

Plumas County Fire Safe Council



Board of Directors

Chair, Don Gasser, Citizen (20)
Vice Chair, John Reynolds, Firewise Community (19)
Secretary/Treasurer, Julie Ruiz, NSAQMD (20)
Dan Martynn, NRCS (20)
Trina Cunningham, California Indian Water Commission (20)

Chuck Bowman, Firewise Community (19)
Jim Hamblin, PC Fire Chiefs Assoc. (19)
Ryan Bauer, USFS (20)
Mike Callaghan, Firewise Community (20)

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, June 13th, 2019 - 9:00 am.

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

1. Welcome & Introductions – Don Gasser
2. Review Agenda – no changes
3. Approval of April Meeting Minutes – **m Cunningham, s – MacArthur**
Approval of May Meeting Minutes – **m Cunningham, s - MacArthur**
4. Public Comment – It was pointed out that the coordinator has a new laptop computer.

Trina Cunningham said that she has been part of a 6-month process to develop a water resiliency portfolio for Governor Newsom. She suggested that the Fire Safe Council participate in the process, which will make recommendations for the Governor during his term in office.

Old Business

3. This item was moved to the top of the agenda to allow Jason Moghaddas to provide an update before leaving. Mr. Moghaddas said that the Spatial Informatics Group (SIG) has been working on a regional map that includes fuel reduction and reforestation treatments in one database for Sierra, Plumas, Lassen, and Modoc counties. It includes treatments from the early 1990's to present. In the process it has become apparent that there is a need for all participating organizations to identify a GIS rep and commit to annually updating the data set according to an agreed upon structure. Mr. Moghaddas suggested that after the map is released that the participating organizations convene a meeting. Before the meeting they should consider what their long-term needs will be and how they plan to use the data. Mr. Moghaddas added that insurance companies haven't had access to fuel treatment information and that it will be valuable to provide this data to them. Mike Callaghan requested that the initial map be presented at the July PCFSC meeting.

New Business

1. Claremont Project – Maurice Huynh presented a slide show about the development and progress of the 22,492 acre Claremont Project on the Mt. Hough Ranger District. Both in-house and contracted surveys are underway. Up to 45 degree slopes will be treated with mechanical thinning. In 11”+ diameter stands the treatment will reduce canopy cover to 40% using variable density thinning. In old plantations the operator will be given discretion about which trees to cut using “description by prescription.” In diseased areas there will be some shelter wood/seed tree treatments. Within the Minerva fire boundary and in the Meadow Valley project there will be some re-treatments. The project is utilizing a Categorical Exemption. The surveys are anticipated to be finished next year and the first sale should be awarded in 2021. Steve DeBonis pointed out that Sierra Pacific Industries’ Fells Flat project is adjacent to the Claremont Project. Additional private land areas that tie into the project should be identified.

2. Cost-share Waivers – Hannah Hepner presented three cost share waivers: Chandler Ranch HOA waiver for the Right of Way along Main Ranch Rd **m – Danaher, s – Ruiz, all ayes, passes** 4.6 acres of treatment in the Mohawk Vista project due to financial hardship **m – Bauer, s – MacAurthur, all ayes, passes**
The merits of supporting a cost-share waiver for the Woodbridge project south of Portola were discussed. Consideration of the Woodbridge project waiver was tabled.

3. Fire Safe Council Secretary Volunteer – Don Gasser asked if there were any volunteers willing to take notes at the Fire Safe Council meetings to ensure timely delivery of the minutes. Barbara MacAurthur volunteered to compile minutes from the coordinators notes.

Old Business

1. CWPP Revision Update – Mike Callaghan said that the fourth and final draft is ready for review. The major incorporations with this revision have been with regards to prescribed fire, climate changes, emphasis on embers, long-term forest health, and structure density in the WUI. The next steps will be: final review via Google docs, finalization with the Office of Emergency Services, submission to the Plumas County Board of Supervisors, and finally to CAL FIRE for filing. Mr. Callaghan also asked who has the resources to update the fire department boundaries and staffing map. Trina Cunningham said that she would like to ensure that the document includes adequate tribal input.

2. Sierra Nevada Landscape Strategy – Don Gasser reviewed the content and intent of the Sierra Nevada/Southern Cascade Landscape Strategy that was produced by Plumas Corporation. He said that the next step is to take the document to the Secretary of Natural Resources. He asked that the Council endorse the document to allow Plumas Corporation to add the Plumas County Fire Safe Council as a signatory. Mr. Gasser sees potential funding opportunities linked with the document. **m – Mike Callaghan, s - Kinateder**

Update

1. Standing Reports and Discussion
 - **Plumas County Office of Emergency Services (OES):** Sue McCourt recapped the wildfire exercise that took place on the Lake Almanor Peninsula. She is currently working with two new Firewise

communities: River Valley View in Beckwourth and Clio. Mrs. McCourt provided an overview of recommended changes to insurance risk models. She said that PG&E is hosting a power safety shut off open house in Chester and reminded the group to have a plan for power outages.

