

# Plumas County Fire Safe Council



## Meeting Minutes

Thursday, July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021 - 9:00 am.

50 Church St, Quincy and via zoom

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

### Board of Directors

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Chair</b> , John Reynolds Firewise Community (21)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Vice Chair</b> , Kathy Kogge Firewise Community (21)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Secretary/Treasurer</b> Dan Martynn, Retired (22)	<input type="checkbox"/> Lindsay Wood Plumas Audubon Society(22)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Don Gasser RPF (22)	<input type="checkbox"/> Trina Cunningham Maidu Summit Consort. (22)	<input type="checkbox"/> Mike Callaghan Firewise Community (22)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chuck Bowman Firewise Community (21)
<input type="checkbox"/> Jim Hamblin Citizen (21)	<input type="checkbox"/> Ryan Bauer USFS PNF (22)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brad Graevs Feather River RCD (21)	<input type="checkbox"/> Richard Stockton State Farm (21)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ryan Tompkins UCCE (21)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tracey Ferguson Plumas County Planning (21)	<input type="checkbox"/> Ron Heinbockel Plumas Fire Chiefs (21)	

1. Welcome & Introductions – John Reynolds ; 24 present
2. Review Agenda – No changes
3. Approve June Meeting Minutes – No changes
4. Presentation of Certificates of Recognition to:

- Mike McCourt

Brad Graevs – congratulations to Mike McCourt in receiving this award. Mike has been very helpful in starting the Plumas Underburn Cooperative, particularly in writing burn plans. He helped write our first in-house burn plan and contributed greatly to PUC’s success.

- Barbara & Bob MacArthur

Penny Leinwander – Barbara and Bob will be missed. Our community has appreciated their hard work.

## 5. Public Comment - None

## 6. Board Comment

- Sacramento Valley American Planning Association Vision Award: Tracey Ferguson is the American Planning Association Planning Director for the Sacramento Valley Section. She submitted PCFSC for the Local Vision Award. The American Planning Association Board of Directors chose to honor PCFSC for efforts in fuels reduction. Award ceremony will be October 6th. The ceremony might be in the Sacramento area with a virtual option.

### **New Business**

1. Tree Mortality Update and Outlook – Danny Cluck, US Forest Service, said aerial surveys will continue but were not undertaken in 2020. When there are good precipitation years, we see less tree mortality. In 2019 PNF had a bad year in terms precipitation but this does not always mean increased tree mortality. However, one bad year can affect multiple seasons. The South Sierra is receiving more precipitation and seeing decreased tree mortality. Plumas County is low in precipitation compared to years past. Mortality dropped off in 2017 after a big winter. Tree mortality increased again in 2019. Some trees sustained long term damages from long term drought and elevated mortality in certain species. As dry as it is in PNF currently, tree mortality is looking good. The current situation in Plumas County is looking positive with relatively low mortality. Beetles are showing up in ponderosa pine and we are seeing scattered white fir mortality associated with root disease and engraver beetles. There is scattered red fir mortality associated with root disease, dwarf mistletoe, Cytospora canker, engraver and wood boring beetles. Douglas fir mortality is increasing and caused by a wood boring beetle, meaning the trees are very stressed. Western Pine Beetle is attacking ponderosa pine in the foothills pine belt. In higher elevations we are not seeing as much beetle predation, but this winter will determine next season's beetle presence. The current drought is causing Douglas fir mortality due to engraver beetles, meaning that the tree is stressed. Excessive heat may be the issue. Very low sugar pine and Jeffrey pine mortality to date. The mortality of fire injured trees has been high in 2018-2020. Beetles are less of a problem compared to wildfire damage. 2-3 years after a fire you will continue to see mortality due to beetles. There is a chance you could see beetle predation cross over between burned areas and unburned areas. Water is well below 50% of the previous average. This puts trees in an acute state of stress. Beetle populations will be increasing. PNF has been in 20 years or more drought.

Mr. Reynolds – noticed a black mold on trees in Grizzly Ranch. Any idea of what this could be?

