

Plumas County Fire Safe Council



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Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 8, 2015 - 9:00 am.
Plumas County
Planning & Building Services Conference Room
555 Main Street – Quincy, CA

Board of Directors

Mike De Lasaux, Chair (16)
Chuck Bowman, Vice Chair (15)
Mike Callaghan, Sect/Treasurer (16)
Jim Hamblin (15)
Deb Bumpus (15)
Shane Vargas (16)
Jerry Sipe (16)

PC FSC will comply with the American Disabilities Act (ADA) by making every reasonable attempt to accommodate any attendee or participant at our meetings needing special assistance beyond what is normally provided. Please contact the Plumas Corporation at 530-283-3739 at least 5 business days prior to a scheduled meeting to inform us of your particular needs and to determine if accommodation is feasible. Please advise us at the time you call if special assistance is required to attend or participate in meetings on a regular basis.

Mission Statement:

“To reduce the loss of natural and human made resources caused by wildfire through Firewise Community programs and pre-fire activities.”

2015 Goals:

- Implement and amend as necessary the Plumas County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP);
- Increase public knowledge and awareness of hazards associated with wildland fire and inform the public about efforts that can be made to reduce their vulnerability to wildland fire;
- Increase community-based involvement in fuels reduction and facilitate the development of additional Firewise Communities in Plumas County;
- Identify, develop and implement community hazardous fuel reduction projects;
- Develop a strategy to provide for sustainable and renewable project funding and reduce the Council's dependence on grant funding;
- Explore green waste disposal and community chipping options for all communities in the County.

1. Welcome & Introductions—Mike De Lasaux
2. Review Agenda-- Mike De Lasaux **Jerry Sipe motion, Jim Hamblin second, passed**
3. Review Meeting Minutes-- Mike De Lasaux **Brian West motion, Jim Hamblin second, passed**
4. Public Comments—**None**

New Business

1. Discuss future of Council coordination—Mike DeLasaux

Nils Lunder will not continue as the coordinator of the Council in 2016. Currently Deer Creek Resources (DCR) has a contract with the Plumas Corporation to provide Coordination services for the PC FSC, Nils is currently an employee of DCR. The contract is set to expire at the end of the year. Deer Creek is interested in extending the contract into 2016 if they can find a suitable replacement.

Mike De Lasaux (Plumas Corporation Board member): Overview: PC FSC became a non profit in 2001, they decided to use the Plumas Corporation (P.C.) as a fiscal agent at that time and hired a coordinator as an independent contractor. In the past John Sheehan (CEO of Plumas Corporation) was very involved with the activities of the PCFSC, he worked closely with the contracted Coordinator to run the Council. Sheehan left P.C. three years ago and since that time the Coordinator has had additional responsibilities (historically the Coordinator was responsible for community outreach, project oversight, education and community interaction while Sheehan was very involved with the writing of grants, budget tracking and grant reporting).

Jim Wilcox (Plumas Corporation Chief Operations Officer):

- **Currently P.C. has concerns about having a contracted coordinator because of potential IRS implications.**
- **The PCFSC must use each project to develop capacity and to create a strategy for building future projects before the grant opportunities are announced**
- **The PCFSC needs to work with communities in advance of funding opportunities**
- **The PCFSC needs a longer term strategy**

Nils Lunder (Current PCFSC Coordinator): Nils feels that the Coordination of the PCFSC is a complex job that requires a diverse set of skills. He feels that the current structure of the organization has too many decision makers and that it may be more simple if the PC FSC becomes independent from the P.C.

- **This would require a Coordinator that can do a variety of tasks and that can delegate to their partners (Rachael Norton and Mike McCourt)**
- **Nils feels that having P.C. as a fiscal agent actually reduces the potential for PC FSC to accomplish their goal of becoming more independent from grant funding because of the flat 10% indirect cost.**
- **Also having P.C. as a fiscal agent may confine the PC FSC's ability to generate revenue (example of removing and selling bug killed trees as a potential revenue source), if those opportunities are seen as a liability to P.C., then the PC FSC does not have the ability to innovate and to take advantage of opportunities that present themselves as the Council serves residents of the County.**
- **Nils acknowledged that if the PCFSC continues to work with P.C. as a fiscal agent, that it makes sense for the Coordinator to be an employee of the P.C. because of the required communication between the PC FSC and Jim Wilcox and Diann Jewett (P.C. Administrative Assistant).**
- **If the new Coordinator is a P.C. employee, Nils recommends that a contract is developed between P.C. and DCR so that Nils can support the new Coordinator during the transition while being compensated to do so.**

