

Plumas County Fire Safe Council



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Dan Martynn, NRCS (20)	Jan Fletcher, Plumas Association of Realtors (19)
Trina Cunningham (20)	Mike Callaghan, Firewise Community (18)

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, February 14th, 2019 - 9:00 am.

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

1. Welcome & Introductions – Don Gasser
2. Review Agenda – Dave Kinateder said that a new laptop is needed for the Fire Safe Council coordinator. It was decided that that matter would be addressed outside of the meeting’s agenda. Mr. Kinateder additionally requested that a discussion of the burn ban in American Valley take place during the Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District update.
3. Approve January Meeting Minutes – **m – Hamblin, s - Martynn**
4. Public Comment – Don Gasser read an anonymous letter outlining fire preparedness concerns in the Portola area. Randy Wilson said that there was no code compliance for a number of years, but now that there is the writer should file a code complaint to the County. Mr. Gasser additionally suggested that the writer talk to neighbors directly. It was determined that copies of the letter would be shared with Phil Oels and CAL FIRE.

New Business

1. PCFSC Project Manager– Hannah Hepner announced that the Fire Safe Council is advertising a part-time project manager position. A cover letter and resume are due by March 8th. The position will be funded by existing grants and match from Plumas Corporation.
2. Defensible Space Assistance –Ms. Hepner received a phone call from a Plumas County resident requesting that the Fire Safe Council provide a defensible space program for all residents, not just those who qualify for the existing senior/disabled program. Mike McCourt said that the senior/disabled program has been growing and that there may not be enough contractors to expand to all residents. Additionally, it is very time

consuming for the operators to bid on the program because they must assess each property. Dan Martynn asked if the program should shift away from maintenance treatments and only provide services to new participants who cannot afford to undertake the work themselves but that are a strategic location for treatment. Mr. McCourt pointed out that the maintenance is more cost effective. Mike Callaghan suggested that coordination funds be used to allow Mr. McCourt to provide consultation to all residents, but that implementation funds only be used for senior and disabled residences. A local contractor list can be provided as part of the consultation. Chuck Bowman expressed concern about the capacity of the existing program to take on more consultations and suggested that individuals in need of assistance should be directed to their local Firewise representative. Karen Lichti said that when she encounters people who cannot afford to do all of the work at once she encourages them to accomplish it in small, affordable pieces. Kelby Gardiner added that landowners can also contact the Plumas Underburn Cooperative for assistance.

3. Website Calendar – Ms. Hepner asked if a cost of \$8/month for an online calendar was supported by the Council. The answer was yes.

Old Business

1. Plumas Underburn Cooperative Report – In January the group’s name changed from Plumas Prescribed Burn Association to Plumas Underburn Cooperative (PUC). PUC holds its meetings directly following the Fire Safe Council meetings. The group recently built and lit piles at the Beckwith property in Genesee Valley. There will be a Dutch oven cook-off fundraiser at the Meadow Valley Fire Department on Sunday, March 24th, from noon-2pm.

2. Mapping Committee Report – The mapping committee met at the end of January. Plumas Corporation will host data and provide long-term maintenance. Costs associated with this will be incorporated into the organization’s operating budget, therefore no grant funds are required. Dave Kinatader pointed out that it’s important for mapping to be incorporated into the workflow, rather than making one big mapping effort annually. Subsequent to the committee meeting Jason Moghaddas of SIG informed Plumas Corporation that he is working with Blue Forest Trust to create a treatment map of past and potential projects. Once the data has been produced it will be publically available at no cost. In the meantime, land managers can provide spatial data to Mr. Moghaddas at jmoghaddas@sig-gis.com

3. CWPP Revision Update – Mike Callaghan provided background on the Plumas County CWPP. He shared some of the revision suggestions that were submitted to him. His recommendation is that the Council not undertake a revision but simply update some key areas. He will incorporate those edits and send the document out for review at the March meeting. Ryan Bauer suggested adding an appendix that is updated annually with current projects.

Updates

1. Standing Reports and Discussion

- **Plumas County Office of Emergency Services (OES):** The date of the multi-agency WUI drill on the Lake Almanor Peninsula has changed to May 29th. It is an exercise to test response and communication and to increase community awareness. The annual Firewise coordinators meeting is scheduled for April 9th from 9am-12:30pm. Taylorsville will hold its Firewise assessment on March 13th. Wildfire Preparedness Day is May 4th. \$500 grants are available for community projects on that day. There is an International Association of Fire Chiefs [WUI conference](#) in Reno March 26-28th. Mrs. McCourt

discussed the Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety and how homes contribute to fire behavior but are not included in fire behavior modelling. She emphasized the importance to hardening the home including roof material, non-combustible siding, metal flashing to protect the roof deck, and vents that protect against ember penetration. Mr. Bauer added that in the Camp Fire it was reported that there was an 80% survival rate of homes built under recent building codes.