Mr. Cluck – this black mold is called Incense Cedar Rust and can sometimes have an orange-colored jelly texture. The black soot on the trunks is a parasite that feeds on trees. All of these things feed on the energy of the tree and can affect tree mortality.

Gary Parque - what is the resin discharge at the base of lodgepole pines?

Mr. Cluck - can be a species of moth that covers larvae in the tree's resin.

Dan Martynn - are giant sequoias at risk?

Mr. Cluck - yes, more due to wildfire than beetles.

Don Gasser – can beetles predate on pine as well as fir?

Mr. Cluck - Red fir and white fir death due to beetle infestation, but engraver beetles do not predate on pines. In a normal precipitation year trees have great defenses against beetle attacks. All tree beetles benefit from drought. When we have good water years, trees are able to defend themselves.

Claude Sanders - tree mortality due to wildfire and beetles was astounding in the Sequoia region. What is the current status of the forests in the Sequoia?

Mr. Cluck – there are current restoration projects in progress, but the landscape is so large the work is still on going. There is no market for diseased trees and no salvage work can be done. Currently there are no landscape level forest restoration projects.

Mr. Sanders – is anyone doing a study on resin flow and climate change?

Mr. Cluck - not to my knowledge.

## Old Business

None

## Updates

### 1. Standing Reports and Discussion

- **CAL FIRE:** Johnathan Pangborn – CAL FIRE is working on suppression efforts for the Beckwourth Complex. As far as funding is concerned, the grant application period will be coming up in September and we are looking to get back on a normal schedule.

John Sheehan - This is the first test for the joint fire station out at the Beckwourth Airport. How is that working out? Mr. Pangborn - no update currently.

Mr. Reynolds - are we conducting defensible space inspection in the county?

Joel Goldman - We have not been able to hire DSI inspectors yet. However, inspections are being conducted for Prop 38 requirements for people that need an inspection to sell their house. The contact for these inspections would be the closest station and local battalion Chief. Go to [fire.ca.gov](https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/e659f03a6e8447af8663e42cf48f60fd) and follow the inspection request process <https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/e659f03a6e8447af8663e42cf48f60fd>  
Reynolds – the disclosure questionnaire for house sales/closures has quite a few defensible space questions.

Ms. Leinwander – The Governor budgeted 500 million to CALFIRE for fire prevention. Is this true?

Mr. Pangborn – yes, there is substantial funding coming from the state for CCI grants. These grants are for Forest Health type grant funding.

Ms. Leinwander - when will the May 19th grants awardees be released? Ms. Pangborn - takes a few months to hear back and depends on a variety of factors. Should be hearing about awards soon.

Mr. Parque – are any CCR crews being defunded? Mr. Pangborn - Yes. Some camps will be closed in the Modoc area. CCC fire crew camps have been increased in Tahoe. 8 CCR camps have been closed state wide. Trying to offset some closures and increase crews in higher risk areas. Magalia fire crew camp is still up and running.

- **Feather River Resource Conservation District (RCD):** Mr. Graevs - completed most of reforestation work in the Moonlight footprint with 943 acres reforested. Chipping away on other projects. We have received

funding for post fire recovery and are partnering with NRCS in order to get landowners assistance for land that was burned in the North Complex Fire. So far we only have interest for folks on La Porte Road.

Ms. Hepner - does Post Fire Recovery Assistance include commercial activities?

Mr. Graevs – yes, it can. RCD does not have in-house programs for commercial land, but NRCS can help through EQUIP program.

Mr. Sheehan - what about the Rush Creek area, has anyone been interested in Post Fire Recovery there?

Brad – outreach to that area has been done.