John Kolb (Plumas Corporation Board President): Based on conversations at the most recent P.C. board meeting, the P.C. would like to have the future Coordinator as an employee of the P.C. John feels that the services provided by the Corporation (office space, grant management, book

keeping, supplies, etc) will help the PC FSC as they work through the current transition and that without the P.C., the PC FSC would have a difficult time sustaining themselves.

Jerry Sipe (PC FSC Board member, Director of Plumas County Office of Emergency Services):

Jerry inquired about the indirect cost that Plumas Corporation charges to oversee the PC FSC, Jim Wilcox reported that the Corporation charges a flat 10% on all items associated with the PCFSC (including Council Coordination invoices from DCR, grant dollars spent, employee pay roll, etc), Jim also mentioned that they should probably charge more.

Mike De Lasaux: Plumas Corporation has always charged 10%, but they only receive that from billed invoices, Mike pointed out that there are \$1.2 million in grant funds with the PCFSC at this time and that many of the grants have languished, and that leads to cash flow issues for the PC.

Jim Wilcox: Currently P.C. has approximately \$100,000 in overhead each year, this includes rent, electricity, office equipment, office supplies, etc)

Mike De Lasaux: John Sheehan drew from the 10% overhead of P.C. and also on some of the grants, while the Coordinator costs are covered by grants. With John Sheehan gone, the PCFSC receives less service from the P.C. than it did when he was involved.

- Does the PC FSC want to continue to have a contracted Coordinator, or should the PC FSC work toward having a Coordinator that is an employee of the P.C.?

Jim Wilcox: My time is drawn from the 10% overhead

- Communication is imperative within the P.C. to ensure that all parties are on the same page
- P.C. prefers that the next Coordinator is an employee of the P.C.
- The best use of PC FSC time and money is to have the Coordinator as an employee of P.C.

John Kolb: P.C. already has four employees that are associated with the PC FSC, the Coordinator should be another employee of P.C.

Jerry Sipe: Should the PC FSC be concerned that Title III funding may not be allocated to the group if there is such a strong nexus with the P.C.? County politics and views of P.C. could be something to consider. Is it a conflict of interest that the Chair of the PCFSC (Mike De Lasaux) is also a board member of the P.C.?

Rachael Norton (Outreach Coordinator of the PC FSC, employee of P.C.): Having the Coordinator as an employee of P.C. could be complicated. The Coordinator would then have two boards of directors to answer to, how will that be managed? Who is in charge?

Mike De Lasaux: The current Coordinator is limited to ~20 hours per week due to other commitments and other contracts. That has limited what the Coordinator has been able to accomplish for the PC FSC.

Mike Callaghan (Board member of the PCFSC): The current relationship between the PC FSC and P.C. is based on an antiquated Memorandum of Understanding and that is a weak link in the relationship. Maybe the PCFSC should having an Executive Director (employee of P.C.) that delegates tasks to other P.C. staff.

Claude Sanders: Depending on the direction that the PCFSC chooses for the future Coordinator, how will that affect the recruitment of the future Coordinator? Who leads the recruitment effort? P.C. or PC FSC?

Jim Wilcox: P.C. has the contract with DCR, so it is the responsibility of P.C. to lead the recruitment effort.

Mike De Lasaux:

- Board members will work with P.C. to identify details of the position.
- Mike Callaghan and Chuck Bowman will help to facilitate the process.
- The current Memorandum of Understanding will be reviewed and will be modified into a formal contract

Jerry Sipe: Who drives the details regarding the funding of the Coordinator position (rate of pay, etc)?

