

# Plumas County Fire Safe Council



## Board of Directors

**Chair**, Mike Callaghan, Firewise Community (18)  
**Vice Chair**, Don Gasser, Citizen (18)  
**Sec/Treasurer**, Mike De Lasaux,  
UC Cooperative Extension (18)  
Chuck Bowman, Firewise Community (17)  
Jim Hamblin, PC Fire Chiefs Assoc. (17)  
Shane Vargas, CAL FIRE (18)  
Dan Martynn, NRCS (18)  
Julie Ruiz, NSAQMD (18)  
Ryan Bauer, USFS (18)

## 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, August 10th, 2017 - 9:00 am.**

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

1. Welcome & Introductions – Mike Callaghan
2. Review Agenda – Mike Callaghan
3. Approve Meeting Minutes – Chuck Bowman requested that the numbers of dead trees in the Graeagle Firewise report be corrected. The statement now reads: “Whitehawk Ranch removed 105 dead and dying trees *last* year due to infestation. *47 have been identified for removal this year.*” – **m – Bowman, s – Gasser**. Revised minutes approved
4. Public Comment –

Julie Ruiz asked for a debrief on the Biomass Facility hearing. Hannah Hepner said that she, Sue McCourt, and Don Gasser made comment (among others). The contract for the facility was approved by the Board of Supervisors. The facility will provide heat for the Health and Human Services building and back-to-grid electricity will be generated as a byproduct.

Gary Parque shared information about the [Red Guide to Recovery](#) disaster recovery resource. A link will be added to the website.

Lynn Campbell announced that the Sierra Nevada Conservancy is having a quarterly board meeting on September 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> in Sierra Valley. The meeting is open to the public and includes a tour of Sierra Valley hydrology and the Loyalton biomass plant.

## **New Business**

### **Minerva Fire Update – South Central Sierra Interagency Incident Management Team**

Dave Martin said that the fire is 96% contained as of the morning report and crews are primarily working on “fire suppression repair:” putting in water bars, pulling slash, putting the roads back into a drivable condition, etc. He noted that Firewise and Fire Safe Councils have been useful in other counties in helping the public understand the fire situation.

Taro Pusina said that little heat was shown on infrared flight last night. He noted that there have been good fire effects - mostly low to moderate intensity, on the ground. About 25% was high-intensity crown fire. There was isolated torching, short crown-fire runs, with the biggest holes of 10-15 acres in size. The resulting heterogeneity provides diversity on the landscape. He noted that it was beneficial that it happened after a wet winter – it would have been different last year. The area that burned hadn’t seen fire in recorded history and currently has a fire departure interval. However, areas that had been logged looked really good. He sees the Minerva Fire as an anchor point for future treatments. His advice was: when considering what HFR work to do, think about what the system was like before fire suppression. Chipping and mastication can change fire behavior from crown to ground, but the fire will go through those treatments just as fast - burning is the best option as removing biomass is necessary. The fire started early enough in the season that there were resources available. Nonetheless, there are not enough resources to post up at every house. Triage “picks the winners.” He encouraged landowners to do clearing and be advised on ingress and egress. He said to think about if your home could survive with no-one there, to select wise building materials, and consider having a water tank (3,000 gallons) if not part of municipal system. In his experience, hazardous fuel reduction work that was done around communities in Yosemite was critical in Rim Fire.

Don Gasser asked if access is going to limit rehabilitation and resource extraction. Mr. Pusina said that there will not be much need for rehabilitation. There will be good edge effects. Though he noted that a big winter will affect sedimentation in Mill Creek. There are some roads that can be used to address safety hazards as well as access some commercial value.

John Sheehan asked if there will be an analysis of fire effects. Mr. Pusina said that it is up to Plumas National Forest to undertake analysis.

Mike McCourt commented that smoke management is a huge issue when using prescribed fire. Trina Cunningham followed that traditional burning would have occurred at this time of year and into the fall. There is more of a smoke issue in the spring when the burn window is open, as well as affects to understory diversity. Julie Ruiz said that she has local data for air quality effects from wildfire versus prescribed fire, as well as wood stoves. Mr. Pusina said that mechanical treatments are appropriate close to communities and that prescribed burning should be done beyond that – then wildfire can burn into those areas “softly.”

Kyle Felker showed a map in progress of all treatments that have taken place around American Valley.

**Old Business – None**

## Updates

1. Plumas County Tree Mortality Task Force – meeting to follow.
2. Status of Current Grants – Hannah Hepner & Project Managers
  - 262 – Feather River Stewardship Coalition:** Hosting a free [SNC grant writing seminar](#) on August 22<sup>nd</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup>.
  - 275/276 – Senior/Disabled Defensible Space:** 55 maintenance projects completed this year. 25 new clients are anticipated to be treated with additional grant funds that have recently been made available from 259 – funds that were not utilized for the Barry Creek project.
  - 278 – Chipping Program:** Phase I complete. An amendment for Gold Mountain has been partially treated. Phase II applications have been coming in and chipping will take place in September. It was suggested that outreach occur during the winter months to coordinate volunteers. It was also emphasized that we need to find contractors who do not respond to fires.
  - 259 – Barry Creek:** Work has concluded. 59.4 acres (of a planned 555) were treated. A portion of the remaining funds will be used for the Senior/Disabled program.
  - East Quincy:** Project is complete with a total of 92 acres of treatment.
  - East Shore:** The project is awaiting a signed Decision Memo from the USFS. The RFP for operators closed Aug 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - 260 – Hwy 70:** Sara Taddo Jones has resigned as the forester. Mastication & hand thinning is complete. Piles require burning in the fall.
  - 273- Dixie Valley:** A modification to extend the grant deadline one year has been approved. Kyle Felker is working on layout. The Archaeology contract is signed.
  - 277- Wolf/Grizzly:** Work has been submitted to contracting by PNF. There will be action on it in 2018.
  - 280 - Bucks Lake:** Contracting is imminent. The expiration date for grant funds has been extended one year to align with the Wolf/Grizzly deadline.
  - 279- Mohawk Vista & 281 – Gold Mountain:** Waiting on executed grant agreements from PNF.

