THE VIEW FROM THE FIELD - 2017

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Resources, Planning, and Fire

2017 Fire Season:
SITL and PSC 2(t) with
Northern Rockies IMT1 (Team 1/ Poncin)
NIROPS SUPPORT TO NR TEAM 1 IN 2017

Frye Fire – Coronado NF
Lolo Peak Fire – Lolo and Bitterroot NFs, MT DNRC
Liberty Fire – Flathead Indian Reservation
Rice Ridge Fire – Lolo and Flathead NFs
FRYRE FIRE
CORONADO NF
JUNE 12 – JULY 12, 2017

43,443 acres
31 Flights Requested
3 UTFs: 2 Weather and 1 Mechanical
Frye Fire IRIN Assignments:
June 12 to July 12, 2017

Pete Martinez - 6/12 to 6/17
Melinda McGann - 6/17 to 6/20
Daniel LeVrier - 6/20 to 7/3
Melanie Rossi - 7/3 to 7/12
Northern Rockies Team 1 - Greg Poncin

Frye Fire Assignment - 6/23 to 7/8

Fire Growth: From 29,424 to 48,443 acres

16 NIROPS Flights Requested

UTFs: 1 Mechanical
Frye Fire – Coronado NF

Successes:
- Great imagery and mission frequency (31 Flights Ordered / only 3 UTFs).
- Excellent Interpretation.
- Timely response with products.
- Outstanding coordination / intel sharing.
Frye Fire – Coronado NF

Challenges:
- Early flight times – 20:21 hrs on 6/27
  20:48 hrs on 7/06
- Extreme heat / surface rock (116 deg. F @TUC).
- Noise in imagery due to retained heat.
LOLO PEAK FIRE
LOLO AND BITTERROOT NF
MONTANA DNRC
JULY 18 – SEPT 26, 2017

37,844 acres
61 Total NIROPS Flights Requested
  9 UTFs - 7 Weather and 2 Mechanical
3 MMA Flights Flown
Lolo Peak Fire IRIN Assignments:
July 18 to Sept 18, 2017

Tim Stauffer - 7/18 to 7/24 and 8/14 to 8/19
Howard Harrison - 7/24 to 7/25
Brian Monroe - 7/25 to 8/3 and 9/18
Buck Buchanan - 8/3 to 8/14
Bob Brantlinger - 8/19 to 9/03
Tammy Hocut - 9/03 to 9/17
Northern Rockies Team 1 - Greg Poncin

Lolo Peak Fire Assignments:
- 7/21 to 8/05  249 to 7084 acres
- 8/17 to 8/29  15,090 to 38,878 acres

29 NIROPS Flights Requested

UTFs: 1 Weather
Lolo Peak Fire – Lolo/Bitterroot NFs

Successes:

- Outstanding mission response rate (29 Flights Ordered / only 1 UTF/Weather).
- Excellent interpretation of heat signatures across control lines.
- Products received for timely distribution.
- Accurate perimeters based on field validation.
- Geo-referenced map products.
Challenges:
- Early flight times were fewer and alternated greater than 50 percent – 21:14 hrs on 8/25
- Noise in imagery due to intense heat of fire.
- IRINs were able to catch false trips and halos.
Lolo Peak Fire – Lolo/Bitterroot NFs

MMA Missions:
- Three missions requested by two other IMTs (pre- and post NR Team 1) on 8/13 and 14 and 9/09.
- Produced three video clips on 8/14 and perimeter mapping on all three dates.
Lolo Peak Fire – Lolo/Bitterroot NFs

**MMA Mission Success:**
- Received valuable intel during daylight hours on relative location of the fire perimeter.
- Provided timely assessment and validation of fire progression toward Management Action Points (MAPs).
LIBERTY FIRE
FLATHEAD INDIAN RESERVATION
MONTANA DNRC
LOLO NF
SEPT. 5 – SEPT. 15, 2017

28,694 acres
49 Total NIROPS Flights Requested.

- 6 UTFs: 3 Weather, 1 Mechanical, 1 Maintenance, and 1 Flight Time Restriction.

