

Plumas County Fire Safe Council



Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 8th 2022 - 9:00 am.
Combination of in-person and zoom meeting

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"/> Chair , John Reynolds Firewise Community (23)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vice Chair , Kathy Kogge Firewise Community (23)	<input type="checkbox"/> Secretary/Treasurer Mike Flanigan, Insurance (23)	<input type="checkbox"/> Michael Hall, FRRCD (23)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sally McGowan, Firewise Community (23)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Joe Smailes, Firewise Community (23)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chuck Bowman, Firewise Community (23)	<input type="checkbox"/> Ryan Tompkins, UCCE (23)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tracey Ferguson, Plumas County Planning (23)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trina Cunningham, Maidu Summit Consort. (22)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mike Callahan, Firewise Community (22)	<input type="checkbox"/> Dan Martynn, Retired (22)
<input type="checkbox"/> Ron Heinbockle Volunteer Fire Department (22)	<input type="checkbox"/> Ryan Bauer USFS PNF (22)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Don Gasser RPF (22)	

1. Welcome & Introductions – John Reynolds
2. Review Agenda – Reynolds
3. Approve August Meeting Minutes – **Motion – Kathy Kogge, Second – Chuck Bowman**
4. Presentation of Certificates of Recognition to: none
5. Public Comment: none
6. Board Comment: none

New Business

1. Deer Creek Resources Hazardous Fuels Assessment Contract – Mr. Reynolds explained that Deer Creek Resources will be conducting a county-wide, community level assessment of wildfire risk and priority projects particular to each community. This assessment will provide an update to the current fuel hazards for the

entire county and will supplement the CWPP. This assessment is part of the 5-year strategic planning efforts. This assessment will be a valuable document for planning projects and for providing specific considerations for each community.

Joe Smailes asked if Deer Creek Resources will be working with CAL FIRE and USFS on this assessment.

Ms. Hepner replied no, Deer Creek Resources will develop this assessment independently, but may solicit input.

Mr. Smailes asked if Deer Creek Resources will be looking at the interface between private and public land.

Ms. Hepner replied that the data provided from this assessment will examine the entire WUI, regardless of land ownership. The WUI boundary is being revised right now in collaboration with Plumas National Forest and Deer Creek Resources will take the new WUI boundary into consideration.

Mr. Reynolds added that the objective of this assessment is not clear. The board must feel comfortable with the deliverables.

Mr. Smailes added that if funds are being spent on a project like this, federal land should be considered when conducting this assessment.

Chuck Bowman added that the last assessment considered federal land. The tools and technology Zeke Lunder utilizes are valuable.

Trina Cunningham added that Mr. Lunder is apprised to state policy and feels confident that the assessment he produces will be helpful for Plumas county.

Phil Oels added that Portola is surrounded by USFS land and will need to be considered.

Mr. Reynolds replied that this assessment will take into consideration all communities within Plumas and areas without communities will receive less focus.

~~2. North Quincy Wildfire Resilience Project — Dave Kinateder~~

Moved to November meeting.

Old Business

None

Updates

1. Standing Reports and Discussion

- Biomass Working Group: Sarah Nasif shared that PCFSC has been working on creating a green waste pilot program that will allow Plumas residents to drop off and dispose of green waste. PCFSC is also working on building a firewood processing and biomass energy system on Plumas Corp land.

Mr. Smailes asked where will the power plant be located. Ms. Nasif replied that the facility will be located behind the Plumas Corp offices, next to the green storage units.

Ms. Kogge asked if there was an estimated timeline. Ms. Nasif answered no, we are still in the research stage.

