2019 Year End Report

Narrative of Achievements:

Northern Region University (NRU) was held during a two week period with the majority of the classes held March 25-29, 2019 on the University of Montana Campus. The NRU team was able to host several multi-day certification courses the week prior, allowing students to participate in more classes during the main week.

Despite challenges with deadlines and reduced timeframes there were 1,310 enrollments at NRU which remained consistent with last year. We had 704 participants and 87 classes which is slightly lower compared to 2018.

We continue to pinpoint specific training needs through our regional training assessment survey. This year we noticed an increase in need for more certification courses and mission critical training from field positions and we were able to offer multiple sessions to accommodate these needs.

NRU has established another five year contract that will run from FY 2019-2023. We have also streamlined the processes and optimized efficiencies with the University of Montana. This positively impacted budgets and the overall uses of the facility. Regional Leadership, the NRU staff, and University of Montana employees continue to work together to keep costs down without sacrificing training quality.
Results from NRU 2019

- Students attending = 704 (slightly lower than last year)
- Average cost per student = $206
- Average travel cost per student = $97
- Students who reported $0 travel expenses = 224
- Students who took more than one course = 329
- Classes offered remotely (Webinar, conference call, etc....) = 3
NRU attendees came from all forests within Region 1. Although our training focus is primarily for Region 1 employees, we also had participation from all FS regions, the WO, and other agencies.

### Course Offerings by Category

- Acquisition Management: 5%
- Computer Skills: 7%
- Engineering: 17%
- Fire: 27%
- Leadership and Personal Development: 16%
- Natural Resources: 9%
- Retirement: 14%
- Safety: 6%

### Other notes of interest

1. **Our most popular offerings were Land Use, Contracting, and Retirement which drew hundreds of enrollments when combined. GIS and NEPA related topics were also very popular.**

2. **This year for our Keynote program Julie Kies organized “Lightning Talks”. Several people from multiple disciplines each put together a 5 minute presentation on what they were currently working on. The keynote session was well attended and received by the approximately 150 people in attendance with an excellent Q&A session at the end. Due to the positive attendance and feedback we will engage a similar keynote session next year with different topics.**

3. **NRU continues to partner with the Southwest Montana Wildland Fire Training Center and the Northern Rockies Training Center in hosting ICS-300 and ICS-400 at the University again this year. The results of this collaborative effort have been very beneficial for all parties involved, coupling discipline-specific expertise and organization with a large student base.**

4. **We plan to send out a survey to all regional employees in September to assess training needs again.**

5. **Survey results provided positive feedback. Of the participants that responded to our NRU survey, 97% said they would recommend NRU to others.**
Proposals for NRU 2020:

1. Continue to network with other regions to offer courses on programs relevant to each region to increase networking, open communication, and different methods of conducting business. (Examples: FOIA, Records, Fire, NEPA). The survey results suggested sharing this excellent resource and reaching out and advertising to other FS regions.

2. Per the NRU survey results, we would like to offer different engineering courses, more leadership courses, administrative management courses for supervisors, and an Intro to NEPA course.

Comments from NRU 2019 survey:

“NRU is great, glad I could participate this year.”
“Love NRU! It was great and well-coordinated.”
“96% of people who responded to the survey said that they would recommend NRU to others.”