- **Feather River Stewardship Coalition:** Ms. Hepner - meeting on July 14<sup>th</sup> is virtual.
- **Firewise Communities:** Beth Rouse - Greenville and Greenhaven Firewise Assessment on July 12<sup>th</sup>. Next Firewise Leads meeting will be Thursday, July 15<sup>th</sup> at 6pm.
- **Industry – Timber:** not present
- **Industry – Insurance:** not present
- **Industry – Utilities:** not present
- **Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS):** not present
- **Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District:** Melissa Klundby - Portola is seeing smoke impacts from the Beckwourth Complex fire; will be releasing a statement about it today.
- **Plumas Audubon Society:** not present
- **Plumas County Fire Chiefs Association:** not present
- **Plumas County Office of Emergency Services (OES):** not present
- **Plumas County Planning Department:** Ms. Ferguson – the new LHMP has been approved by FEMA adopted by the county Board of Supervisors and approved by FEMA. We now have a fully adopted LHMP and are in the implementation stage. We will be reporting frequently. Plumas County is now eligible for all recovery funds in the case of a disaster. Thank you to all who participated.

Mr. Parque – commented on roadside weeds.

Ms. Ferguson – will reach out to Public Works.

- **Plumas Underburn Cooperative:** Matt West - Meeting today at 12pm at PCFSC office. Met with Firestorm in Valley Ranch and hoping to do a meadow burn combined with small forest understory. PUC is planning this burn for winter 2021. PUC will come out for a supporting role for Firestorm Burn Boss.

Brad – this is the preparation season and good time to get burn units ready.

Claude Sanders – there is a good potential burn project in Galleppi Ranch. This would be a great demonstration project as well as provide an extra measure of safety for the Galleppi community.

- **Sierra Nevada Conservancy:** Kristy Hoffman – Immediate Action Wildfire Resilience grants have 25 million available and have chosen 15 projects to contribute to. Two of these projects are in Plumas County – one for PCFSC's Quincy Wildfire Protection Project and one for the FRRCD's Mohawk Valley Project. Lassen FSC also awarded. Out of the 25 million available, 5 million went to Plumas County. These funds will be awarded July 15th. Waiting for legislature to finalize budget for potential 50 million for Wildfire Resilience.

- **Tree Mortality Update:** Above presentation, Danny Cluck (USFS). Mr. Sanders - confirming anecdotally on slow die off of trees. Hoping for a good winter.

- **Tribal Representatives:** not present

- **UC Cooperative Extension:** Ryan Tompkins – Thank you to PCFSC for the success of the May 15th Preparedness Event. Looking forward to it next year. Tracy Schor has developed a Grazing for Change in

the Context of Wildfire handbook and copies are available. UCCE recently had a paper published in the Journal of Forestry on the use of pyrosilviculture at the landscape scale. Focusing on more organized fire training in the west. This evening is a Plumas Sierra Stakeholders exchange presentation that will focus on fire in a changing climate. Tracy Schor will be hosting a wildfire preparation and grazing talk for small farms and ranches on July 29<sup>th</sup>. Next Stakeholder Exchange will be August 26<sup>th</sup> focusing on reference based ecosystem restoration. UCCE is working with a grad student near the Antelope border on fuel treatment longevity and effectiveness. The Firewise Reporting tool has shown over \$525,000 in investments in 3 months. Encourage communities to use the tool. Over 300 people are using the tool. Asking for help to outreach this tool. Potential to show over 1 million dollars in investments for Plumas and Sierra Counties. Don Gasser - will the results of this longevity and effectiveness study help to determine when we should be revisiting burned areas? Mr. Tompkins – no promises on what the data will reveal.

Mr. Sheehan – Will the Firewise Reporting tool data be included in the mandatory disclosure of fire risk in the resale of a home? Mr. Tompkins – not at the moment.

Mr. Sanders – do homeowners need to show proof of home hardening efforts? Kathy Kogge – homeowners do not need to show proof but must disclose fire protections efforts.

Mr. Tompkins – encouraging a push for 1.5 million dollars in Firewise investment hours.

Ms. Kogge – Many folks do not trust online tools. Mr. Tompkins – communities can record investments on paper and then enter the amounts into the online tool.

Mr. Reynolds - August 1st Firewise Event for Grizzly Ranch. The more Firewise investments that are recorded, the more likely insurance companies will be interested.