- CAL FIRE: not present

- Feather River Resource Conservation District (RCD): not present
- Feather River Stewardship Coalition: Ms. Hepner reminded the group that the Franks Valley Tour is scheduled for Friday, September 9th @ 9am and leaves from the Mt. Hough Ranger District.
- Firewise Communities: Beth Rouse shared that the next Firewise Leads meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 19th @ 6pm. Lower Grizzly Road Firewise community has applied for Firewise designation and should receive official Firewise status in the next few weeks. The community of Red Clover near Genesee has begun the process to become Firewise.
- Industry – Timber: not present
- Industry – Insurance: Mr. Reynolds shared an update on behalf of Mike Flanigan: property insurance market for both commercial and personal coverage continues to be challenging. Availability and affordability are ongoing concerns. Plumas County will be an example for other high fire risk rural areas.
- Industry – Utilities: not present
- Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS): Ben McNally shared that an NRCS working group meeting to gauge landowner interest is in the works for this fall.
- Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District: Julie Hunter shared that a health advisory for Plumas, Sierra and Nevada County has been issued due to the Mosquito Fire. Reminder for the Portola Burn Wise event on September 24th.
- Plumas Corporation: Scott Corey reported that Plumas Corp is rebranding and a new logo has been publicly released. Plumas Corporation is now Plumas Corp. Fire Safe emails will change to @plumasfiresafe.org. Fire Safe email signatures will also be changed to reflect that PCFSC is a program of Plumas Corp. Brad Bodenham, Plumas Corp's Outreach Coordinator, is working on updating the Plumas Corp website. The new forestry fellows have completed their first month with us and Plumas Corp is still looking for a new Project Manager for both Plumas County and the Southern Sierra. On August 30th the Thompson Meadow Project was fully implemented and is Plumas Corp's 100th project. Work at the Yellow Creek Project in LNF is continuing. The construction of the Mattley Meadows Project in Stanislaus National Forest will begin next week. The agreement for the PNF Forest Recovery Planning Project with USFS on the East Side of County will be executed in October and will require CEQA and NEPA. Meadow restoration on the Sequoia National Forest and LNF are moving forward. Watershed monitoring continues to be a large part of this project. Plumas Corp will be submitting a proposal to SNC to build local a collaborative in Southern Sierra to address Giant Sequoia resiliency and survival.
- 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: Tracey Ferguson updated the group that at the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection meeting, the board approved the rulemaking for the revisions to the new fire safe regulations. There were many comments and the regulations passed. Senate Bill 901 added changes specific to PRC 4290 and includes changes for fuel breaks, undeveloped ridgelines as well as administrative components. Plumas County Planning expects the new regulations to take effect October 1st. Plumas County will be implementing the new regulations in SRA and in LRA very high fire severity zones. Next week's Plumas County Board of Supervisors agenda will discuss a support letter for the House of Representative's Bill 6903. This bill will require the Secretary of Agriculture through USFS to use all

available resources to carry out wildfire suppression with the purpose of extinguishing wildfire within 24 hours of detected ignition. This bill applies to prescribed fire if the activities are out of prescription.

- Plumas Underburn Cooperative: Matt West shared that the Butte TREX registration is open until Friday for the on-call list for the Butte PBA. PUC meeting at Greg Kinne's home for tool trailer prep scheduled for Thursday @ 16:30. Email reminder to come.

Ms. Hepner added that PCFSC is hiring for a PUC Coordinator and has received 4 applicants. PCFSC staff will begin the interview process next week.

Mr. Smalles asked how long the funding is for the PUC manager. Ms. Hepner replied 3.5 years.

- Sierra Buttes Trail Stewardship: not present
- Sierra Nevada Conservancy: not present
- Tree Mortality Update: Ms. Kogge reported seeing brown and dying trees and asked for a report on current forest conditions.

Mr. Reynolds reported seeing mortality across all species across multiple forests. USFS fly-over should tell us more.

- Tribal Representatives: Ms. Cunningham reported that the MSC properties that were burned in the Dixie Fire are now being logged by J&C Enterprises. Thanks to Plumas EForT for support of this project, logging on MSC properties would not have happened without the EForT program. MSC continues to send tribal monitors out on projects due to damage to tribal and cultural resources. MSC asks to be included on project planning so sensitive areas can be avoided. NEPA and CEQA is often conducted without consulting MSC or tribal representatives and important cultural areas are often destroyed. Region 5 tribal communities have been invited to participate in writing the Region 5 Tribal Strategic Plan. Region 5 will have a first-ever strategic plan. MSC has been heavily involved in the Rebuild Greenville efforts and is working collaboratively on WUI considerations.
- UC Cooperative Extension: not present
- USFS Hazardous Fuels Reduction: Joe McGinn updated the group that USFS is finalizing burn plans for this fall and winter.

Mr. Smalles asked what the target acres were for pile burning this fall. Mr. McGinn answered that last year the goal was 2,500 acres and will be similar for this season.

Matt West asked if there were any changes to the 90 day freeze on burning. Mr. McGinn answered that there is a meeting today at 11am to address the 90 day freeze.

