

# Plumas County Fire Safe Council



## Board of Directors

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|---|---|
| <b>Chair</b> , Don Gasser, Citizen (18)                     | Julie Ruiz, NSAQMD (18)                           |
| <b>Vice Chair</b> , Mike Callaghan, Firewise Community (18) | Ryan Bauer, USFS (18)                             |
| <b>Secretary/Treasurer</b> , Dan Martynn, NRCS (18)         | John Reynolds, Firewise Community (19)            |
| Chuck Bowman, Firewise Community (19)                       | Jan Fletcher, Plumas Association of Realtors (19) |
| Jim Hamblin, PC Fire Chiefs Assoc. (19)                     |   |

## 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, April 12th, 2018 - 9:00 am.

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

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1. Welcome & Introductions – Don Gasser
2. Review Agenda – Mike De Lasaux asked to add an announcement regarding the Plumas Corporation Board. It was added as item 5 under New Business.
3. Approve Meeting Minutes – Steve DeBonis of Sierra Pacific Industries asked that we correct the March minutes to accurately reflect their districts. **m – Martynn, s – Callaghan**
4. Public Comment – none

### New Business –

1. Report from the Wildland Urban Interface Conference – Hannah Hepner gave an overview of the presentation topics she attended at the WUI conference in Reno. She also shared a graphic that depicts the components of a Fire Adapted Community.
2. Membership Program Recommendations from Butte Fire Safe Council – The Butte Fire Safe Council contracted Cedar Creek Communications to prepare a membership campaign plan. Butte Fire Safe Council has made this document available for PCFSC to view. The Council asked that Hannah send the document to the mailing list so that it can be reviewed for further discussion.
3. Selection of Committee for Cost Share Requirement Recommendations – Don Gasser called for the formation of a committee to make recommendations regarding the PCFSC’s cost-share policy. John Reynolds

was assigned as the committee chair. Mike Callaghan, Dan Martynn, Mike De Lasaux, and Hannah Hepner are additional committee members.

Mr. De Lasaux voiced concerns about inconsistency if there is a desire to change the policy. He pointed out that people were, and continue to be, willing to participate with the cost-share in place.

Don Gasser stated that the strategic value of treating a particular parcel needs to be considered when determining if the cost-share is an impediment to the attainment of the PCFSC's objectives. Hannah Hepner pointed out that the Council currently has a mechanism to waive the cost-share in such cases.

4. Press Release Contribution Request – Hannah Hepner requested that Council members contribute monthly press releases that promote PCFSC activities and upcoming meetings. A schedule was developed:

May – Mike Callaghan

June – Dan Martynn

July – Don Gasser

August – Ryan Bauer

September – Sue McCourt

David Popp suggested that a photo be submitted with the press release to make it more eye catching.

Mike De Lasaux discussed the value of quarterly editorials for educating the County's Board of Supervisors. He offered to write one of these editorials.

Sue McCourt said that she will also write one for Wildfire Awareness Week (May 5-11<sup>th</sup>). Additionally, Plumas National Forest is taking out a ¼ page advertisement with information about Community Wildfire Preparedness Day. "The New Normal" is expected to be the theme issued by CAL FIRE.

5. Plumas Corporation Board – Mike De Lasaux explained that PCFSC works closely with our fiscal agent, Plumas Corporation. They are a 501 c 3 non-profit with a Board of Directors. Mr. De Lasaux has resigned from the Board and would like to see his position replaced with someone from PCFSC. Plumas Corporation is currently soliciting for the position.

## **Old Business**

1. Report from the Community Connections Sponsor Committee – Dan Martynn introduced a potential fuel reduction project at Gansner Park that could utilize Community Connections volunteers. Mr. Martynn also announced that he has a conflict with the PCFSC's meeting time and needs to resign as Treasurer. Julie Ruiz was nominated for the role. **m- Martynn, s- Gasser, passed**

2. Legislation Update – Hannah Hepner summarized updates to proposed Assembly Bill 2091, which was shared with the group by Mike De Lasaux at the March meeting. It was noted that the subject of prescribed fire is not as relevant to the group as other potential legislation. Future updates will include proposed legislation that aims to financially support community fuels projects.

Nick Bunch added that the recent Federal Omnibus Package contains a new Categorical Exclusion that includes forest health fuels projects up to 3,000 acres. It will be used for the Spanish Ranch underburn. It has Farm Bill language that requires collaboration for its use.

