

Plumas County Fire Safe Council



Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 13th, 2021 - 9:00 am.

Via Zoom

Mission Statement: "To reduce the loss of natural and human made resources caused by wildfire through Firewise Community programs and pre-fire activities."

Board of Directors

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chair , John Reynolds Firewise Community (21)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vice Chair , Kathy Kogge Firewise Community (21)	<input type="checkbox"/> Secretary/Treasurer Dan Martynn, Retired (22)	<input type="checkbox"/> Lindsay Wood Plumas Audubon Society(22)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Don Gasser RPF (22)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trina Cunningham Maidu Summit Consort. (22)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mike Callaghan Firewise Community (22)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chuck Bowman Firewise Community (21)
<input type="checkbox"/> Jim Hamblin Citizen (21)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ryan Bauer USFS PNF (22)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brad Graevs Feather River RCD (21)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Richard Stockton State Farm (21)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ryan Tompkins UCCE (21)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tracey Ferguson Plumas County Planning (21)	<input type="checkbox"/> Ron Heinbockel Plumas Fire Chiefs (21)	

1. Welcome & Introductions – John Reynolds (32 participants)
2. Review Agenda – no changes
3. Approval of April Meeting Minutes – approved via online survey
4. Presentation of Certificate of Recognition Program - Mr. Reynolds presented certificates to May's nominees:
 - Claude Sanders
 - Ryan Tompkins

Hannah Hepner added that the Certificate of Recognition for Ryan Tompkins came from the Quincy Firewise Community, but there are many other ways we could be thanking him for his involvement.

Brad Graevs shared that Plumas Underburn Cooperative would not be as successful without Ryan's involvement. He has been invaluable to the development of PUC.

Richard Stockton said that Ryan has been particularly helpful in forming Quincy Firewise. He has also worked hard to develop the Firewise investment recording software which will be extremely helpful to not only Quincy Firewise, but all Firewise Communities.

5. Public Comment: none
6. Board Comment: Tracy Ferguson – looking for new space for monthly meetings. Brainstorm for meeting location.

Mr. Reynolds – Zoom meetings are accessible for those who are out of town. Committee to be formed on deciding what options we might have.

Ms. Hepner is looking at using the PCFSC office space for future meetings and integrating zoom.

New Business

1. Firewise Reporting Form – Ryan Tompkins shared information about the online tool for Firewise investment reporting. The format mirrors NFPA investment examples. Paper records are still useable. NFPA has expressed some interested in using tool for all Firewise reporting. Mr. Tompkins gave a quick demonstration on how to use the tool and what data it can report. He encouraged Firewise communities to come up with a target value of investments to meet for the year.

Mr. Stockton – Need to clarify on investment hours to participating Firewise Community members. There is no cash reimbursement for investments and invested hours only count as volunteer hours.

Mr. Reynolds – The tradeoff is insurance security.

Sally McGowan – Can you enter data as on ongoing process for Firewise renewal? Mr. Tompkins responded that there is no link directly between NFPA and the Firewise investment reporting tool yet. However he can pull the data annually for each Firewise community to report.

2. Ratification of Resolution 2021-02 Sierra Nevada Conservancy Wildfire Resilience proposal – Quincy Wildfire Protection Project

Ms. Hepner described the project. The resolution is for a proposal to the Sierra Nevada Conservancy. Votes were taken via email prior to the proposal's due date - no need to vote at this time.

3. Board Vote: Resolution 2021-03 CAL FIRE Fire Prevention proposal – Eastern Plumas Wildfire Prevention Project

Ms. Hepner explained that that project changed from a Forest Health to a Fire Prevention proposal based on the number of acres of private lands in the project. The budget cap was \$5 million for Forest Health, but with private lands alone the budget was to 5.8 million. Public lands will need separate funding source.

Vote - Ayes: John Reynolds, Kathy Kogge, Don Gasser, Trina Cunningham, Mike Callahan, Chuck Bowman, Ryan Bauer, Brad Graevs, Richard Stockton, Ryan Tompkins, Tracey Ferguson.

Noes: none.

Absent: Dan Martynn, Lindsay Wood

4. Board Vote: Resolution 2021-04 CAL FIRE Fire Prevention proposal – Community Chipping Program

Ms. Hepner said the request is for an additional 3 years of funding from CALFIRE for the Chipping Program. Included in the budget is funding for the software that is now in use.