Jim Wilcox: P.C. will not drive the details of the position; they will develop cost/hour including overhead/indirect costs and will share info with the PC FSC board

MOTION: PCFSC REQUESTS THAT P.C. SOLICITS APPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE COORDINATOR OF THE COUNCIL—JERRY SIPE, MIKE CALLAGAHAN SECONDS, MOTION PASSES

2. Discussion and action regarding the PC FSC policy on the prioritization check list for future HFR projects in the region—Mike Callaghan

Mike De Lasaux recommends that the word Community is inserted into the title as that will better reflect the mission of the PC FSC.

Ryan Bauer recommends that the matching funds element should be removed in order to reduce the potential for accusations of discrimination against disadvantaged communities, especially with regard to NEPA and Federal funding of projects.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE PRIORITIZATION LIST WITH THE SUGGESTED MODIFICATIONS—MIKE CALLAHAN, SECOND CLAUDE SANDERS, MOTION PASSES

Updates

1. Discussion of potential PC FSC funding sources, upcoming opportunities--Nils Lunder, Mike De Lasaux

Mike De Lasaux provided some background on the California Forest Improvement Program:

- In the past the program was funded by the sale of timber from state demonstration forests.
- Then it was funded by California Proposition 40.
- Now it is funded by a two year grant from the Timber Regulation and Forest Restoration fund.
- There will be no CAL FIRE forester to support these funds locally, but will be based in regional offices

Nils Lunder reported that program reimburses landowners 75% of the cost from forest improvement projects and 90 % for projects on properties that have sustained major damage by

fire, insects and disease with in the past 10 years. Nils hopes that the PC FSC will be able to share info on this program with interested landowners and help to increase awareness of similar programs with Plumas County residents who are hoping to do work to improve their forest lands.

- **CFIP funds multiple activities, major ones include forest management plans, Registered Professional Forester supervision and conservation practices.**
- **Conservation practices include forest road repair and upgrading as long as the project maintains or enhances fish and wildlife habitats.**

2. Status update of Current Grants– Nils Lunder

- A. 252–Stevens 2010- In-kind, C Road—**Bids have come in this week: both are for more than the balance of our in kind funds. Next steps? Ask landowners if they can pay some? CSD has paid in-kind thus far.**
- B. 256—Title III, PC FSC Council Coordination 2015–2016--
- C. 257A—Title II Resource Advisory Committee, Cutler Meadows—**Awaiting Decision Memo from Mt Hough RD.**
- D. 257C--Sierra Nevada Conservancy, La Porte Road—**Piles will be burned ASAP, weather permitting**
- E. 257D—La Porte Road In Kind Funds--
- F. 258--Stevens 2011– 200 acres of Soper lands (Lee Summit, East Quincy)—**Mastication is under way at Lee Summit, East Quincy will follow**
- G. 259—Stevens 2012, Burlington Northern, Graeagle Land and Water—**Landowner list has been compiled, 274 landowners at this point, many small lots, PCFSC approved Nils to send out letters and invite folks to participate in public meeting at the HB Fire Station in November; Nils asked if in-kind funds will be required? This grant does not require any. No resolution on that issue during the meeting. The Stevens 2012 grant will expire at the end of the September 2017, no extension beyond that.**
 - a. **Mike De Lasaux informed the PC FSC that this project was initially developed by a RPF named Keith Crummer.**
 - b. **He feels that at the meeting we will offer the participating landowners 3 options: contractors, CAL FIRE work crews, or NRCS Programs.**
- H. 260--Stevens 2014, West Quincy Highway— **Planning, mapping, and layout will be occurring in order to complete Decision Memo analysis per discussion with USFS in August.**
- I. 261— Title II Resource Advisory Committee, Indian Valley—**Nils is proposing that remaining funds be used to purchase some signs, do some local media and host a field trip to other projects in the Indian Valley. Ryan Bauer informed Nils that a modification will need to be prepared for this change. Nils will prepare the required paperwork to make that happen.**
 - a. **Landowner In Kind Funds—Will be used on a future project, Williams/Pecks is next area being developed**
- J. 262—Title II Resource Advisory Committee, Feather River Stewardship Coalition—**Meetings continue: October 19 (in Quincy, a discussion on how the FRSC can be more involved with the Lakes Basin Project), October 21 (monthly meeting at the Indian Valley Community Center at 6 PM, logo contest of FRC art classes, winner will be selected at Greenville meeting), and October 29 (Lakes Basin Field Trip)**

