

Plumas County Fire Safe Council



Board of Directors

Mike Callaghan, Chair (16)
Chuck Bowman, Vice Chair (17)
Mike De Lasaux, Sec/Treasurer (16)
Don Gasser (17)
Jim Hamblin (17)
Jerry Sipe (16)
Shane Vargas (16)

Mission Statement:

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

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, October 13, 2016 - 9:00 am.

Plumas County Planning & Building Services Conference Room
555 Main Street, Quincy, CA

1. Welcome & Introductions – Chuck Bowman
2. Review Agenda – **no changes, m- De Lasaux, s- S. McCourt, passed.**
3. Approve Meeting Minutes – **m- Gasser, s-Hamblin, passed.**
4. Public Comments

Lori Simpson requested that Plumas County Board of Supervisors email addresses be added to Council contact list.

Paul Harris, resident of Greenville, has spoken to Paul Violett about 50 acres of Soper Wheeler land that poses a fuels risk to the adjacent community. Soper Wheeler doesn't have the resources to treat it and suggested that Paul request the services of the Fire Safe Council. Chuck Bowman directed Mr. Harris to the online application to request services. Discussion about the location and merits of the project followed.

MaryBeth Farley, of the Union Pacific Railroad, offered small diameter logs that are collecting on the railroad's right of way.

Old Business

1. Transition of Mission of Feather River Stewardship Coalition –

Hannah Hepner summarized her proposal to incorporate coordination of the Feather River Stewardship Coalition into the Fire Safe Council Coordinator job duties.

John Sheehan gave a historical perspective and highlighted the three components necessary: Industry, the Forest Service, and the community. In the future there are other organizations and individuals who need to be involved.

Mike De Lasaux asked the council to consider what work is being sacrificed on private land if the FSC Coordinator is working on the Coalition.

Dan Martynn requested information regarding a budget for continuing the coalition. Hannah believes that the existing balance of \$10,000 from the RAC grant will be sufficient for the next year.

Ryan Tompkins added that the fiscal year has turned and that money once earmarked for the coalition has been reallocated. There may be still be funds available in the next fiscal year. Additionally, he highlighted the benefits of projects undertaken with PNF: the Forest Service does all of the contract prep, there is one landowner with the skills to do the work, and there is a large sum directed to the PC FSC and Plumas Corporation.

Mike De Lasaux mentioned that Title II funds may be available again once a RAC is formed.

John Sheehan noted that these projects are completing DFPZs of the QLG. The projects remove non-merchantable materials and include burning. He suggests there is a need to get back to a situation where PNF is doing commercial removal.

Don Gasser – motion to accept the proposal as a means for going forward. Seconded.

Vote by the council passed and was unanimous.

Updates

1. Plumas County Tree Mortality Task Force –

The first task force meeting convened last week. There was active discussion and consensus that we are not currently in a crisis state in Plumas County. The task force is developing a preventative Incident Action Plan (IAP), which will position us to respond in the event of a crisis. The IAP, with working group objectives, will be available at the next Council meeting. The next meeting of the TMTF is Wednesday November 2nd.

2. Status of Current Grants –

Hannah Hepner confirmed with Sara Taddo Jones that C-road Narrows burning will be completed this fall. The Cutler Meadows project is nearly complete. The final report for 258 (Lee Summit, Dwyer Tree Farm) has been submitted. Danielle Bradfield (RPF #2808) has signed the contract for the East Shore Lake Almanor project. Parcel assessments will be conducted by Kyle Felker next week. The Hwy 70 project is still awaiting NEPA approval. Sara expects to have the contractor bids completed this fall and work to begin next spring. The hand thin treatments for American Valley have begun. Mastication work will begin once the archeological report is approved. The Dixie Valley project needs a contract addendum for the forester. The final Collection Agreement with the Forest Service for the Wolf/Grizzly project should be ready in November. A Tenancy Agreement for the Bucks Lake project is being drafted. We are still awaiting the grant agreement for the CA Fire Safe Council award to the Senior Disabled program. Mohawk Vista and Gold Mountain have been awarded Stevens Funds. The Gold Mountain project needs development. Discussion of the potential scope of work followed. Mike De Lasaux commented that we have had a hard time “keeping up” with

Stevens funds as the projects have been limited by available RPFs, contractors, and Coordinator turnover. Therefore, projects should be well developed before submittal for grant funding.

