

Minutes
NCRC Winter Meeting
February 2, 2008
Walker County Georgia 911 Center

Call to Order: 9:00 a.m. by National Coordinator John Punches

Roll Call & Collection of Proxy Letters

Caribbean	Mercado	present
Central	Mirza	present
Eastern	Good	present
Northeastern	Evans	present
Pacific NW	Punches	present
Rocky Mtn.	Ohms	proxy Mirza
South Central	Walker	present
Southeastern	White	present
Southwestern	Rodgers	present
Western	Mortimer	proxy Amanda Mortimer
Training Coordinator	Hudson	present
Medical Coordinator	Mosberg	present
Diving Coordinator	Wilson	present
National Coordinator	Punches	present

Minutes of Summer 2007 Meeting

Approved as presented

Finance Report

Appendix A

Database Report

None (Tricia not available due to illness)

Officer Reports

National Coordinator
Appendix B

Motion: \$1,000 to be transferred from National account to South Central account for to be utilized at the discretion of DJ Walker for expenses associated with the online database implementation. DJ to maintain financial records to report on expenses.

Passed.

Action Item: Punches to transfer \$1000 to NSS Cave Rescue Training Restricted Fund per earlier BORC action.

Training Officer
Appendix C

Medical Officer
Appendix D

Diving Officer
Only international accidents. Expects more domestically due to growth of sump diver numbers. Will provide callout process to Tricia for database.

Regional Coordinator Reports

Caribbean Region
Appendix E

Central Region
Appendix F

Eastern Region
Appendix G

Northeastern Region
Appendix H
Discussion of fungal disease in bats ensued.
Action Item: Evans to write up summary of known information and share with BORC members.

Pacific Northwest Region
No activity to report

Rocky Mountain Region
Appendix I

South Central Region
Appendix J

Southeastern Region
Appendix K

Southwestern Region
Appendix L

Western Region
Appendix M

Confirmation of BORC actions via e-mail (for official record)

No actions

2007 Seminar Update

Attendance good. Site worked well. No dorms, but adequate camping. Well received by community. Finance report delayed (site coordinators both very ill following seminar). Punches working with them to complete report.

2008 Seminar Update

7 students registered/inquired. 45 instructors offered to participate. Have permission to use all SCCI caves. Brian Krebs will attend seminar in event of policy questions or issues around SCCI caves.

2009 Seminar Proposal(s)

Proposal A: Central Indiana, presented by Anmar Mirza.
Obstacles--have three or four sites but only one would commit so far in advance
The fairgrounds wanted 14k at initial proposal; can negotiate down
Thinks he can get other sites cheaper but doesn't know how much cheaper until it gets closer; looking for direction from the BORC
Will continue or turn over to others
Slide show: over 3,000 caves; Lawrence County has highest density

Deepest pit 140 feet; 10 - 15 min drive from one potential site.

Anmar owns training cliffs; has a good set up; rural county so facilities not readily available. (Cliffs 18-25 feet; old sandstone quarry; clean)

Most caves 10 - 15 drive from facilities; many more within 45 minutes; won't have problem with the state this time like last time

Relatively central for US; four airports within 2.5 hrs range

Facility Options

- Lawrence County 4-H Fairground
Indoor exhibit facility for rigging; close to caves; close to Anmar's cliffs, close to National Forest caves; no problems with access there
- Mitchell Community Schools
May be more willing to discuss now

Budget assuming 65 students; 27 core instructors (45 total with helpers); 6 core staff

With \$475 registration fee; would lose 7-8k if paying 14k for site.

Might be able to do it cheaper but can't guarantee it.

See slide shows for expense estimates for meals, student versus instructor costs

Doesn't want to increase fee to 500 at this time.

Question: how much can you negotiate down? Anmar responded that he has gotten it as low as \$1200; has rescued one of the children of the board members.

Per Jess: the 14k is just a figure calculated based on the cost per building times number of days; were told they need to go to a board meeting. Fair only has two major events per year so scheduling is not an issue.

Schools seem enthusiastic but haven't come up with a number---estimates were in the hundreds not thousands of dollars.