Vote – Ayes: John Reynolds, Kathy Kogge, Don Gasser, Trina Cunningham, Mike Callahan, Chuck Bowman, Ryan Bauer, Brad Graevs, Richard Stockton, Ryan Tompkins, Tracey Ferguson.

Noes: none.

Absent: Dan Martynn, Lindsay Wood

5. Board Vote: Resolution 2021-05 CAL FIRE Fire Prevention proposal – Lake Almanor Peninsula HFR

Ms. Hepner shared that this proposal will be submitted for the next funding round. The most significant property owner has chosen to undertake timber sale within the next two years. PCFSC does not want to be committed to a grant deliverable while waiting on the timber sale.

Penny Leinwander asked if the timber sale will accomplish fire break goals for Bailey Creek. Ms. Hepner responded that the timber sale will address slash and provide a significant benefit over no treatment. PCFSC will follow up with HFR for a 350 foot fuel break around the communities.

6. Landowner Cost-Share Waiver for White Sulfur Springs – Ms. Hepner said that White Sulphur Springs is part of the Mohawk Valley Project and includes 30 acres for treatment. White Sulphur Springs had a plan to submit a CAL FIRE grant proposal to cover their \$7,500 cost share to participate in the Fire Safe Council’s Mohawk Valley HFR project. Alternatively the PCFSC Board could consider a cost share waiver for the property. Any board opposition to approving cost share? No objections.

7. Wildfire Preparedness Day event information – Ms. Rouse screen shared event flyer and schedule for the day.

Old Business

None

Updates

● **CAL FIRE:**

Jonathan Pangburn introduced himself as the new CAL FIRE Area Forester based out of Quincy.

● **Feather River RCD:**

Mr. Graevs – Applications to SNC for Mohawk Valley Project submitted. Working on CAL FIRE forest health proposal centered around Indian Valley. Applying for additional project funding. Application to CAL FIRE to Biochar Program funding under Fire Prevention and will operate similar to the chipping program. Applying for more PUC funding. Working on wrapping up projects in Moonlight area but unable to burn piles, too dry. Completed planting and moving back into thinning work. Thinning 89 corridor.

- **Feather River Stewardship Coalition:**

Ms. Hepner – FRSC with PNF is hosting a North Complex tour on May 21st. If you would like to attend, please RSVP. Meeting at PCFSC office. The tour will visit private as well as public lands.

- **Firewise Communities:**

Ms. Rouse – Summarized Firewise Leads meeting. New proposed communities of Butterfly Valley and Chandler Heights. Greenville and Greenhaven looking towards scheduling assessment.

- **Timber:**

Camille Swezy – representing J&C Enterprises. J&C Enterprises is affected by a non-existent lumber market. Prior to April 1st, J&C completed 500 acres of thinning on Genesee Valley Ranch. Recently completed 75 acres around Copper Creek Camp in Greenville as biomass only. Limits on what biomass facilities can accept. New chipper has been purchased.

Don Gasser – Are there any new entrants in the field that can help you out?

Ms. Swezy – Yes. Large scale fires are affecting the market greatly. Salvage logging is the main option. Joe Smailes added that it may be about 2 years until market improves.

- **Insurance:**

Mr. Stockton – one of the main goals for Firewise to is to keep insurance companies affordable. New discounts available for State Farm insurance in terms of fire proactivity. Encouraging home owners to make home hardening improvements. Language has changed to include “home hardening” and “wildfire prevention”. This applies to individual home owners and not just zip codes. Quincy Firewise has successfully submitted application to NFPA.

- **Utilities:**

Not present

- **NRCS:**

Not present – new District Conservationist has been hired. (Ben McNally)

Mr. Smailes – worked with new District Conservationist, looking to get treatment done through NRCS.

Mike Yost – McNally visited Taylorsville, treatment to begin on shaded fuel break with NRCS

- **NSAQMD:**

Julie Ruiz – check status for open burning. Fire danger is high. Plumas County is open for burning today (5/13/2021). CALFIRE makes last minute decisions, so check each morning.

- **Plumas Audubon Society:**

Not present

Ms. Hepner said there was a field tour of Quincy Watershed's Improvement site at the beginning of the week. The planning document for that project should be finished soon.

