

The Aerial Survey Working Group 2010 Charter

January 2010

Introduction

Aerial detection surveys are an important part of USDA Forest Service, Forest Health Protection (FHP) Region/Area and most state forest health programs. Aerial surveys, including sketch mapping and other forms of remote sensing, often account for a significant portion of the program resources, including time, personnel, and budget. Information from the aerial survey is employed for a variety of uses. It has provided a means for identifying relative extent, intensity and locations of forest damage. It has also been used for analysis and project identification for suppression projects, for developing historical trends, and for location of salvage opportunities by federal, state, and private land managers. State cooperators use data from the aerial survey in reporting to state legislators for continued support of their forest health programs. The aerial detection survey is providing data in support of their forest health programs and in support of the National Forest Health Monitoring Program (FHM). The extensive and comprehensive database is one of the primary data layers for identifying disturbance patterns for landscape analysis. Some aerial survey programs have 60 or more years of aerial survey data in either digital or hard-copy form. Those FHP units and states that did not previously have aerial survey programs have begun or extended their programs to meet the growing demands listed above.

The Working Group

The Aerial Survey Working Group (ASWG) was formed in November of 1996 to provide field-level input to the FHP Washington Office and Staff Directors as well as to provide technical assistance to others conducting or planning to conduct aerial surveys. The group was formed to support the need for national aerial survey program leadership and direction. Functioning autonomously, as an ad hoc group of forest health and aviation specialists, the ASWG provides technical input to resource professionals regarding issues of aerial survey safety, efficiency and effectiveness. The ASWG was originally chartered by FHP in March of 2000 and is due for re-chartering in 2015. FHP has the second largest aviation program in the Forest Service after firefighting. FHP and its cooperators fly approximately 4,000 hours each year and survey more than 400 million acres annually.

Scope

Aerial surveys are conducted on forested lands nationwide, including state, private, federal, and tribal lands, to meet FHP Staff and State Cooperator responsibilities.

Membership

Membership includes a representation from each Region/Area, State representatives, the FHP National Aviation Safety Manager, and one FHP Staff Director who serves as liaison between ASWG and the FHP Directors/State Foresters. Additional membership consists of a voluntary group of interested parties including all state, federal, and tribal agency personnel involved with aerial surveys. The FHP Staff Director member is selected by the Washington Office FHP Director.

Charge

The ASWG has the following objectives:

1. To promote a positive safety culture by applying components of Safety Management Systems, helping all aerial survey programs to operate in a safe and efficient manner.
2. To acquire high-quality aerial survey data resulting in accurate reports and maps of forest insect, disease, and related conditions on state, private, federal and tribal lands.
3. To provide input to the FHP Washington Office, Staff Directors, Fire and Aviation Management, State Foresters, and State Cooperators on aerial survey program issues and opportunities.
4. To broadly and cooperatively share expertise, information, and ideas.
5. To continue to improve the reliability and accuracy of the aerial survey program.

Role of the National FHP Aviation Safety Manager

The National FHP Aviation Safety Manager is the permanent Chair of the working group and will provide advice and assistance to the national FHP Staff Director, Regional FHP staff Directors, State Foresters in meeting their aerial survey management and safety responsibilities. The FHP National Aviation Safety Manager also provides guidance and technical assistance to ASWG on aviation safety and aerial survey and serves as a coordinator for aerial survey training, certification, and standardization of FHP aerial surveyors. The FHP National Aviation Safety Manager provides coordination for the group as a whole, develops an agenda for the annual meeting, prepares an aerial survey committee report for each meeting, maintains a list of all certified aerial surveyors, and maintains a mailing list of the group. The position also serves as a liaison between the ASWG, the FHP Management staff, and the National Fire and Aviation Management staff.

Duration

The group will be empowered for five years with a review for re-chartering at the end of the fourth year or as directed by the National Forest Health Protection Director.

Operating Guidelines

This group is comprised of Forest Service/State aerial survey and remote sensing specialists and aerial survey program managers. The ASWG meets annually or as often as deemed necessary to address issues related to the group.