Question: Access to the caves the same from the schools? Yes per Anmar

Proposal B: Carlsbad NM, presented by Bob Rodgers

Last seminar in region was 2003 in Carlsbad, NM

Proposal based on using the rescue facility currently under construction, three and five story towers under construction; geared for vertical work, building an obstacle course out of conduit pipes; have used them in an OCR

Tom Bemis requested the pipes; Tom and Bob and others are helping with design

Audo Visual in all classrooms; free coffee; large bays available

Cliff sites available; man-made damn also available

Many caves but can't use many of them

Forest Service said they could use one, maybe two caves (over an hour drive away but there are class rooms in the National Forest that can be used for all day excursions)

Looking for areas with caves, cliffs and classroom in the same place

No dorms in facility; no sleeping arrangements; no showers.

Looking at Border Control station across street; have not approached them.

Over 15k for facility with another \$20k for showers

Would have to charge \$976 or so to make a couple bucks per head.

Pat: Want to use the space to generate income; Pat approached the board explaining we are non-profit and can approach the board individually to negotiate

The 2003 Washington Ranch site is available but folks didn't care much for the caves

Discussed caves available and the issues around them.

Summary: "2009 is doable" until he got the \$15 k price. Pat says the site wants us to showcase their facility but doesn't know how much they can get the price down.

Funding for showers and dorms is one of the last things that will be available.

Small town, 24k people; they want the visitors in town spending on hotels

DJ: Wants more info...like what kind of "anchoring challenges"? He wants details on how the caves meet the criteria of each level.

Anmar: Driving travel times?? Bob: an hour drive easy; Beck added that there are significant hikes up and down hill. Too hot for NE cavers.

Bob: the facility is in town; airport now in Carlsbad

Punches: DJ's point well made; BORC is interested but due to low number of caves

will need more specificity on cave sites. Perhaps for 2010 bid? What else needed?
Amanda: Would there be camping in 2009? Yes per Bob.
Tim: Temperatures? Pat: 70's in May; cools down at night significantly. The higher elevations are cooler.

Motion: Accept Central Region bid to host 2009 National Seminar in Lawrence County, Indiana. Draft budget is accepted with understanding that seminar coordinator will keep per-student fee to \$500 or less. **Passed.**

Motion: National Coordinator and Training Coordinator evaluate status of 2009 seminar budget 60 days prior to the event to determine if seminar will proceed. **Failed for lack of second.** (Discussion: job descriptions for these officers already place this responsibility upon them, so there is no need to pass a motion to that effect.)

Actions Items:

- Hudson to provide Rodgers with copy of cave/cliff site requirements in anticipation of bid for 2010 seminar.
- Southwestern Region can seek grants to help offset seminar cost, but must coordinate with NSS Treasurer (Peri Frantz) to ensure there are no conflicts with NSS grant efforts.

Fixed Sites for Future Seminars

Roanoke Valley Fire/EMS Training Center

Per Harold Chrimes, seminar was well received by site director and we would be welcomed back.

General Discussion: site lacks dorms, but this keeps cost down. Cliffs great. Some transportation difficulties – correctable. Showers good. Facilities nice.

Action Item: This site is acknowledged as a contender for fixed site status, but we need to finalize fixed site criteria before making a decision.

Motion (as amended): Tim White will chair a committee to compile evaluation criteria for fixed seminar sites for presentation at the summer 2008 BORC meeting. **Passed.**

Action Item: Brainstormed List of Fixed Site Criteria

- cave locations must meet requirements of NCRC curriculum requirements and potential changes in the curriculum
- office space
- at least four classrooms; each seating 30 comfortably
- installed presentation equipment (preferred)
- showers
- indoor rigging / climbing sites
- proximity to airports
- either on-site or nearby camping or dormitory arrangements
- reasonable prices
- housing, feeding, classrooms
- water sites
- no consensus on dorms as deal breaker
- projectors or classroom kits
- locking office area
- gear cache site
- place for cleaning gear
- adequate parking at cave and cliff sites
- cell coverage; internet access

- access to catering
- access to “support” facilities (i.e. less than 10 miles to Wal-Mart/Sam's/Office Max)
- proximity to a copy center
- adult beverages permitted on campus
- local personnel to facilitate the pre-work (e.g. making on-site arrangements in advance)
- good landowner relations in the region

Nominations for BORC/Ed Board Positions

Education Board Member-at-Large

- Pat Seiser nominated by Pat Seiser
- Becky Jones nominated by Tim White

Nominations closed. Discussion in executive session. Dr. Mosberg recused himself from discussion.

