

ROSS Partner Conference Call Notes April 18, 2002

Participants:

Jon Skeels, Neal Hitchcock, Nancy DeLong, Rod Chaffee, Andy Gray, Paul Condit (Lockheed-Martin), Lu Vega (UTA), David Kee (UTA), and ROSS Partners from most Geographic Areas.

Jon Skeels (Project and application update):

- ROSS version 1.2.2 is on the "Practice" server. This will allow for ROSS Dispatch training to be held. The practice server will be made available to folks after training is completed. The practice server has a copy of the production data on it. The practice server will be refreshed (all data returned to its original state) each week.
- The Instructor's Guide has been completed, and the first Lead Instructors' session will be taught next week in Boise.
- ROSS version 1.1.4 is now on the "Production" server. This version will be replaced by 1.2.3, which will include the ability to do web status, on June 7.
- Dispatch won't be turned on, even though it'll be there on 1.2.3, until later.
- All "person" and perhaps "resource item" records in ROSS will be converted to upper case. Having a mix of upper, lower and first letter caps has adversely affected sorting.
- The official Forest Service ROSS release notice is in the hands of the FS IRM people. It's coming. The ROSS Team is also working with the BLM to develop the BLM release of the application.
- Jon and Nancy recently met with the NWCG IRM Working Team, and a letter from the NWCG Directors approving/endorsing ROSS will be issued (the NWCG can't officially release software).
- The IRM W/T also discussed requests from some in the user community for a Wildcad/ ROSS interface. The IRM W/T said they would not support such a request with funding. If another entity (e.g. an agency) were to offer to fund such an interface, the IRM would like an analysis of the costs and impacts.

Question:

Do you have an idea what such an interface would cost?

Jon:

No. There would be a cost involved in determining that cost, and at this point it would be premature to invest it.

Neal Hitchcock (Overall project overview):

- We had a good meeting in Arlington, VA last week at UTA headquarters.
- The Helpdesk people are identifying their favorite callers!
- Jon, Nancy and I gave another FEMA briefing last week.
- I met with the Forest Service Operations people this week and showed them Resource Stating. This generated interest.
- Also briefed the BLM State FMO's last week. This, too, created interest. They felt good on the progress we've made to date. I discussed how implementation would be documented.

Jon:

- Between 2,000 and 5,000 resources are being entered by ROSS users each week.

- There are currently more than 450 crews and more than 15,000 overhead in the database.

Nancy DeLong (Implementation update):

- Coaches are needed for training sessions, and we're counting on the ROSS Partners to do this. Get in touch with your Geographic Area's Primary Contact (as identified in the Partner training letter sent by Andy on April 3 (and shown at the end of this document).
- The first Lead Instructor Training Session begins next week in Boise. Instructors from this session will teach the first Coach training session beginning May 13.
- Data is now being entered into the ROSS Training database for next week's session. The training course looks very good and we're looking forward to a good two weeks.
- Development of the web-based training is also coming along well. Those in next week's Lead Instructor's training will get a preview.

Lu Vega (UTA Helpdesk):

- Thanks to all the dispatchers and others who attended last week's ROSS meeting at UTA.
- We're proud to be part of the ROSS Team and the NWCG.

David Kee (UTA Helpdesk):

- For those who might not know, we've been on line since December 17.
- In December we had 19 calls; in January – 47; February – 58; March – 132; and so far in April we've had 77 calls.
- We just had five calls in the last ten minutes, and that was fun!
- You have a few options for contacting us:
 - Call: 1-866-244-7677
 - Email: Helpdesk@dms.nwcg.gov
 - Website: ross@nwcg.gov, then click "User Support" tab and click on UTA logo.
- Once on our website, you can use Heat self service, or you can check out the Knowlix database, which currently has 40 entries on ROSS topics and 20 entries on DMS topics.
- Your calls have been great. Last month the biggest issue was Red Card qualifications importing.

Andy Gray:

- The March/April ROSS Newsletter will be posted today or tomorrow and has an article with more detailed information on Heat self-service.

Rod Chaffee (Business Team update):

- A lot of testing is going on. We're currently testing and getting ready for the release of version 1.2.3.

Jon:

- The main focus of the NICC/Rocky Mountain beta testing the past few days has been on the "Notifier" and making sure the messages from ROSS are accurate.

Rod:

- We're also helping the Implementation Team get data entered for training next week.

Paul Condit (Lockheed-Martin development update):

- We're working with GIS data now, and getting ROSS ready for the training server next week.
- The ROSS Practice instance (copy) is running on the Production servers.
- Version 1.2.3 is currently undergoing integration and system testing. It will next be loaded at NITC for Alpha testing.
- It'll be ready for release between June 1 and June 17.