- **Plumas Fire Chiefs Association:**

Not present

- **Office of Emergency Services:**

Not present

- **Plumas County Planning Department:**

Tracy Ferguson - ANNOUNCEMENT - The State Minimum Fire Safe Regulations 2021 rulemaking package has been published effective April 23, 2021 and comments will be received up and until the public hearing before the Board of Forestry on June 1, 2021. You can view the 45-day Notice, Initial Statement of Reasons, and Rule Text at the Board's webpage at <https://bof.fire.ca.gov/regulations/proposed-rule-packages/>. The Plumas County Board of Supervisors will have an agenda item on their June 2, 2021 for public information and comment. Working on address senate bill 379. Adaption strategies for Climate Change. Step one is vulnerability assessment. Working to address critical vulnerabilities. Meetings to come for public outreach.

- **Plumas Underburn Cooperative:**

Matt West – TREX event for Spring 2021 is wrapping up. Hopes to burn in Little Grass Valley reservoir and night burn in Butterfly Valley. Basic 32 in Quincy this weekend. Refresher to come soon. Pack test tomorrow at 9:00am. Workshop with Cromberg/Sloat Firewise community planned for June 5th – “How to Prepare Your Land for Fire.” In person PUC meeting today at Old Highway Road Firewise Community at 12:00pm. Radio interview with Brad Graevs and Hannah Hepner through KQNY airing today and Sunday. Wildfire Preparedness Day event on Saturday includes a PUC fundraiser. RCD working on more funding for Matt West's position. New legislation will hold burn bosses to a gross negligence standard for suppression costs on prescribed fires.

- **Sierra Nevada Conservancy:**

Not present

- **Tree Mortality Update:**

None

- **Tribal Representatives:**

Trina Cunningham – MSC working on numerous partnerships across homelands. MSC will be stepping back from partnerships in order to manage land in the manner MSC sees fit. Developing a Landscape Scale Emergency Response Plan that maps sacred Maidu Sites. This plan can be used for wildfire response and includes evacuation plans for Native Lands.

- **UC Cooperative Extension:**

Mr. Tompkins – no additional updates.

- **USFS:**

Ryan Bauer – Prescribed burning seasons is wrapping up – looking for burn windows for two more projects. Field season for mechanical operators in underway. Fuel moisture levels for PNF is where we are expected to be for July. Fire Crews will be certified by the end of the week.

- **State Parks:**

Not present

1. Status of Current Grants

- **Senior/Disabled Defensible Space:**

Mike McCourt – List of addresses out to contractors for this work this week. One bid so far. Still have applications coming in. 140 people so far. Work should begin by the end of May.

- **Chipping:**

Gary Parque – the new software is up and running. Small glitches to be worked out. New phone number – check PCFSC website.

Ms. Hepner – Waitlisted people may be able to receive service. 176 people signed up. Some rural address are not recognized, you are able to put in a nearby address and specify your location in the notes.

Mr. Parque – grant money available for chipping program to help with air quality.

Ms. Ruiz – Money must be spent in non-attainment areas which is limited to Portola.

- **HFR Project Schedule:**

Mr. West – most project work is at high elevation. Starting at the end of this week or next week, higher elevation areas will be clear enough for treatment. Additional Butterfly Valley units have been contracted.

Ms. Hepner – Private Lands American Valley project in underway for mastication. Layout for Portola/Quincy/Chester will begin soon.

2. Status of Grant Budgets:

Ms. Hepner – 292, Living with Fire is expended.

Mr. Gasser – cost center 293 for coordination is nearly expended, is there a plan for additional funds?

Ms. Hepner – Coordination will continue to be funded with Plumas Corporation funds. Coordination time is also built into each project budget. RAC Title II funds will be available soon.

3. Status of Potential Projects/Grant Opportunities:

Ms. Hepner – Applied to PGE to treat 102 acres in Quincy, not awarded. Will be treated by CALFIRE. Submitted proposal to SNC for Quincy Wildfire Protection Project. Innovative Finance for National Forests grant due June 30th that can be used for scalable initiatives for forest health.

4. Other Updates & Upcoming Events:

Adjourn - Next meeting June 10th, 2021