Result: Becky Jones appointed to fill position.
Reconvened in regular session.

Database Manager

- Tricia Daugherty nominated by Anmar Mirza

Action: Tricia was called to confirm her willingness to serve in position. She confirmed.

Result: Tricia Daugherty appointed to fill position.

Announcements

- Frick's Cave SCCI Open House at the preserve. (Hudson summarized his e-mail invitation to Frick's for the event.)
- Anmar announced his maple syrup on sale
- Forrest found \$10 lights - single 3 watt LED module; see him if your interested
- Punches: Think ahead on upcoming positions. Coordinator positions open this summer, 2008, include Diving, Northeastern Region, Caribbean, Rocky Mountain, Western, Southwestern, Education Board Member at Large (Amanda completing Hudson's term)
- 2009 Winter Meeting will mark 10 years for Punches as National Coordinator. Punches does not intend to run for re-appointment.
- 2009 Winter meeting Greg's Ed Board position will be up for re-election.

Action Item: John Evans is to review last 3 years minutes and compile a schedule of BORC election terms. This is to be finished in the next 3 months. He is also to determine when DJ's term was intended to conclude.

Discussion Items

Recommendations from Education Committee

Small Party Self Rescue Course

Course concept paper presented by Becky Jones. **See attachment N.**
Discussion: Target audience is advanced cavers. No prior NCRC training required. Entry skills will be identified. Compatible with NCRC curriculum. Topics tailored to regions. Instructors from current NCRC pool – but approved by Training Coordinator to work in this capacity. Instructors must be very solid in caving and vertical work.

Punches requests amendment to wording of third paragraph, first sentence, page one: “SPSR materials will include flexible lesson plans

that focus on skill development rather than specific techniques or packaged presentations.”

Motion: To accept proposed concept for SPSR, as amended by Punches. **Passed.**

Media Relations

Discussion: has been in review and editing for 1.5 years.

Motion: Accepted as presented.

Action Item: Curriculum Coordinator to post final version on curriculum website/FTP site

Entrance Skills Testing Plan

Discussion: changes from last version included:

L3 student can only retest on 1 rigging station and 1 knot
L2 entry rigging skills are same as L1 exit skills, with allowance for retests. No extra points for tying knots faster than allowed time.

Motion: Accepted as presented.

Action Item: Curriculum Coordinator to post final version on curriculum website/FTP site.

Curriculum/Instructor Update

Discussion: can be taught by any NCRC instructor approved by Training Coordinator. Required prior to national seminar, and covers any policy or curriculum changes that have occurred within last 3 years. Not required if no changes have occurred during that time (but still recommended to keep instructors on same page). Emphasis is quality assurance. Applies to Level 1 and higher, but not small party or OCR. Will apply to future seminars for which authorization has not already been granted.

Motion: Accepted with modifications.

Final amended version reads:

“An Instructor Update shall be required prior to each national and regional seminar, and shall apply to Level 1 and higher seminars, but not to Small Party Self Rescue or Orientation to Cave Rescue events.

“The content of the Update shall be defined by the Training Coordinator or his/her designee and shall include an overview of policies, procedures and curriculum changes that have occurred within the last 3 years, and any other material determined by the Training Coordinator or BORC as necessary for inclusion.

“The coordinator or lead instructor of the proposed course must include a request for an Instructor Update in his/her seminar authorization request packet, and must clearly describe any requests for exemption (whether for the seminar in full or for individual instructors/specialists).

“The training coordinator may authorize an exemption to this policy if, in his/her opinion, reasonable accommodations have been made to ensure all participating instructors/specialists will be fully informed of current NCRC policies, procedures and curriculum relevant to said instructor/specialists’ assignments during the seminar.

“The course coordinator/lead instructor shall, in a timely manner, provide to the database manager a list of NCRC instructors who completed the Instructor Update.”

Mock Rescue

Discussion: Lesson plan presented by Steve Hudson. One modification to clarify that, in regional courses, instructors may fill ICS roles during mock. Instructors mentor during national seminar mocks.

Motion: approved as amended.

Action Item: Curriculum Coordinator to post final version to curriculum website/FTP site.