- K. 263-- Title II Resource Advisory Committee, Senior/Disabled Defensible Space Assistance—**Program has funds remaining, Mike McCourt will be developing another round of projects in 2016.**
- L. 265– Title III, Greenhorn CSD -Firewise Communities USA & CWPP Development—**CWPP planning meeting scheduled for October 22 at the Fire Station**
- M. 266--Title III, Senior/Disabled Defensible Space Assistance Coordination—**Funding is nearly gone, PCFSC has applied for Title III fund to continue the coordination of this program.**
- N. 271—State Responsibility Area Fee-funded American Valley Project--**AV HFR, approx. 40 landowners at almost exactly 150 acres, ~99% of landowner meetings have been completed. Next steps include final layout, mapping and permitting. Implementation will be occurring throughout 2016 season.**

Nils wants to meet with landowners in the Mohawk Vista area that have signed up for a future HFR project and to work on developing a SRA proposal for the community in advance of the next round of funding; hopes to have Rachael Norton help with the process.

Nils and Mike provided an update re: the proposal that was submitted to the Sierra Nevada Conservancy to pay for fuel reduction work on public lands in the Lake Davis and Round Valley Reservoir areas. SNC has requested that PC FSC/Plumas National Forest develop a land tenure agreement for the project areas. Work is being done to draft the required document.

- 2. Plumas County OES update—**Jerry Sipe reported that the State 4290 standards have been updated by the Board of Forestry. Plumas County has been operating with an exemption and that exemption will be expiring. Plumas County will have to re-apply for a new exemption or will have to adopt the new 4290 standards. These standards only apply to new construction. Main changes include the roadway vehicle load bearing, the minimum load bearing will be increased from 40,000 to 70,000 lbs, other changes affect driveway specifications. The County is concerned that new standards will impact future development in the region.**
- 3. Plumas County green waste disposal update—**The PC FSC discussed the development of a County wide chipping program. Nils feels that another proposal should be submitted to the SRA program this year. There was disagreement about this as some feel that submitting more than one proposal may reduce the potential that any of the proposals will be funded. No resolution was made during the meeting regarding the development of a proposal for chipping.**
- 4. CAL FIRE Update—**Shane Vargas reported that his Unit has apprehended a serial arsonist.**
 - a. **Scott Rosikewicz reported that SRA applications will be announced on the SRA website as soon as mid-October, he recommends that we monitor the website.**
 - b. **Greenhouse Gas applications regarding Hazardous Fuel reduction projects are still under review in Sacramento.**
- 5. USFS Hazardous Fuel Reduction Update—**Ryan Bauer reported that the USFS has awarded the Bucks Lake Stewardship Project contract to Pew Logging of Indian Valley. The project will include commercial harvest, subsidized biomass removal, grapple piling and other activities and will take place over the next 5 years. Ryan also reported that the PNF will begin prescribed burning operations throughout the region.**
- 6. Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District update—**Julie Ruiz announced that the NSAQMD is preparing for the “burn season”. They have been conducting outreach in the area re: open pile burning and has also been actively conducting burn permit education.**
- 7. Other HFR updates-
- 8. Implementation of the Plumas County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP), fuel reduction projects, local Firewise Community activities, community events—

- **Nils reported on planned activities of the PC FSC including Genesee Woods property consultations on October 13 as a part of the effort to help their community apply for Firewise status.**
- **Butterfly Valley Firewise Assessment on October 20.**
- **Greenhorn CWPP stakeholder meeting October 22.**
- **The PC FSC/PCOES has been assisting with the development of a CWPP for the Lake Almanor Country Club, a stakeholder meeting is being planned for early December.**
- **Chuck Bowman announced that the Graeagle Fire Protection District will be having their Firewise activity day on October 17 from 0930-1230. They will be working to remove forest fuels near the entrance area of Whitehawk along state route 89.**

Upcoming events

October 21:Indian Valley public meeting of FRSC

October 29:Lakes Basin Field Tour—Aspen and Meadows

Adjourn, next meeting November 12, 2015