Ms. Kogge - Gold Mountain will have an event soon.

Mr. Tompkins – Thank you to PUC volunteers for May 15th Wildfire Preparedness Day event.

Mike McCourt - Cromberg folks don't trust the internet. Working on computer skills with these groups of people.

Ms. Hepner – in your research project on longevity and effectiveness does the study include prescribed fire? Mr. Tompkins - at least a pile burn. They all had a prescribed fire as well.

• **USFS Hazardous Fuels Reduction:** not present

## 2. Status of Current Grants

• **Senior Disabled Defensible Space:** Mr. McCourt - working on eastside of Plumas County. High Sierra Fire is doing a great job. Haven't been able to hire as many employees as usual. Moving into the canyon area next week. Scheduling work throughout the county and 20% of jobs are completed to date.

Mr. Reynolds - is Portola included in Senior/Disabled Defensible Space? Mr. McCourt – yes.

Mr. Reynolds – Beckwourth Fire Chief is willing to do defensible space consultations for the Portola area.

Mr. McCourt - We have completed a few jobs in Portola city limits.

Ms. Leinwander - will be posting Senior/Disabled Defensible Space information for LACC network.

Mr. McCourt - we have a few clients in the LACC area. They can apply now but might be treated next year.

• **Chipping Program:** Gary Parque - program moving along nicely. We have a lot more people participating than in the past. Encountering some glitches on the Eastern side of the county. Overall the program is going quite well. This week we will treat all the people who were missed.

Ms. Leinwander - LACC appreciated the chipping program. Will be advertising again.

Mr. Reynolds - went very well in Grizzly Ranch

Ms. Hepner - the emails that are generated from the software often end up in spam. There is an option to cancel in the confirmation email. When a crew shows up and can't find pile it impacts the whole program. We have received 70 reviews of the program and only 3 reviews have not been 5 star.

• **HFR Project Schedule:** Mr. West - Little Grass Valley work had begun again. Machine work left and hand work is complete. Partnering with USFS. CCI grant for Franks Valley post monitoring will be completed by mid-September and will be finished this year. Lakes Basin contractor bids are in and we will be awarding the contracts next week. Bids were over budget. USFS will fund the rest of the project.

Ms. Hepner - CCI grant activities need to be finished this year - except Spanish Ranch burn, which can be implemented through 2022. Mohawk Valley will resume layout and will contract environmental compliance surveys. Hopefully the CAL FIRE Prevention grant proposal will cover the rest of this project. Greenhorn layout is complete and working on environmental compliance surveys. Chester and Quincy layout for PDC project is underway.

Mr. Graevs – is there an update on the tool trailer? Ms. Hepner - No. Waiting for CFSC to deliver.

Mr. Reynolds - have we purchased tools? Ms. Hepner - not yet. Waiting for payment from the California Fire Safe Council.

### 3. Status of Grant Budgets –

Mr. Gasser – is there an update on 298 Defensible Space? Ms. Hepner – we are first year for 298 with 2 more years to go.

Mr. Gasser – have we applied for RAC funding? Ms. Hepner – We plan to apply and the application is due in September.

Mr. Gasser – is there an update on 293? Ms. Hepner – 293 is spent and we are using Plumas Corporation funds for coordination.

Mr. Gasser – updates on 911? Ms. Hepner – we are looking good on the timeline for 911. Funded for the next year.

4. Status of Potential Projects & Grant Opportunities: Ms. Hepner – we plan to apply for both RAC and CAL FIRE funding. CFSC has a new program for Counties and Outreach.

Mr. Graevs - will the county give funding to PCFSC for coordination in the absence of OES? Ms. Hepner – Have reached out to the Sheriff's office, it is yet to be determined.

Mr. Reynolds – are we applying for a second round of grants from CAL FIRE in September?

Ms. Hepner – yes, the projects submitted will depend on our the success of our current applications.

### 5. Other Updates & Upcoming Events

Adjourn - Next meeting August 12th, 2021