3. Community Fuel Treatment Maintenance Workshop Committee – On April 5<sup>th</sup> the committee went on a tour of the La Porte road to assess maintenance needs. Most of the parcels viewed were treated in the second phase of PCFSC's La Porte Rd efforts and, therefore, didn't show much maintenance need. The committee is considering making a similar visit to the work that was done in Indian Falls.

## Updates

1. Status of Current Grants –

**Senior/Disabled Defensible Space:** Mike McCourt – There has been a lot of interest this year. Currently there are 88 people signed up for the program. Most are maintenance sites, but there are 17 new locations. At the operator meeting on March 29<sup>th</sup>, Jess Wills (of Firestorm) suggested that the bidding be done as a daily rate, which would save the contractors from having to bid on every property. There are RAC funds and potentially Stevens funds to support the program this year. Operations will start June/July.

**Chipping Program:** Gary Parque – The eastern part of the county has already had an escaped pile, which burned 75 acres. Mr. Parque noted that in many cases individuals who would take advantage of the chipping program need the Senior/Disabled Defensible Space Assistance program's services first. He suggested that the weather is influencing the pace of pile building in communities. He has several meetings on his calendar to attend to promote the program. Additionally there will be an underwriting ad on KQNY and county-wide newspaper ads for the program. Mike Callaghan requested that community leaders be informed of who the chipping operators will be. Mike De Lasaux requested that a reasonable daily rate be calculated from last year's contracts.

**Hazardous Fuel Reduction Schedule** – no questions or comments

2. Status of Grant Budgets – Dan Martynn reported that funds are tracking as expected.

3 & 4. Status of Potential Projects/Grant Opportunities – Hannah Hepner

**USFS Stevens funds** requests were submitted April 14<sup>th</sup> 2017. Solicitations for 2019/20 funds will take place shortly.

**SNC Prop 1** were submitted November 1<sup>st</sup> 2017 for:

Little Grass Valley Reservoir Watershed Protection Project – 480 acres, \$500,000

Butterfly Twain Fuels and Forest Health Project – 455 acres, \$500,000

An award decision is expected in June.

**CAL FIRE California Climate Investments (CCI) Forest Health grant** concept proposal was submitted February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2018 to treat ~7,000 acres on public private lands in Plumas County. CAL FIRE received \$335 million in requests for the \$200 million available. Representatives from the Feather River Stewardship Coalition will make a project defense to the selection committee on April 30<sup>th</sup>.

**PG&E** request for support for the Senior/Disabled Defensible Space Assistance program and a "Defensible Schools" program was submitted March 16<sup>th</sup>.

**CALFIRE Fire Prevention Grant** (formerly SRA) – Yet to be announced

**IAFC Ready, Set, Go! Wildfire Mitigation Grants** – open until awarded

**Secure Rural Schools** (Title II & III) – passage of the Secure Rural Schools legislation will again make these funds available.

