

Plumas County Fire Safe Council



Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 10th, 2020 - 9:00 am.

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			
Chair , John Reynolds Firewise Community (21)	Vice Chair , Kathy Kogge Firewise Community (21)	Secretary/Treasurer Don Gasser, RPF (20)	Julie Ruiz NSAQMD (20)
Dan Martynn NRCS (20)	Trina Cunningham (20) Watershed Research Center	Mike Callaghan Firewise Community (20)	Chuck Bowman Firewise Community (21)
Jim Hamblin Citizen (21)	Ryan Bauer USFS PNF (20)	Brad Graevs Feather River RCD (21)	Richard Stockton State Farm (21)
Ryan Tompkins UCCE (21)	Tracey Ferguson Plumas County Planning (21)	Ron Heinbockel Plumas Fire Chiefs (21)	

1. Welcome & Introductions – John Reynolds
2. Review Agenda – no changes
3. Approval of August Meeting Minutes – approved via online survey
4. Public Comment – none
5. Board Comment – Kathy Kogge proposed that the Fire Safe Council establish a recognition program for individuals who go beyond the normal line of duty. She provided examples of the kind of efforts that could be recognized. She envisions the recognition being published in the newspaper once per month. John Reynolds voiced support for the initiative but asked that it not deter from "regular business" of the Fire Safe Council. A committee was formed consisting of Mr. Reynolds and Mrs. Kogge. Tracey Ferguson shared information about an upcoming webinar titled ["Who Started the Fire? 2000 Years of Climate, Fire, and Native Californians"](#)

New Business

1. North Complex Update – Jamie Gamboa, Incident Commander trainee for the California Interagency Incident Management Team (IMT) 4, said that prior to the wind event good containment progress had been made with limited resources. A spot across the Middle fork made a 30 mile push to the southwest that required resources to get out of the way and get people to safety. The fire growth has destroyed structures and lead to several fatalities. The IMT is now in unified command with CAL FIRE Team 4. The North Complex

has been broken into zones. IMT is responsible for the North and East Zones and CAL FIRE is responsible for the West Zone. The wind subsided last night. Southwest winds are now expected, which will push the fire towards Bucks Lake. Chief Gamboa was asked about potential damage in the La Porte area. He responded that no structures have been affected in La Porte. Assessments are being made, but with limited resources. Matt West asked what the orange dots were on the map displayed. Chief Gamboa said that they are heat signatures from satellite imagery that have not been confirmed. Heat signatures can register from smoke in the area, so they are not necessarily indicative of the fire perimeter.

Chief Gamboa mentioned that members of the public can watch the daily [cooperators meeting broadcast](#), which includes timber companies, PG&E, and grazing allotments, among others.

2. Living with Fire - Hannah Hepner provided an overview of the content of the new Living with Fire publication. She shared some of the feedback that she has received about the publication and summarized where hard copies have been distributed. There was discussion about where additional copies were needed. Several positive comments were shared about the content and graphics of the publication.

Old Business

None

Updates

1. Standing Reports and Discussion

CAL FIRE – not present

Feather River Resource Conservation District (RCD) – not present

Feather River Stewardship Coalition – no update

Firewise Communities – no update

Industry – Timber – Camille Swezy from J&C enterprises said that they continue to make progress on the Franks Valley project. There have been some delays due to biomass logistics and rocky terrain.

Industry – Insurance – Mike Flanigan was in attendance and attempted to provide an update, but the sound was of poor quality.

Industry – Utilities – not present

Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) – not present

Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District – Julie Ruiz said that the Air Quality Management District is working with Portola Firewise to provide bins for green waste collection between now and the end of the year. They will conduct a public outreach campaign in the Portola area during fire prevention week, starting October 4-10th.

Plumas County Fire Chiefs Association – not present

Plumas County Office of Emergency Services (OES) – Sue McCourt reported that there were nearly 2,000 new sign-ups for CodeRED during the first days of the North Complex fire. She expressed her pride in the work of the Firewise communities during this fire event. She encouraged people to read the [article](#) written by the Nelson Point Firewise lead, David Matuszak. Mrs. McCourt said that many tips are being shared online. She asked people to refer to their trusted sources for information. She recommended Plumas National Forest and Plumas Sheriffs Office Facebook pages and Plumas News. She suggested that this winter the Fire Safe Council membership share stories and lessons learned from the recent Public Safety Power Shutoff.

Plumas County Planning Department – Tracey Ferguson said that the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan draft is undergoing a committee review. The timeline for comments has been extended to September 18th. The draft will be available to the public in October.

Plumas Underburn Cooperative – Matt West said that PUC conducted a “Preparing Your Land for Fire” workshop in Meadow Valley, which is the first time the workshop has been held since COVID-19. PCU is also involved in planning a TREC prescribed fire training exchange this fall. It will take place in late October/early November and ideally will be a cross-boundary burn between public and private lands.

Tree Mortality Update – no comments

Tribal Representatives – not present. Trina Cunningham is involved with the North Complex Fire mitigation and restoration planning.

UC Cooperative Extension – Ryan Tompkins said that feedback during the “Prescribed Fire for Private Lands” workshop last fall was incorporated into [policy recommendations for burn permits](#) published in California Agriculture. Mr. Tompkins made comment linking tree mortality in the Creek Fire to the behavior and growth of that fire and thanked the Planning Department for including tree mortality in the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. He said the Forest Stewardship workshop field day has been affected by the fires. A paper will be coming out shortly about post-fire restoration in the International Journal of Wildland Fire. Mr. Tompkins has been getting several calls about post-fire recovery.

USFS Hazardous Fuels Reduction – not present

2. Status of Current Grants –

Senior/Disabled Defensible Space: Mike McCourt expressed that it has been a challenging year. The contractors have had extra demands on them including sending crews to the fires and assisting Plumas Sierra Rural Electric. There have been road closures and days of heavy smoke that have slowed down production. The program is about 2/3rds of the way done. People who have had the work completed are thankful. Mr. McCourt hopes the remainder of the work will be done by the end of September/early October.

Chipping Program: Gary Parque said the program has been busy. People have been anxious about when the operator is going to get there. The crew is running about a week late. There have been a lot of participants in Cromberg this year.

Hazardous Fuel Reduction: Ms. Hepner said that the American Valley bid tour has been postponed for a month due to impacts from the fire. Mohawk Valley planning forester is contracted, site visits are planned for later this month. Greenhorn may have been affected by fire activities. Outreach letters for the Disadvantaged Communities Project are being sent out. There will be a virtual meeting about the project for interested landowners on October 5th.

Mr. West shared the announcement that all National Forests in California are closed until September 14th. He will be assessing what that means for the contractors who are working on public lands. The fire burned up to Little Grass Valley reservoir. The operator has been pulling their machines out of that area. Corridor and Genesee are the last CCI areas for treatment. They have a Limited Operating Period that will be lifted in 5 days. Chipping in Elizabethtown units near West Ranch Rd has been delayed due to heavy smoke. Franks Valley work is ongoing by both operators.

3. Status of Grant Budgets – The active grant spreadsheet was not available. Don Gasser commented that it appears that project spending is going well.

4. Status of Potential Projects/Grant Opportunities – Ms. Hepner said there have been few changes since last month. Stevens proposals have been submitted to the Forest Service and awards could be announced as early as this month. Sierra Nevada Conservancy proposals have not been developed yet.

5. Other Updates & Upcoming Events - None

Adjourn - Next meeting October 8th, 2020