- **CAL FIRE:** Mr. Kinatader asked the CAL FIRE representative if their fuels crews can be used on Forest Service land. He was told that most work is done by crews in the State Responsibility Area. CAL FIRE is moving out of the Westwood station and will have one of their engines in Chester during the fire season.
- **USFS Hazardous Fuels Reduction:** Ryan Bauer said that pile burning is underway but the weather is affecting progress. There is an upcoming contracting deadline for the Butterfly and Little Grass Valley projects. Dave Kinatader announced that Jerry Bird will be the new Acting Forest Supervisor starting this month. He also said that the RAC grant process has been delayed.
- **Natural Resource Conservation Service:** Dan Martynn said that some of the elements of the new Farm Bill have been slow to roll out due to uncertainty. There will likely be 4-5 new NRCS contracts funded in Plumas County this year. Plumas Underburn Cooperative efforts may be incorporated into some of them. Mr. Martynn will conduct site tours of the proposed underburn properties with operators and with the NRCS State Forester.
- **Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District:** Representative not present. Rule 318 prevents burning in American Valley between November 15th and March 15th. Mr. Gasser said that the map should be limited to the areas within the Quincy Fire Protection District and that it is the area south of town that has the greatest impact on air quality. He suggested more efficient wood stoves are needed in the valley. Mr. Kinatader has talked to representatives at NSAQMD. He was advised to develop a strategy and propose it to the County Board of Supervisors. Randy Wilson interjected that Plumas County is close to non-attainment for PM 2.5 and that Rule 318 helps to ensure compliance. He said that if we reach non-attainment it will trigger a lot of changes, including a requirement for vehicles to be SMOGED. Kyle Felker followed that the rigid rules are affecting fire safe goals and that the Council has been unable to burn some of the American Valley project piles. Mr. Bauer said that air quality data is available online and should be utilized to make a case for any suggested changes to the rule. Mr. Gasser requested a committee to address the issue. Committee members are: Dave Kinatader and Don Gasser. Ryan Bauer said he will assist with data.
- **Industry Representatives:** Cade Mohler of SPI said that their 400 acre fuel break outside of Chester is about 95% complete. Hauling and chipping is still needed. He encouraged the public to view the property to understand how commercial logging can be part of the solution. The project will be maintained with mastication as needed. SPI will also be doing a fuel break project at Cutler Meadow near a Fire Safe Council treatment.
- **Tribal Representatives:** Ben Cunningham reported that there are project delays due to PG&E encroachment issues.
- **Feather River Stewardship Coalition:** The February 5th meeting of the FRSC included discussion of CAL FIRE's programmatic EIR for vegetation management. The FRSC is hosting a tour of the effectiveness of treatment areas in the Camp Fire on March 15th.
- **Firewise Communities:**

Graeagle –Chuck Bowman said it has been a quiet month, but that Firewise efforts are progressing in Graeagle proper. He will be scheduling a showing of Wilder than Wild in March.

Galeppi Ranch –Dave Kinateder said they are trying to schedule an annual meeting in March. He said that fuels work has been happening all winter.

Sloat/Cromberg/Camp Layman – Mike McCourt reported that they have scheduled a committee meeting in April to decide what the annual project will be.

Plumas Eureka – Dennis Lincoln said that seasonal residents won't return until Memorial Day.

Chester – Karen Lichti said that they showed Wilder than Wild. There was representation from communities other than Chester and there was good discussion. Chester Firewise will be participating in the May 4th preparedness day. They will be doing volunteer clean-up around the homes of senior citizens.

Gold Mountain – Mike Callaghan reported that they are looking forward to the Stevens project getting underway. There are still six properties who have not submitted their landowner agreements to the Fire Safe Council yet. They are small areas that might drop out of the project. The Firewise committee will be advertising the 2019 chipping program.

Old Highway – Sally McGowan said that her community is interested in becoming Firewise and they are coordinating with Sue McCourt and Dan Martynn.

Not present/no update: LACC, Almanor Pines, Mohawk Vista, Lake Almanor West, Greenhorn Creek, Grizzly Ranch, Gold Mountain, Portola

Potential Communities: Paxton Lodge, Feather River College, Chilcoot/Vinton, Taylorsville, Genesee Woods

- **Tree Mortality Update:** An additional 18 million trees died in 2018.

2. Status of Current Grants –

Senior/Disabled Defensible Space: Mike McCourt said the program is on hiatus and there is no update.

Chipping Program: Gary Parque said that applications are continuing to come in. A final chipping schedule has been released and is available on the Fire Safe Council website. Operator bids are due March 8th.

Hazardous Fuel Reduction Schedule – There were no questions about the HFR schedule.

3. Status of Grant Budgets – There were no questions about the grant budgets.

4. Status of Potential Projects/Grant Opportunities – Hannah Hepner directed attendees to the handout for information about upcoming projects and opportunities.

5. Other Updates & Upcoming Events

March 13th – Taylorsville Firewise assessment, 10am

March 15th – FRSC Camp Fire tour, 9am-5pm

March 24th – PUC Dutch oven cook-off fundraiser, 12-2pm Meadow Valley Fire Department

April 9th – Firewise Coordinator meeting, 9am-12:30pm

May 4th – Wildfire Preparedness Day

May 29th – Lake Almanor Peninsula WUI drill

Adjourned – Next meeting scheduled for March 14th, 2019