## 5. Standing Reports and Discussion

- **Plumas County Tree Mortality Task Force:** Sue McCourt said that State TMTF meeting minutes are available online. Ryan Tompkins added that the Tier 1 & 2 High Hazard watershed maps have been updated. The locally identified watersheds were not included because there wasn't significant mortality or infrastructure. However, he will continue to make the argument that the watersheds are worth restoring while the forests are still intact. There won't be another aerial survey until August. Meeting attendees gave updates on where they have seen additional mortality – including a 3 acre section of the PCFSC's Mohawk Vista project.
- **Feather River Stewardship Coalition:** The existing agreement that supports FRSC coordination expires in June 2018. Ryan Tompkins stated that the goal is to expend the existing funds. He foresees the Forest having continued interest in supporting the group's efforts, since it has thus far provided a significant return on their investment. The Forest will be looking at their budget to see what, if any, funding is available for continued support. However, there will be a period of time in which coordination for the FRSC will be unfunded. Hannah Hepner pointed out that this time will likely coincide with SNC's grant proposal deadline. Mike De Lasaux was concerned that PCFSC coordination funds are being considered as a source of support for the "gap" time, as those funds should be used to focus on community benefit. Mr. Tompkins suggested that regardless of whether or not PCFSC coordination funds are used in the interim, the existing agreement should be evaluated to determine any changes that we'd like to see in the future.
- **Plumas County Office of Emergency Services (OES):** Sue McCourt said that the Plumas County Hazard Mitigation plan will be updated this summer. There will be meetings scheduled to solicit public input as part of the process. She shared that [inciweb](#) has a great new interface. She is working on the Chester evacuation map, which will be incorporated with CAL FIRE outreach and mailed to all residents. She also shared that Plumas County now makes road signs in house. They won't install on private roads, but the signs can be purchased. There is also a new storm hotline (530-283-6102) – mainly for flood warnings - for individuals who don't utilize the internet.
- **CAL FIRE:** Scott Rosikiewicz said to keep an eye on the grant section of the CAL FIRE website for Fire Prevention Fund information. Mark Hillskotter said that the Defensible Space inspectors will start on the 24<sup>th</sup> of April. He would like to know of any communities of concern. Sean Delacour said that the Unit is going through a large turnover. There may be a new Unit Chief within 3-4 weeks. There will also be a new Operations Chief. Staffing has grown over the last few years and the season is two months longer, but resources to support the staffing have not been available. There was a plan to have an engine in the Lake Almanor basin this summer, but instead there will be two in Westwood.
- **USFS Hazardous Fuels Reduction:** Ryan Bauer said that a Decision was just signed for Gibsonville, which is adjacent to Plumas County. Decisions for Plumas Eureka and Mohawk Vista are expected soon, with Lakes Basin to follow. This year the PNF has two fuels management interns from Feather River College. Mr. Bauer also said that he is willing to send weather updates to help other prescribed fire practitioners in the area. Nick Bunch shared that a pile burn north of Greenville "came alive" in the middle of the night. As a result burning will be delayed until conditions dry out enough for underburing, since the piles are too unpredictable. He announced that he has taken a position with Lassen National Forest and that there will be a new Mt. Hough RD representative a next month's PCFSC

meeting. Marty Senter shared information about the 800 acre East Side underburn that is planned for the spring.

- **Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS):** not present
- **Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District:** Julie Ruiz said that every day of March was a permissible burn day. She announced that CCI funds will be supporting a woodstove change out program county-wide.
- **Firewise Communities:**
  - Gold Mountain** - Mike Callaghan said that the HOA has made a job offer to Judy Clot, which will relieve Mike of his efforts in the parcel treatment program. Their Firewise day will be May 28<sup>th</sup> in conjunction with the homeowners meeting. He shared that the Portola green waste facility will move from its current site to Delleker. From there the material will be transferred to the Loylton biomass facility for utilization.
  - Grizzly Ranch** - John Reynolds shared that their Firewise day will be the first Sunday in October, which coincides with the community association meeting. The fire department will come for a demonstration and defensible space review.
  - Graeagle** – Chuck Bowman said that a new thinning project in Whitehawk is getting started now. He doesn't know yet what the Firewise Day activity will be.
  - Sloat/Cromberg/Camp Layman** - Mike McCourt announced that their Firewise day is May 5<sup>th</sup>. They will be doing defensible space cleanup around the fire station. Local expertise will also share information about defensible space, burning, and tree stand health improvement.
  - Portola** – Phil Oels updated that they did their assessment and that they are working on a website. He currently has three exemptions approved from CAL FIRE for their first three projects.
  - Gallepii** - Firewise assessment done
  - Chester** - Karen Lichti said that they will have a Firewise day information booth at Holiday Market on May 5<sup>th</sup>.
  - Feather River College** – Firewise assessment done
  - Not present/no update:** LACC, Mohawk Vista, Lake Almanor West, Plumas Eureka, The Pines, Chilcoot/Vinton
- **Industry Representatives:** Steve DeBonis (SPI) said that because of the typical wet spring weather, they haven't started operations yet. The first week of May is when he expects things to get underway. He is currently in the process of identifying fuel break projects.
- **Tribal Representatives:** none present
- **Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC):** Lynn Campbell said that Collins Pine and SPI are going to be working on a road fuel break in Tehama County. SNC has some Prop 84 funds remaining and they will likely support CEQA planning efforts for FRC. Additionally, Loylton has received a grant to develop a business plan for a value added wood products campus.

#### 6. Other Updates & Upcoming Events

**May 5<sup>th</sup>** – Wildfire Community Preparedness Day, Chester and Sloat/Cromberg/Camp Layman events

**July 7<sup>th</sup>** – LACC annual Firewise meeting: 9:30am at Fire Hall #2

**October 7<sup>th</sup>** – Grizzly Ranch Firewise Day

Adjourned – Next meeting scheduled for May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018