

Plumas County Fire Safe Council



Board of Directors

Chair , Don Gasser, Citizen (18)	Chuck Bowman, Firewise Community (19)
Vice Chair , Mike Callaghan, Firewise Community (18)	Jim Hamblin, PC Fire Chiefs Assoc. (19)
Secretary/Treasurer , Julie Ruiz, NSAQMD (18)	Ryan Bauer, USFS (18)
Dan Martynn, NRCS (18)	John Reynolds, Firewise Community (19)
	Jan Fletcher, Plumas Association of Realtors (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, July 12th, 2018 - 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. Approve June Meeting Minutes – **m – Callaghan, s - Ruiz**
4. Public Comment – none

New Business – none

Old Business

1. Report from the Committee for Cost Share Evaluation – John Reynolds reviewed the current \$250/acre cost share requirement and the process in place to waive the cost-share on a case by case basis. Ultimately the committee’s recommendation is that the Council has the needed mechanisms in place to waive the cost-share when necessary to do so. Mike Callaghan added that the forester is relied upon to make determinations about the value of participation of any particular parcel and that removal of commercial material can offset the cost-share for the landowner. Claude Sanders suggested that the cost-share should be split 50:50 by beneficiaries, particularly in cases that involve large landowners who presumably have the financial resources to undertake the work themselves. It was determined that the Council will continue to utilize the current cost-share methods at the Board’s discretion.

2. Membership Program Committee Selection – Don Gasser asked the Council if there is a desire to pursue a membership program. Discussion that followed touched on the opportunity to provide outreach and education through such a program. A question was raised about the cost to administer it and the necessity to rely on volunteer time. It was suggested that dissemination of information would likely be more successful if it was piggybacked on outreach already undertaken by organizations with broad support, such as the Sierra Buttes Trail Stewardship. No Council members volunteered to lead a committee to develop a membership program, so Mr. Gasser appointed himself and Sue McCourt to develop a recommendation for the Council.

3. Community Fuel Treatment Maintenance Workshop Committee – Hannah Hepner provided an update that an outreach letter was sent out to previous HFR participants in Indian Falls on June 20th. One landowner had responded.

4. Light Burning Presentation Proposal – Hannah Hepner said that if a public presentation was to be held in Quincy, a venue would cost a minimum of \$300. The presenters are able to cover their own costs for travel and accommodation, so there would only be a few additional costs associated with the event - such as promotion. There was concern among some Council members that the event would encourage private landowners to burn on their own properties without proper training. It was clarified that the presentation provides a non-prescriptive, historical evaluation of burning in the area. Ultimately the event was supported as an opportunity for dialog, a chance to provide context for the Forest Service’s goals, and for further general understanding of where prescribed fire fits into land management for fuel reduction. It was suggested that Feather River College may be a more appropriate venue, as well holding it at several locations throughout the county would likely garner more participants.

Updates

1. Standing Reports and Discussion

- **Plumas County Tree Mortality Task Force:** Meeting at 1:00pm.
- **Feather River Stewardship Coalition:** In temporary hibernation until additional coordination funds become available.
- **Plumas County Office of Emergency Services (OES):** Sue McCourt - The California Department of Insurance AB 1799 was signed by Governor Brown to protect homeowners who have been affected by losses from fire. The bill requires insurance companies to provide policy holders with the details of their insurance policy. Plumas OES is supporting California fire suppression efforts through the Sheriffs office. Shane Vargas is the new Firewise liaison for the area.
- **CAL FIRE:** Scott Rosikiewicz – There were three CCI Forest Health applications in the Lassen-Modoc Unit (LMU) and eight Fire Prevention applications. Of the eight, five were in Plumas County. Mark Hillskotter – Defensible Space inspections are being undertaken in parts of the county that have never before received inspections. Inspections will continue through September, if not longer, to allow for coverage in counties outside of Plumas. Individuals have been responsive to the requirements of PRC 4291. It is unclear if Plumas County now has a Code Enforcement Officer, but if so, it will likely be helpful for enforcement. CAL FIRE has cited a few individuals for piles burned after the open burning suspension.
- **USFS Hazardous Fuels Reduction:** Ryan Bauer – There is a lot of ongoing work around Butterfly, Bucks Lake, and Little Grass Valley. There are almost daily responses for initial attack. Fire Restrictions on campfires and charcoal fires on Forest Service lands will come into effect shortly. Dave Kinatader – The

recently awarded SNC grants are awaiting agreements. About \$1 million is still needed to fully implement the Butterfly Twain project. The Bucks Project has been affected by Limited Operating Periods. Existing SNC funds have acted as seed money, resulting in an additional \$75,000 investment from the Forest Service for two additional units.