The representative for the location of each meeting will serve as co-chair and be responsible for establishing local arrangements, helping to develop the agenda and providing communication regarding local arrangements as needed.

Each group member represents their respective forest health unit or state, brings all issues and concerns regarding aerial survey to the meetings, and makes sure that outcome of information is provided to those they represent. Each member will provide a short annual summary of the aerial survey and remote sensing activity for their region/area each year. This summary would include information relating to technology, number of survey hours, acres flown, special surveys, training, and incidents.

The Chair will, on behalf of, and as directed by the working group members, communicate to appropriate venues, concerns, needs, and recommendations of the ASWG and represent the working group at meetings as appropriate.

The Annual Aerial Survey Working Group Report

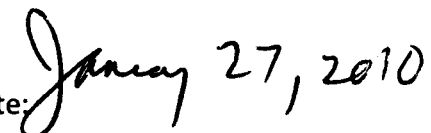
ASWG will submit an annual report to the FHP Staff Directors after completion of their annual meeting. This report will include a summary of each meeting's activities, input to management and is sent to the Directors prior to their spring FHP Directors Meeting.

Activities

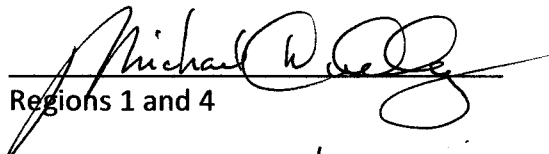
ASWG activities include a national training course: Aerial Survey Aviation Safety and Management (AS2M), evaluation of new technologies and conducting pre-season training workshops for aerial survey personnel. These activities are conducted to help ensure safe, efficient, and effective aerial survey programs.

I concur with the Re-chartering of the Aerial Survey Working Group:

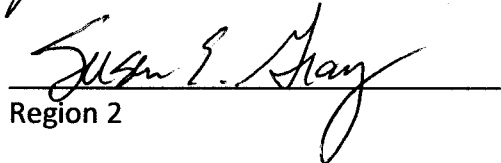

Director, Forest Health Protection

Date: 

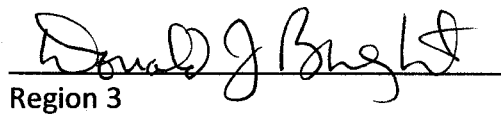
Regional/Area Directors, Forest Health Protection:


Regions 1 and 4

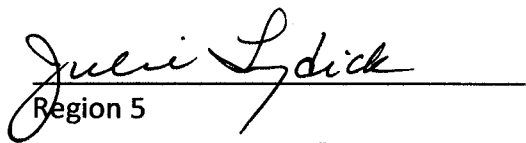
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Region 2

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Region 3

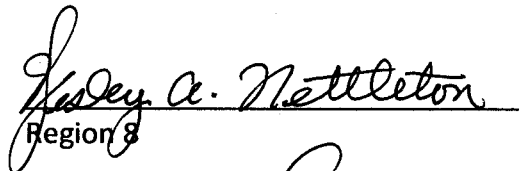
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Region 5

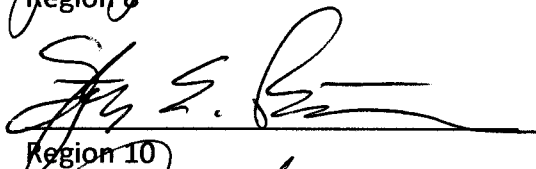
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Region 6

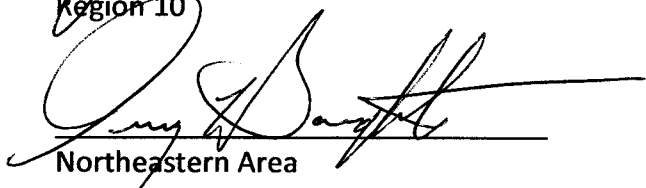
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Region 8

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Region 10

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Northeastern Area

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