

Interagency Strategies for Advancing Vegetation Management Projects in Sensitive Areas

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Overarching Issues Identified

- Complex regulatory environment
- Lack of approved treatment methods for sensitive areas
- Knowledge gaps (tools, impacts, standards)
- Workforce availability (uncertainty)
- High cost for Vegetation Mgmt. work

Issue: Complex regulatory environment

- Formation of an interagency project delivery process (Happening now and active for next field season)
 - Multi Agency Coordination team and Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team

Multi – Agency Coordination Group
(Fire Chiefs, USFS, CTC, CSP, NDF/NDSL, CalFire, NVFSC)

Provides a basis for regional interagency coordination over:
PRIORITIZED PROJECTS
Priority determination
Resource use priorities
Information coordination
Intergovernmental decision coordination

Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team

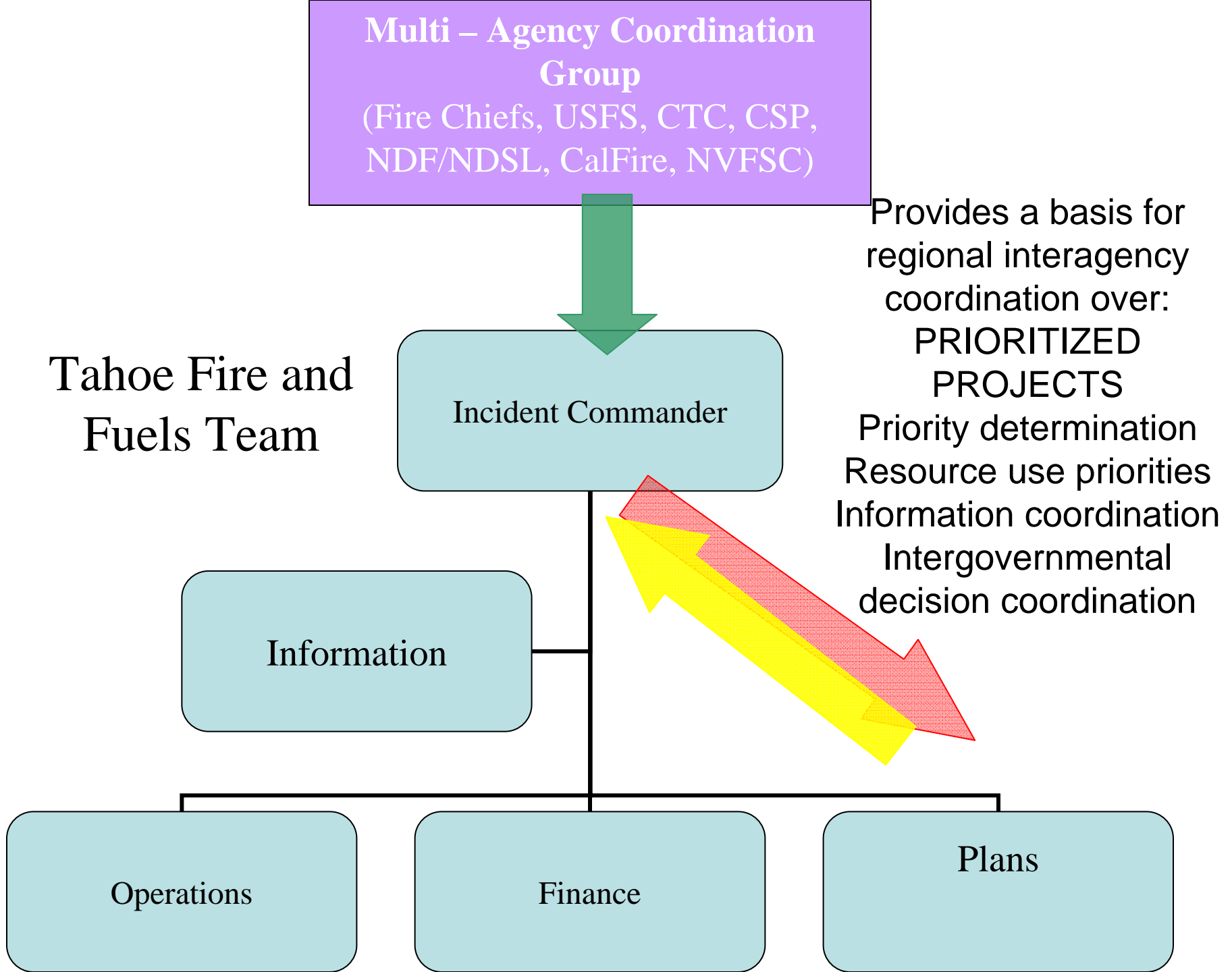
Incident Commander

Information

Operations

Finance

Plans



Issue: Complex regulatory environment (TRPA & Water Board)

- Build More Flexibility into Regulatory System ('08-09)
 - Change TRPA and Water Board Plans
 - Remove Prescriptive Language Concerning Harvesting Systems
 - Provide Mechanism to Allow Impacts in Sensitive Areas
- Reduce regulatory complexity (Fall '08)
 - Streamline Permitting Process (e.g., MOU's, delegation of Water Board permits/waivers to TRPA, single application/permit)
 - Exempt some activities (e.g., hand crews)
- Develop standard project types with mitigations and monitoring (e.g., pile burning, low impact equipment in SEZ and steep slopes) ('08 with help)
 - Base Exemptions on minimum project size or impact area
 - Develop initial guidelines / standards with input from the panel (what proximity to streams, types of piles, % area affected)

Issue: Lack of approved treatment methods for sensitive areas (TFFT)

- Develop process to allow other treatments and techniques ('09 and ongoing)
 - Synthesize existing information on equipment impacts
 - Identify potential areas suitable to different equipment (Logging feasibility study)
 - Define threshold concerns such as soil compaction, sediment/nutrient discharge, or ground cover
 - Develop guidelines that clarify performance specifications and mitigation measures
 - Identify SEZ sensitivity and link to treatment methods

Issue: Knowledge gaps (tools, impacts, standards)

- Develop a work plan for (Agency & Science Collaboration; '08)
 - Appropriate Standardized monitoring of implementation and effectiveness (both treatments and mitigations)
 - Applied research questions to develop critical program information (as opposed to project level monitoring)
 - Increase applied research to fill gaps in knowledge/uncertainties
 - Storage and dissemination of data and results

Issue: Workforce availability (TFFT; ongoing)

- Better planning to identify resources needed to do all work in each season (including staff turnover)
- Employ additional dedicated contract crews and explore local work center
- Identify additional suppression resources to back up prescribed fire programs (e.g., CalFire)
- Explore the ability for joint contracting (e.g., equipment and crews) or joint equipment purchases