2. Status of Grant Applications in Process -

Three SRA grants were submitted. They have been reviewed locally for completeness and returned to the State. Results should be announced in late Nov/early Dec.

4. Standing Reports and Discussion

- Website Development Committee – The website is ready and awaiting the domain changeover. There will be an announcement once it is live.
- Senior/Disabled Defensible Space Assistance Program - Mike McCourt said the program is slow this time of year, but applications continue to trickle in. He is writing the final report for the RAC funds.
- Plumas County Office of Emergency Services (OES) – Sue McCourt is incorporating social media. Cell phones need to be registered for CodeRed, landlines will receive alerts automatically. Lori Simpson added that the BOS wants people to keep landlines because cell coverage in the area is unreliable. Cary Curtis added that cell towers don't have back-up generators. Sue also shared that Plumas County GIS has useful maps at: Plumascounty.us under the GIS section.
- CAL FIRE – Don Gordon said inspectors will remain on duty until the end of the month and will return in April. It is a great time of year to do heavier maintenance and burning. On Friday (10/14) the burn restriction will be lifted for permit holders. Residents will still need to check with air quality for restrictions. Burning without a permit will be allowed in a few weeks time dependent on weather. Julie Ruiz added that 9am-3pm are the Air Quality Management recommended hours. Scott Rosikiewicz said that 260 applications were received by the state for SRA grant funding. Sean Delacour said that trucks will be staffed until Dec 31st. Don Gordon added that CAL FIRE can keep staff on if there is work for them to do as part of readiness measures due to the drought. Sean should be contacted to request crew assistance on projects. Mike De Lasaux asked if there was any follow-through with the projects that were prioritized at a prior Council meeting. Sean responded that, yes, they were and those involved were very happy with the outcomes. Mike D – Followed to say that these efforts are SRA funds coming back to the community and their success should be in the media. Additionally, the opportunity to utilize crews could be advertised. Discussion followed about potential projects that would benefit from CAL FIRE crews.
- Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District is gearing up for first day of the burn season. The early ban lift is useful because burning ceases in American Valley after Nov 15th. They applied for an EPA grant in May for green waste collection and are still waiting to hear. In Portola, 75-80 woodstove updates have been installed. Julie has been collecting contact details for smoke sensitive people and has a list to contact people if burning is going to take place in their area.

- Firewise Communities – John Reynolds from Grizzly Ranch reported that they recently treated 20 hazardous acres. They have also submitted their Firewise renewal for 2017. Cary Curtis from Gold Mountain updated that they conducted their Firewise day. There has been a positive shift in the community’s perception of fuel reduction work; most are in support. The community is looking to modify their CC&Rs that would allow pile burning under very controlled and regulated conditions. Chuck Bowman reported that treatment on the last of the 19 Whitehawk properties that received letters to complete hazardous fuel reduction work was completed last week. Additionally, the project to remove the 80 dead trees in Whitehawk has removed 69 trees at this point. They are awaiting responses from the property owners regarding removal of the remaining dead trees. Property owners have 60 days after being notified to remove the trees or to respond for the HOA to have them removed. They have recently noticed five additional dead trees and are in the process of notifying the property owners.
- Lori Simpson reported that it is difficult to get PRC 4291 compliance when there is nowhere for residents to take their green waste. The County’s air curtain burner, that was purchased to address the issue, is out of commission. The County sought SRA funds for grinder, but were not successful. Recently the Board negotiated an agreement with SPI under which the County will collect green waste and deliver it to the mill’s co-gen. This arrangement won’t start until next Spring. The county is seeking SRA funds to make it work. There will be a small cost associated for residents.

Adjourned - Next meeting November 10, 2016