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

#### **USFS Stevens funds – submitted April 14**

**C Road** - 90 acres, \$180,570

**Grizzly Ranch** – 130 acres, \$270,275

**American Valley Phase II** – 100 acres, \$285,970

**Genesee Woods/Red Clover** – 100 acres, \$178,970 (2019 Stevens funds)

#### **CA FSC Grant Program – submitted May 10**

Requested \$11,350 for Senior/Disabled Defensible Space program

Two year implementation period; requires 1:1 non-federal match

#### **FEMA Fire Prevention & Safety Grant – submitted May 18**

Requested \$56,168 for Senior/Disabled Defensible Space program

One year implementation period, 5% cost share - \$2,808

#### **Plumas RAC Title II – due August 11**

\$500,000 available. No match requirement.

Senior/Disabled Defensible Space Assistance Program application in progress for \$65,300

PCFSC Coordination application for \$27,000 (6 months) received Council's approval for submission.

### **SNC Prop 1 – pre-applications due Sept 1<sup>st</sup>**

No match requirement.

Grass Flat application in progress.

Butterfly Twain received Council's approval for submission.

### **CAL FIRE Landscape Scale Restoration Competitive Grant Program & Western States Fire Marshal WUI Grant Program – both due Sept 1, 2017**

Both 50:50 match requirement, up to \$300,000

Highly competitive, Council opted not to apply.

**CAL FIRE SRA FPF** – to be announced soon.

## 5. Standing Reports and Discussion

- **Plumas County Office of Emergency Services (OES):** Sue McCourt reported that evacuations went well. Necessary plans were in place and the 2016 WUI exercise proved valuable. Social media was a tremendous help. Mr. Sheehan commented that there was a confusion of terms by individuals outside of the area – they had the impression that Quincy had a voluntary evacuation “order.”
- **CAL FIRE:** Shane Vargas said that Defensible Space Inspectors have been hired, trained, and are working in the Plumas Eureka area right now. The crews work through geographic areas and are now back where inspections started several years ago. Scott Rosikiewicz said the SRA grant applications will be released mid-month and that there will be about 6 weeks for submission. They are considering extending the two-year implementation deadline. Don Gordon said that they have been very busy with lightening fires. They have had the opportunity to work with cooperators on the fires. He encouraged projects to be sent to Sean Delacour for crews to address in September.
- **USFS Hazardous Fuels Reduction:** The 4,600 acre Butterfly Twain NEPA was not objected on vegetation the portion, however, it may take a few months due to road objections from SAC.
- **Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District:** Julie Ruiz said that air quality has been bad and that the health advisory may be extended – which impacts measurements for air quality compliance. She will be working with Public Health to see what the health impacts have been.
- **Firewise Communities:**
  - Lake Almanor West** – Had a Firewise day last month and have done fuel reduction work.
  - Graeagle** – Tree mortality is up to 63 from 46 last month. They have taken down 24. Whitehawk has just passed CC&Rs and bylaws that include fire language. 205 voted yes for Firewise inclusions in CC&Rs. Ted Dobbs will talk about insurance for Firewise day on August 29<sup>th</sup>. New evacuation maps will be distributed.
  - Gold Mountain** – Seeing cedar mortality. Community is focused on overall fuel reduction. Gold Mountain CSD is looking for a fire and emergency services coordinator as an ongoing part-time job.
  - LACC** – CAL FIRE has been doing work. Community burn pile has been chipped.

**Grizzly Ranch** – The association hosted a first responder day and is considering doing it annually. 25 people attended the recent Firewise Day. The HOA board accepted a hazardous fuel standard policy. They sent out nearly 300 letters in March that let landowners know the hazard rating of their property. 10-12 have started clean up.

**Plumas Eureka** – Firewise committee and Chief went around the community and identified hazards. CAL FIRE Defensible Space Inspectors are currently working in the area. Firewise will be discussed at a large event. When new homes are built, or homes are sold, there is a letter that the CSD sends out – but outreach will now also include a site visit and Firewise information.

**Sloat/Cromberg/Camp Layman** - They have a mailing list with 90 people.

**Gallepii** – Ryan Tompkins is moving the community towards Firewise recognition. The Redding OES strike team did a rapid assessment of the area, which will be included in the Firewise community assessment.

**Portola**- no update.

- **Industry Representatives** – none present

#### 6. Other Updates & Upcoming Events

PCFSC Board member, Jim Hamblin, is retiring after 70 years of service. His retirement party will take place Sunday, Sept. 24, at the Greenville Community Park at 1 p.m.

Adjourn - Next meeting September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2017