- **CAL FIRE:** Chris Christopherson introduced himself and gave an update on Defensible Space inspections. He said that the unit is utilizing engines in support of the inspections this year. Chief Christopherson added that initiation of the burn ban will be held off for as long as it is safe to do so. Sean Delacour said that the late rains and snow have affected seasonal staffing. The Battalion will have an engine in Chester while the station in Westwood is rebuilt. Chief Delacour pointed out that there are no more time of day restrictions on burn permits this year.
- **USFS Hazardous Fuels Reduction:** Ryan Bauer said that the Forest has continued pile burning. Conditions have come in and out of prescription. Meadow Valley had a lightening fire in an area that was treated with prescribed fire last year. The fire was managed to 40 acres. PNF resources were sent to Napa for the Sand Fire. Locally they have responded to a lot of burn piles, but there have been no escapes. Plumas National Forest is set to over-accomplish targets this fiscal year, however, next year is looking short. There is still salvage work planned in the Camp Fire which will function as fuels treatment as well. On the Mt. Hough RD they are working on the Claremont project and on the Beckwourth RD they are working on the Mapes project. The Haskell project along the south side of Mohawk Valley is moving forward. Dave Kinatader added that bids were submitted for the Butterfly Twain contract and that they will be evaluated soon. The Bucks project is currently underway. The Little Grass Valley project will have a bid tour as soon as access opens up.
- **Natural Resource Conservation Service:** Not present
- **Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District:** Julie Ruiz announced that the district is hiring an additional air pollution control specialist for the area.
- **Industry Representatives:** Steve DeBonis of Sierra Pacific Industries said they are finishing the first phase of the Falls Flat project east of Quincy. In Chester they have finished the biomass portion of the fuel break along Warner Valley Rd. Soon they will be focusing on the CAL FIRE project on Martin Ranch. Highway 36 west of Chester is targeted for late fall.
- **Tribal Representatives:** Ben Cunningham reported that they had a meeting with the Public Utilities Commission at Humbug Valley. The property is going into escrow and work should begin within a few months.

Trina Cunningham said that the Mountain County Funding Area needs collaborative assessment focused on water needs. From a two-year process the biggest concerns being voiced are fire threat to communities, water quality issues, the need for water storage tanks for fire suppression, and alternative sources for drinking water during power outages. She is investigating how to apply for funding collectively since the area that most of the water comes from gets the least investment.

- **UC Cooperative Extension:** Not present
- **Feather River Stewardship Coalition:** The next FRSC meeting will be June 20th at 3:00pm
- **Plumas Underburn Cooperative:** Matt West has been hired at the PUC coordinator. He said that the CAL FIRE grant has been signed and that he is looking into putting on workshops and classes.
- **Firewise Communities:**
Sue McCourt said that Johnsville is a newly recognized Firewise community, and that Meadow Valley should expect evacuation maps in the mail next week.

Graeagle – Chuck Bowman said there will be a Firewise demo work day in Valley Ranch on June 22nd. They have been doing a number of Home Ignition Zone consultations. He is working with Mohawk

Meadow to enhance rules to enable people to do work on their properties. Mr. Bowman reported that there is continuing interest in the Mohawk Valley Hazardous Fuel Reduction project. He is working with large landowners in the area to get involved. He has been working with Clio to get Firewise recognition. Their Firewise assessment will be July 20th.

Smith Creek Ranch – Andrea Irving said they will also be having a workday on June 22nd. Forest Service personnel will be present. She voiced concerns about motorcycle use of private roads being an ignition concern.

Gold Mountain – Mike Callaghan said that the annual Firewise meeting was held three weeks ago. They will have another meeting on June 26th on the topic of evacuation. Their committee is looking for new active members. Mr. Callaghan said that Winningham is working on the Stevens funded project in the area. He said that the HOA has changed its name to Nakoma.

Lake Almanor County Club – Barbara MacArthur said that there has been a big effort to get state-compliant defensible space inspections done by the local fire department. A shaded fuel break has been recommended across the golf course. The committee is working on a “junk the junipers” campaign. A local nursery is involved in providing fire resistant plants. Deer Creek Resources will be making a proposal to the Board in August for a hazard assessment. Mrs. McCourt said that 14 LACC residents participated in the wildfire exercise.

Old Highway – Sally McGowan reported that the community had a brush clearing workday last month. She said that she has seen an increase in wildlife since the work was done. A neighbor with a brush hog has cleared along the road. Ms. McGowan said that horses also contribute to fuel reduction in the community. Currently the community is focusing on establishing a secondary escape route.

Sloat/Cromberg/Camp Layman – Mike McCourt said that there has been a lot of work done independently. Community members are reporting their hours.

Galeppi – Dave Kinatader said that they held their annual committee meeting. There has been a lot of neighbors helping neighbors in the area.

Not present/no update: Almanor Pines, Mohawk Vista, Lake Almanor West, Plumas Eureka, Galeppi Ranch, Johnsville, Taylorsville, Portola, Grizzly Ranch, Chester, Greenhorn Creek

Potential Communities: Paxton Lodge, Feather River College, Genesee Woods, Meadow Valley, Hamilton Branch, Clio, River Valley View

- **Tree Mortality Update:** No report

2. Status of Current Grants –

Senior/Disabled Defensible Space: Mike McCourt reported that he has about 90 clients. The contractor has started in the east side of the county. Funding is limited but he is hoping to be able to treat everyone on the waiting list.

Chipping Program: Gary Parque said that the program has grown and needs to operate according to the guidelines. He said that there are 170+ people signed up for the first round of chipping. Excess material beyond 16 linear feet will be chipped at a subsidized rate of \$100/hour.

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

3. Status of Grant Budgets – Hannah Hepner said that there have been few changes to the budget.

4. Status of Potential Projects/Grant Opportunities – Ms. Hepner said that the Plumas RAC will meet on June 27th. The Fire Safe Council has two proposals that will be considered. A Stevens request was submitted to Lassen National Forest to implement a fuel break project on the Lake Almanor Peninsula.

5. Other Updates & Upcoming Events

June 20th – Feather River Stewardship Coalition Meeting, 3pm

June 27th – Plumas Resource Advisory Committee Meeting, 9-12 Quincy Library

July 20th – Clio Firewise assessment

Adjourn - Next meeting July 11th, 2019