Single Rope Cooperative Patient Pick-off

Discussion: lesson plan has been revised to accommodate a wider variety of ascending systems.

Motion: approved as presented

Action Item: Curriculum Coordinator to post final version to curriculum website/FTP site.

NCRC Instructor Job Description

Discussion: not really curriculum, but more of a procedural document presented to the BORG to ensure all are comfortable with how the Ed Committee expects instructors to conduct themselves.

Motion: approved as presented

Action Item: Curriculum Coordinator to provide final version to John Evans for posting to policy & procedure website

NCRC Lead Instructor Job Description

Discussion: under section on Supervision, strike first point

Motion: approved as amended

Action Item: Curriculum Coordinator to provide final version to John Evans for posting to policy & procedure website

Instructor Recertification Schedule Policy

Discussion: request from Database Manager to tie recertification to a specific date.

Motion: accepted as amended by Panches.

Final version reads:

“To recertify, an NCRC instructor must have

- 1) attended an Instructor Update within the last 3 calendar years.
- 2) taught at least one Level 1 or higher event during the previous 3 calendar years
- 3) successfully completed an approved written test over NCRC curriculum and policies

“The recertification period begins on January 1 of the year following the date when the test is completed and continues for 3 calendar years.”

New Level (3 or 4)

Not ready for action.

Instructor Test

Discussion: Hudson requests clarification of BORC's objectives/expectations on this item. Much discussion, some question need for test – others adamant it is necessary. Intent is to keep instructors up to date with curriculum and policies – test gets instructors to review these items. Ed Committee has updated test and developed detailed answer key.

Action Item (by BORC consensus): A prior BORC motion required a pool of instructor test questions be posted to the NCRC website (ncrc.info). Lacking further direction from the BORC, the Ed Committee is to post the existing test to the website. Other questions may be added to the pool by the Ed Committee. These will be available as a study guide. The existing test will continue to be used for testing purposes.

Motion: Instructors shall be allowed to download the test and complete it in and unproctored format, and mail it to the testing coordinator. **Failed** (1 in favor, 7 against, 3 abstain: majority of BORC members want proctored test)

National Seminar Coordination Timeline and Responsibilities List

Discussion: working document under development by Ed Committee. How-to on running a seminar in accordance with policy.

Action Item: Hudson to send document to all BORC members

List of anticipated seminars (with # people and locations) in 2008

Punches solicited information in anticipation of request from Ted Kayes for insurance purposes.

Update contact info for NSS Members Manual

Punches solicited information to comply with NSS request

Update on ICS (Int Congress of Speleology)

Discussion: Roger Mortimer is our representative on this matter. Amanda Mortimer provided overview on Roger's behalf. He has considered a variety of options. Is now planning a one-day presentation session at the Congress. Efrain recommends series of 20-minute presentations. Beck is willing to arrange sites in Mexico if desired. DJ is willing to help since Congress will be held in his region. Punches encourages a group to represent NCRC to support exchange of information.

Action Item: by consent of BORC, plan is to hold a one-day session during Congress, organized by Roger Mortimer, with other BORC members attending and supporting as available.

Invitation to European Speleological Conf, August 2008, France, for international cave rescue exchange

Discussion: Punches was contacted. Organizers want US representatives to attend. Week-long event followed by week-long training. NCRC doesn't have specific authority to send people to France or pay for them to attend. Peri Frantz has suggested that NSS international grant may be available. Mercado says group of instructors from Caribbean Region are willing to attend at their own expense.

Motion: Efrain, Carlos, Bull and Blas will be the official representatives of the NCRC at the European Speleology Conference in August, 2008, and may apply for the NSS International Cooperation Grant to offset their expenses. **Passed.**

NCRC Scholarships

Discussion: Roger Mortimer, at the BORG's request, had chaired a committee to develop recommendations on how to utilize, and make awards from, the NSS Cave Rescue Training fund. Discussion was carried out in advance via e-mail. Roger presented 3 motions.

