.
  - Rural Development Initiative pointed out that the Northumberland group had spent 6 months establishing themselves and raising their profile and the benefits of an independent body. The next round of RDPE applications are in the New

Year and this sort of application might be successful. Northumberland bid for £80k over 2 years (£25k of which was for training events). Some 40% of the funding for the Northumberland group comes from a Drager fund that NF&RS have – with a further 12% coming from the North Pennines AONB Sustainable Development Fund (now empty).

- The steering group itself was initially focussed on fire plan discussions (contact details, boundaries, priority areas, and the template). RDI added that one-to-one visits were proving to work better than workshops, although very labour-intensive. Clearly fire-plans are an area of priority for the group. **Action – Abi to email the fire plan templates to all**
- We discussed what the objectives of the group were and a desire to keep these simple, provisionally settling on :

**OBJECTIVES:**

- 1) To reduce the incidence of wildfires**
- 2) To co-ordinate an improved response to wildfires to reduce their impact and maintain the safety of responders**
- 3) To raise awareness amongst public and landowners of the risk and impact of wildfires**

- There was some discussion about how applicable the Northumberland “model” would be to Cumbria’s geography and land ownership patterns.
- The steering group also discussed the need for a business plan in order to make the funding case, both amongst partner organisations and as preparatory work for a 2008 funding bid. Themes of public awareness, pollution, climate-change, fire plans and training are strong here.
- RDI would need some “pump priming” money in order to start working on the business plan and co-ordinating a future meeting. Abi said that her managers and Duncan’s managers had already made some resources available for this financial year. **Duncan Taylor to confirm the joint amount and commit the funding to RDI.**
- From next April onwards it is hoped that a successful funding bid would then sustain the group’s activities. **All to consider other funding bids we could make e.g. LDNPA SDF?**

- All group members agreed to “information gathering” which RDI could then pull together. Topics:

**Action ALL / RDI to co-ordinate**

- what activities we need to undertake,
  - which ones are short (6 months), medium (1 year) and long term (more than 1 year), and
  - what we could do ourselves and what we need external facilitation with.
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- RDI agreed to provide us with a costed proposal / quotation for the areas of work we had discussed, in time for the next meeting, and based on the information gathered above. **Action RDI**
  - All members agreed to the aim of finishing their own fire plans and having these with the CF&RS by next Spring. Duncan undertook to make personal visits and start listing resources. **Action ALL**
  - Membership of the group was discussed. It was agreed to approach Simon Webb from Natural England and also a representative from MOD Warcop / Spadeadam. **Action Duncan**

**Date of next meeting**

Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> February, Penrith Fire station, 2pm

(Duncan to book the room).

**Members' News**

- 1) Duncan Taylor mentioned that under the new CF&RS structure effective from the 1<sup>st</sup> January there will be 4 managers responsible for risk information based in Cumbria (Kendal, Workington, Carlisle and Barrow)
- 2) Duncan added that he is now taking delivery of the 8 landrovers, the first of which is being fitted out at Dalston. They will carry special biodegradeable foam. He is organising off-road training for 80 drivers in December. He envisaged the landrovers being fully operational in time for the Spring.

- 3) Duncan added that there may be managed burn events coming soon in Northumberland and there may be places for people to go on the courses. (note – the Wildfire training course that Northumberland has done is slightly different – a 1.5 day course)
- 4) Martyn Glynn mentioned that Northwoods are now starting work on Wildfire 2009 conference to be based in the New Forest.
- 5) Abi wished to make everyone aware that if they need to get a message to the group about a training event or any other news, to use the email “reply to all” function – or contact her and she can pass items on.