

Plumas County Fire Safe Council



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Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 10, 2016 - 9:00 am
Plumas County
Planning & Building Services Conference Room
555 Main Street – Quincy, CA

Board of Directors

Mike Callaghan, Chair (16)
Chuck Bowman, Vice Chair (17)
Mike De Lasaux, Sec/Treasurer (16)
Don Gasser (17)
Jim Hamblin (17)
Steve Murphy (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.”

2016 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;
- Support green fuels utilization and community chipping options for all communities in the County.

1. Welcome & Introductions - Mike Callaghan
2. Review Agenda - **Mike De Lasaux moved to approve the agenda with the addition of Item 5 under New Business, s-Bowman, passed.**
3. Approve Meeting Minutes – **m-Sipe, s-DeBonis, passed.**
4. Public Comments - None were made.

Old Business

1. Consent to Action Taken Outside Meeting concerning Council approval of LACC CWPP - Mike Callaghan explained that the final version will contain some non-substantive revisions discussed at the LACC March 3 meeting. **m-Hamblin, s-De Lasaux, passed.**

New Business

1. Establish Website Development Committee - Mike Callaghan explained that the website was last updated in 2013, primarily by updating documents with little updating of the site itself. Mike appointed the following committee to re-design the website: Sue McCourt - Chair, Bowman, Callaghan, Norton.
2. Discussion of Archeological Survey Proposal - Mike De Lasaux commented that an existing agreement between the California Fire Safe Council and the USFS to allow qualified Registered Professional Foresters to conduct site surveys has been a more efficient and cost-effective way to expedite fuels reduction projects. Nick Bunch explained that there was a temporary gap in policy at the regional level, and in the absence of clear direction, local personnel were strictly interpreting the rule that this work must be completed by a qualified archeologist. The issue still is being reviewed at the regional level and may still be resolved in such a manner that professional archeologists would not be required. **Mike De Lasaux moved to approve the strategy of dealing with five currently stalled projects in two packages by engaging an Archeologist on a contractual basis, and that the Council continue to pursue the issue with the USFS, s-Callaghan, passed.**
3. Discussion of Development Process for Firewise Assessments & CWPPs - Sue McCourt introduced the process that Jerry, Bill and she had drafted. Primary points: 1) Firewise designation should be done first to allow communities to get internally organized, 2) Firewise and CWPP process should begin with the Council as it has contacts and resources, 3) CWPP is good process to involve adjacent landowners. This worked especially well at Greenhorn, but not as well at Lake Almanor Country Club. Mike Callaghan emphasized that the value of Firewise is the formation of a core community group focused on taking action to make their community safer from wildfires. Mike De Lasaux commented that communities are eligible for grant funding through the county-wide CWPP as well as through a local CWPP. Ryan Bauer mentioned that a local CWPP also has the advantage of guiding USFS actions on adjacent PNF lands.

Mike De Lasaux welcomed clarification of how OES and the Council would coordinate educational and outreach efforts related to the formation of Firewise communities. It is important to reduce potential confusion, especially since both programs are funded by Title III funds. Jerry Sipe commented that the proposal continues the synergy between the organizations that has created great success in forming Firewise communities.
4. Presentation of Title III Grant Information & Analysis - Mike De Lasaux presented data that highlight the importance of Title II and Title III funds which have represented about one-half of Council funding since 2001. He pointed out that every dollar of Title III funding has produced three dollars in fuel reduction grants and has allowed the Council to reduce fuels on approximately 5,000 acres. His presentation also summarized the amounts and sources of grants for each of the Council's first fifteen years.
5. Special HFR Mapping Meeting - Mike De Lasaux stated that the purpose of past meetings was to allow anyone who had done HFR work to share the results with others. Also, mapping

data were submitted and assembled into a comprehensive map by PNF staff. Ryan commented that the last update occurred in 2011. Consensus was that the sharing of information was valuable and we should try to focus on HFR mapping at our May meeting. The Coordinator was instructed to research methods of re-instating mapping, but that this was a lower priority than current HFR projects.

Updates

1. Status of Current Grants - Bill Chapman pointed out that two new Title III grants have been added to the Active Grant Status spreadsheet and discussed the strategy for completing current projects. We are in the process of closing out two grants, and two additional ones will be closed in 2016. Four additional projects will have the bulk of the HFR work done in 2016 with implementation completed in 2017. Rachael Norton announced that the Stewardship Coalition will be hosting the Feather River District Ranger, and perhaps representatives of the Yuba River Water District, at its April 27 meeting. In May, the Coalition will be meeting in the Graeagle/Portola area and conducting a field trip of Mohawk Vista. Mike McCourt reported that the Senior/Disabled program is on schedule.
2. Status of Grant Applications
 - a. Rachael Norton reported that the Wolf & Grizzly Creek project CEQA Negative Declaration is open for public review until April 28, and that we should get a decision on the Bucks Lake project in June or September.
 - b. Mike Callaghan announced the California Fire Safe Council 2016 wildfire prevention grant applications are due on April 22 with a maximum award of \$200,000 and a required 1:1 non-federal match. A discussion of possible projects ensued.
3. Standing Reports and Discussion
 - a. Plumas County OES - Sue McCourt shared information she obtained at the International Association of Fire Chiefs WUI conference. The liveliest discussion was about insurance coverage in WUI areas and how at least one company is offering discounted premiums for properties in Firewise communities.
 - b. CAL FIRE - Sean Delacour reported that defensible space inspections in Plumas County are pending the hiring of personnel and weather.
 - c. USFS Hazardous Fuels Reduction - Nick Bunch reported that the Mt. Hough District had treating 100 acres on the mountain and will be developing a project on a 40 acre parcel surrounded by private properties participating in the Hwy 70 HFR project, and may be able to do some underburning on those parcels as well. Ryan Bauer reported that priorities for Stevens funding for both the 2017 and 2018 cycles are due the end of April sparking a discussion of possible projects.
 - d. Firewise Communities - Cary Curtis said Gold Mountain had an initial meeting regarding compliance with fuels reduction standards and possibly has a 100 acre project for funding consideration. Chuck Bowman discussed insurance issues in the Graeagle area. John Reynolds reported that Grizzly Ranch is developing treatment standards to be incorporated into its CCRs, informing owners of the risk assessment performed by Deer Creek, and working with Sue to publicize the evacuation plan.

Upcoming events - None announced.

Adjournment - Next meeting April 14, 2016