Motion: Each year at their Winter meeting the BORG will authorize a number of scholarships to be awarded based on money available in the NSS Cave Rescue Training Restricted Fund. Each scholarship will be in the area of half of the registration cost. The number will be restricted to allow ongoing scholarships based on the inflow of money into the fund. Scholarships are restricted to the National Seminar. A student at any level can be funded, but preference will be for levels 1 and 2. Deadline for application is 90 days prior to the National Seminar. The committee shall render a decision by 60 days prior to the seminar. The committee chair shall inform the National Coordinator who will direct the NSS Treasurer through the NSS AVP to disburse the funds to the seminar registrar. The application should include a caving/rescue CV, 3 letters of recommendation from NSS members, and a cover letter stating financial need and describing how training would benefit the caving community in their region. Letters from Grotto officers will be given more weight. The committee will decide based on NSS membership, financial need, and involvement in the caving community. They may also take into account geographical spread, level to be taken, and whether they have already had a scholarship. The application process will be posted on the NCRC web site. Seminar registration forms shall include the URL if funds will be available. The chair will send the information to be included in the NSS News. The chair will make a yearly report to the BORG on the actions of the committee. **Passed.**

Motion: The committee shall be composed of a non-voting chair from the BORG appointed by the National Coordinator who shall assemble a different committee each year composed of 5 instructors from different NCRC Regions. The chair shall assure that all Regions are represented equally over time. **Passed.**

Comment: The intent was that the Chair annually appoint members of the committee, rather than the National Coordinator.

Motion (as amended): The NCRC will authorize two scholarships of \$200 each for the 2008 National Seminar. Deadline for application this year is waived. The existing committee will make the student selections. Documentation for the Application Process must be given to John Evans no later than two weeks following the winter meeting. **Passed.**

On-line Database

Discussion: DJ has been working with Tricia to make elements of our database available on our website. These would include instructor status, seminar assignments, teaching application process. DJ provided a detailed outline with timeline.

Action Item: DJ is to e-mail his document to all BORG and Ed Committee members.

Mitchey Phones

Discussion: Jeff Good is working on this project. Requested information from BORG members on desired design features. Feedback: paired-wire ok (single wire function not necessary), inexpensive, simple, durable, 5000 foot range is sufficient. DJ suggested discussion be held at summer meeting on an NCRC position on communications.

Action Item: Jeff to procure three prototypes for testing at 2008 National Seminar.

Recognition of Tim Comer's Service to NCRC

Discussion led by DJ Walker. Precedent set by Jim Shire's award of Honorary Lifetime Instructor.

Motion: to award Honorary Lifetime Instructor status to Tim Comer, in recognition of his outstanding service to the NCRC. **Passed (Unanimously)**

Action Item: Tricia will make a certificate and send to DJ by March 1, 2008. DJ will award to Tim during their March OCR.

NCRC Book

Discussion led by Anmar Mirza. Roger Mortimer has rewritten hypothermia chapter.

Motion: to replace existing NCRC book chapter on this subject with the one written by Roger Mortimer. **Passed.**

Coordinator Fees at National Seminars

Discussion: Steve Hudson requests policy to assist in budgeting for national seminars. Existing practice has been to treat BORG members attending a national seminar in the role of student in the same manner as instructors with respect to seminar fees.

Motion: The following shall be added to National Seminar Policy: Persons holding NCRC Coordinator positions may register for Level 1, 2 or 3 at NCRC National Seminars at a special price. Coordinator's fee to be calculated in advance by the Course Coordinator for each event shall be: The sum of the projected budget cost per person for food, lodging, camping, text book and other printed matter, insurance fees and any other direct per-person or student cost. Indirect cost such prorated shares of instructor and staff living expenses, replacement equipment and the like will not be included in this fee. Fees to be paid at time of registration. **Passed.**

Bank Accounts for National Seminars

Discussion: prior BORG action had directed the National Coordinator and/or Finance Officer to establish bank accounts in association with fixed sites, to serve seminars held in those locations. Lacking BORG action on fixed sites, establishment of these accounts is premature.

Motion: Establishment of national accounts for fixed site seminars is tabled. **Passed.**

Investment Options

Discussion: prior BORG action directed the National Coordinator and/or Finance Officer to identify investment options for a portion of the funds currently held in the NCRC national account.

Action Item: Investment options will be considered at the summer meeting, at the discretion of the BORG.

Date for Next Winter BORG Meeting

January 31, 2009. Location to be determined.

Meeting Adjourned: 5:25 p.m.