2 MMA Flights Flown: on 8/15 and 9/09.

- NIROPS UTF for Maintenance on 8/15
Liberty Fire IRIN Assignments:
July 31 to Sept. 17, 2017

Brian Monroe - 7/31
Cheron Ferland - 8/01 to 8/05, 9/02 to 9/07
Tami Hocut - 8/05 to 8/08, 8/10 to 8/19
Kyle Felker - 8/08 to 8/09
Billy Harris - 8/19 to 9/01
Elise Bowne - 9/8 to 9/10
Kurt Teuber - 9/10 to 9/12
Daniel LeVrier - 9/16 to 9/17
Northern Rockies Team 1 - Greg Poncin

Liberty Fire Assignment:
- 9/05 to 9/20  22,360 to 28,694 acres

14 NIROPS Flights Requested

UTFs: 3 (2 Weather and 1 Flight Time)
Liberty Fire – Flthd. Indian Resv., MT DNRC, Lolo NF

Successes:
- Continued high quality products late in season.
- Provided interp. of adjacent Black Fire on map.
- Met deadlines for operational briefing at 0600.
- Validation indicated accurate interp.
- Overall later flight times provided improved heat signature interpretations.
Liberty Fire - Ft. Indian Resv., MT DNRC, Lolo NF

MMA Successes:
- Provided IR intel during period of NIROPS maintenance.
- Validation indicated accurate interp.
RICE RIDGE FIRE
LOLO NF AND MT DNRC
AUG. 1 – SEPT. 28, 2017

160,181 acres
49 Total NIROPS Flights Requested.
  - 8 UTFs: 5 Weather, 1 Mechanical, 2 Unknown
  - NIROPS UTF on 8/14-15 and 9/09
  - MMA Flights Flown: on 8/14-16, 8/18, 9/02-04 and 9/09
    - NIROPS UTF on 8/14-15 and 9/09
Rice Ridge Fire IRIN Assignments: August 1 to Sept. 27, 2017

Cheron Ferland – 8/01 to 8/06
Tami Hocut – 8/06 to 8/09
Brian Mitchell – 8/11 to 8/16
Nate Yorgason – 8/17 and 9/27
Dale Gough – 8/18 – 9/07
Chad Horman – 9/07 to 9/08
Elsa Hucks – 9/10 – 9/26
Northern Rockies Team 1 - Greg Poncin

Rice Ridge Fire Assignment:
- 9/05 to 9/21  108,126 to 163,800 acres

14 NIROPS Flights Requested

UTFs: 4  (Weather)
Rice Ridge Fire – Lolo NF and MT DNRC

Successes:
- Excellent products for assessment and location of fast moving fire during wind events.
- Superior staffing during long duration incident.
- Met deadlines for operational briefings at 0600.
- Very large geographic interp was accomplished.
- Accurate perimeters and acreages daily.
Rice Ridge Fire – Lolo NF and MTDNRC

MMA Successes:
- Provided IR intel during periods of NIROPS maintenance and UTFs for weather (4 days).
- Validation indicated accurate interp.
Suggestions for Further Consideration:

1) Set up a Feature Service to store all NIROPS data. This would include the flight polygon request from SITL (you would be able see everyone else's request, too), as well as the NIROPS data output (the data that is currently stored in the FTP via shapefiles). A feature service centric system would create numerous efficiencies and is the future.
Suggestions for Further Consideration:

2) This Feature Service could restrict public and media access to IR products presently delivered on an open FTP site.

There were instances this season of media access and release of IR interpreted acreages before IMT and GISS validation and official release.
Suggestions for Further Consideration:

3) Utilize IMT provided previous perimeters on all map products.

Use of previous perimeters is very helpful to GISS and captures areas of fine fuels burned and cooled during previous shifts.
Suggestions for Further Consideration:

4) Assure immediate notification of GISS by IRIN when a UTF occurs.

Set up a protocol for immediate notification by text or email at night when a UTF occurs. GISS can modify their early start time to obtain additional rest.
Suggestions for Further Consideration:

5) Discuss advantages and disadvantages of IRIN submitting recurring flight requests rather than the SITL.

SITLs appreciate that assistance yet want to ensure that orders are placed in times of transition to replacement IRINs.