- **Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS):** not present
- **Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District:** Julie Ruiz – The burn ban went into effect on July 1st. There were a series of no-burn days leading up to that date.
- **Firewise Communities:**
 - Graeagle** – Chuck Bowman – Whitehawk has contracted for 7 acres of thinning around townhomes. Additionally, landscaping is being replanted to more fire resistant species. There are currently 85 trees identified through Whitehawk’s dead and disease tree program. Valley Ranch Firewise activities are gaining traction. They are doing a demonstration and workday on July 20th. Mohawk Meadows is additionally gaining traction. Smith Creek Ranch is working on becoming their own Firewise community. Nine out of 13 landowners attended a recent Firewise assessment. It is an area that is likely to pursue a Fire Safe Council project in the future.
 - LACC** – Barbara MacArthur – Approximately 50-60 members attended the Firewise day event. Speakers included the Napa County Fire Chief, CAL FIRE Deputy Chief, and LMU Unit Chief. The primary message to the community was that fire services are limited if the community hasn’t taken action. Suppression efforts are going to go where they can do the most good. LACC is working on a fuel break with a large adjacent landowner.
 - Portola** – Phil Oels – Portola’s Firewise application is complete and submitted. Currently they are focusing on weed abatement. Eight acres of thinning between the hospital and park are almost complete.
 - Chester** – Karen Lichti – Chester’s Firewise application is in final review by Sue McCourt before being submitted. Large landowners in the area have been contacted about undertaking HFR work. Sierra Pacific Industries is considering maintaining an existing fuel break. PG&E has announced that they will be changing the clearances on their poles and lines and that they will be turning off power on extreme fire weather days in Tier 2 and 3 areas. More information may be available at the July 24th Board of Supervisors meeting.
 - Grizzly Ranch** – John Reynolds – The community’s Firewise day will be held Aug 5th at 9:00am. Beckwourth Fire will be there to talk about defensible space. Expense tracking for Firewise compliance will also be discussed. Only one homeowner was ready for chipping in Phase I.
 - Sloat/Cromberg/Camp Layman** – Mike McCourt – Held a Firewise day in May. The community is working on defensible space and have been tracking numbers. The Senior/Disabled Defensible Space Assistance program treated four properties in the area.
 - Galeppi Ranch** – Dave Kinateder – They are nearly ready to submit their Firewise application.
 - Gold Mountain** – Judy Clot – The first round of chipping is complete. A committee member is working on outreach and a newsletter. Twenty-four “problem” properties are approaching the deadline for compliance.
 - Chilcoot/Vinton** – Gary Parque – Firewise presentation had low attendance but got good coverage in the newspaper.
 - Not present/no update:** Almanor Pines , Mohawk Vista, Lake Almanor West, Feather River College, Plumas Eureka
- **Industry Representatives:** none present

- **Tribal Representatives:** none present

2. Status of Current Grants –

Senior/Disabled Defensible Space: Mike McCourt – There are 103 clients this year. High Sierra Fire has completed 60 properties. Feedback has been positive. The program will utilize nearly all of the available grant funds.

Chipping Program: Gary Parque – Interest in the program continues to grow. New applications are being added to the client list for Phase II.

Hazardous Fuel Reduction Schedule – Hannah Hepner – Dixie Valley is scheduled to start operations in September. Gold Mountain and Mohawk Vista/C-Road’s environmental assessments should be complete by the end of the month. Wolf/Grizzly units are complete except for the Jankman part of the project, which is scheduled to begin shortly. Bucks Lake is in progress.

3. Status of Grant Budgets – Julie Ruiz – The Feather River Stewardship Coalition coordination funds expired at the end of June. There is a project balance of about \$7,000 that will not be utilized.

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

Little Grass Valley and Butterfly Twain applications awards were approved by SNC for \$500,000 each.

La Porte Road project is underway, funded by previous landowner contributions.

Requests for American Valley Phase II, Genesee Woods/Red Clover, and Portola were submitted for 2019 Stevens funds.

Requests for Lake Almanor Peninsula and Grizzly Ranch were also submitted for 2020 Stevens funds.

CAL FIRE CCI Fire Prevention applications were submitted for Portola HFR and for three years of the Community Chipping Program.

A CAL IFRE CCI Forest Health application for the Plumas Collaborative Forest Health Project, which includes Meadow Valley and Genesee Woods/Red Clover, was submitted June 12th.

Indian Falls, Boyle Ravine, and La Porte are potential projects that require further development.

Marty Senter on the Beckwourth Ranger District is going to apply for the next round of SNC grant funds for portions of the Plumas Eureka, Lakes Basin, and Mohawk Vista projects.

Plumas National Forest has a proposal through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to secure project funding for the Butterfly Twain project with a partner that can provide a cash match (preferably 1:1).

6. Other Updates & Upcoming Events

July 14th – Plumas Eureka Firewise Insurance presentation

July 20th – Valley Ranch Firewise day

July 23rd – Plumas Eureka clean-up day

July 24th – Board of Supervisors meeting with presentation by PG&E

August 5th – Grizzly Ranch Firewise Day 9:00am

Adjourned – Next meeting scheduled for August 9th, 2018