Jon Skeels (Infrastructure):

- Steve Simon couldn't join us today.
- Last Friday we completed the installation of high-speed network lines between the Portland and Denver routers to improve BLM ROSS performance.
- This will reduce the number of network hops from 22 to 3 or 4 in many cases. NICC, Western Great Basin and other BLM shops will notice improved speed.
- We will add additional hard disk space on the servers as GIS data is added. We've received GIS data on Geographic Area boundaries, roads, Geomac data (e.g. topography) and military training routes. Plus, we'll be adding location data that you folks enter. We won't see maps in ROSS for quite some time.
- Dial-in access information is now on the ROSS website. This will give access to ROSS, DMS, WIMS and FAMWEB. Note: the user pays the cost of the calls. **Update on this:** we cannot post dial-in instructions on the website because of security concerns. For dial-in instructions, contact the ROSS Helpdesk.
- An oracle "coordinate conversion error" has been identified and will be fixed in the next couple of weeks.

Question:

Have the problems with Windows 2000 machines and access to the report writer been resolved?

Jon:

You can access Reports and the Helpdesk via the application. The problem is actually with the connection between ROSS and Win2K. The Helpdesk has the info on how to resolve the problem.

Sue Roussopoulos:

A suggestion would be to have dial-up instructions posted or linked on the ROSS webpage, rather than just on Famweb.

Jon:

Good idea. We'll do it.

Question:

How do we access "ROSS Practice?"

Jon:

It's not available to you yet. It will be available following ROSS Dispatch training. Lead Instructors will be given access after they've been trained.

The ROSS Training server will be used during the training sessions and the ROSS Practice server will be used for practice once you return home. The Practice server will basically have a copy of the data from the ROSS Production server on it, but it will be somewhat dated (we refresh the data periodically with a new copy from production), and it will be reset on a weekly basis.

Question:

What's the status of SACS-IQS download?

Jon:

We have the data from the SACS-IQS national database, but it's "problematic." The SACS programmers are going to try to reformat the data so it can be imported into ROSS. It isn't good clean data, and contains non-standard organization i.d.s and overhead mnemonic codes.

Nancy:

The DOI folks are committed to having their programmers work with us to resolve this.

Jon:

The IQS data (e.g. State of Florida) that we received looks good. Jon and the L-M group will test it soon. Hand entering is still an option for SACS-IQS records.

Nancy:

You might consider what Ray Nelson plans in the Northern Rockies and that is to do crew status this season, rather than individual crewmember status. Manifests with crewmember names would then be handled as they are now. This would prevent you from hand entering all the names into ROSS, then importing them later in the year and having duplicates.

Andy Gray (Partner Update):

- Rather than a ROSS Partner Workshop this year the Partners are encouraged to attend one of three Coach training sessions, to be held in May, July and October. Please click the "Training" tab on the ROSS Home Page for the schedule: <http://ross.nwccg.gov/training>.
- The next call will be held at this same time on Thursday May 16. I'll send out the information in advance of the call. Nancy will lead that call for me.

Question:

Will there be notes from the call?

Andy:

I'll have them out next week after the core team reviews them for accuracy.

Question:

I've had a hard time tracking down phone numbers for the ROSS Team members. Is this information on the web?

Jon/Flint:

We'll put it on the web. **Update on this:** Due to past issues with the posting of ROSS Team Member phone numbers on the web, we request that initial contact with team members be done through the ROSS Team's Boise office. That number is: 208-947-3718. We will post team member names on the web and a couple of phone numbers where contact can be made.

Question:

Did you know that the next Partner call is scheduled during a Coach Training Session?

Nancy:

Yes. We'll make arrangements for the Partners to participate during the training.

Question:

Is there a schedule on the web for the monthly Partner conference calls?

Andy:

No, but we've got the calls scheduled on the third Thursday of each month at the same time (1000AK/1100P/1200M/1300C/ 1400E). The phone number and access code should not change unless we need to change the call bridge. We've got 40 incoming call lines. If anyone hears of Partners not being able to get on the call due to not enough lines, let me know and I'll look at increasing the number of lines.

Geographic Area ROSS Primary Contacts			
Area	Name	Office	Telephone
Alaska	Dave Hendren	AIFCC	907-356-5645
Northwest	Phil Cardin	Medford Fire Center	541-858-2340
Northern California	Cathy Johnson	North Ops	530-226-2801
Southern California	Beth Mason	South Ops	909-276-6721
Northern Rockies	Ray Nelson	NRCC	406-329-4996
Eastern Great Basin	Dan Roth (now)	USFS R-4	801-622-9174
	Gus Malon (soon)	EGBCC	801-531-5320
Western Great Basin	Kathy Wiegard	WGBCC	775-861-6455
Southwest	Brian Lee	SWCC	520-842-3473
Rocky Mountain	Flint Cheney	RMACC	303-275-5388
Eastern	Ruta Glinski	EACC	612-713-7313
Southern	Pat Boucher	SACC	770-458-2464
NICC	Rick Squires	NICC	208-387-5400