Tony Jimenez reported for the Lake Almanor Ranger District that burn plans are being finalized for this fall and winter. The Almanor district is deciding if burning is a good idea for a vulnerable community recently exposed to wildfire and heavy smoke. Timber sales are on-going in the West Shore area. The Almanor District is focusing more on the Dixie Fire WUI and steering the planning process away from timber and towards fire suppression and HFR planning. LNF is currently working with PCFSC on planning for the Lake Almanor Peninsula HFR project through USFS Steven's funds.

- Feather River Tourism Association: not present

2. Status of PCFSC Programs

- Senior Disabled Defensible Space – Tommy Brenzovich shared that 150 out of 200 homes have been treated for defensible space. High Sierra Fire will finish around the end of the month and PCFSC is still

collecting applications for next year. The program has been getting a lot of good feedback especially from folks in Indian Valley. High Sierra Fire will be out on the east side of the county to make one last sweep and pick up any properties that were missed or added late.

- Chipping Program – Gary Parque reminded the group that the Chipping Program began in the effort to reduce air quality concerns due to burning. Thanks to NSAQMD for assisting with funding this season. Participants who have been waitlisted seem to think they won't receive treatment, but the program intends to treat all properties who have signed up. At the beginning of the season there was a scramble to find a contractor and some equipment issues, but overall the season has gone smoothly. The crew is currently working out in Johnsville and juggling between new equipment and rental equipment. The program is receiving a lot of good feedback. Work is continuing on the Quincy Wildfire Protection Project and chipping has been completed. Ms. Hepner added that an underburn might be possible on the QWPP. The chips generated from the QWPP went to SPI.
- Public Lands Projects – Mr. West reported that the Lakes Basin project is in progress and the grapple pilers have started work. There have been several days without work due to hot and dry conditions. Next Friday is the end of Wildlife Limited Operating Periods and hand crews will be back to finish the project. A full proposal for the QWIP in Boyle's Ravine will be due at the end of October for HFR and burning. Mr. Smailes asked who this land belongs to. Mr. West answered CSD and USFS.
- Private Lands Projects – Rachel Werhman reported that the layout for the Plumas Disadvantaged Communities project is still being conducted and the project has stopped accepting new applications. Greenhorn HFR is receiving bids. A landowner in the Greenhorn HFR project has applied for a full cost share waiver for 48.8 acres totaling \$12,200. Mr. Reynolds asked if not approving the waiver would affect the performance of the project. Ms. Wehrman answered yes, the project is 150 acres total. Ms. Hepner added that the project map can be distributed via email. The Board can vote on this cost share waiver via email. Ms. Cunningham asked how this project is funded. Ms. Hepner answered that the project is funded through Federal Steven's funds. PCFSC does not have enough funds to implement the project despite cost share waivers and will be working on securing more funding regardless. Mr. Reynolds added that Stevens grants do not require match from landowners, but that cost share funds are used to fully implement the project or undertake additional projects in the area in the future. Ms. Kogge asked if this project will be implemented this year. Ms. Wehrman answered yes. Kyle Felker added that these 48.8 acres are on the east side of the project and starts near the horse camp and extends clear to the top of the project. This is a crucial part of the project.

Ms. Wehrman added that the Mohawk Valley project is receiving bids and landowner agreements. Ms. Wehrman will be working with Glen Schall to designate treatment units on the Hamilton Branch Clear Creek VMP. Eastern Plumas WPP is still in layout and is on track to go to bid in October. EForT is in the process of selecting a contractor.

- County Coordination – Ms. Hepner reported on the behalf of Liam Galleher that Fire Safe Home Visits have been positive.

- Biomass/Firewood Facility – Sarah Nasif re-sated that a biomass and firewood processing facility is in progress. A green waste program will be piloted in Quincy, but the plans are still in development.
- 3. Status of Grant Budgets – Mr. Reynolds shared that there are not many changes from last month. Mr. Bowman asked where the chipping program is located on the budget list. Ms. Hepner replied the chipping program is now under 921, mitigation programs.
- 4. Status of Potential Projects & Grant Opportunities - Ms. Hepner reported that a new cycle for Plumas RAC has been announced and PCFSC will be going back to the drawing board to re-apply. Matt West will be making a full proposal to SNC for QWIP project planning. Liam Galleher will be applying to the Community Wildfire Defense federal grant program to update Plumas County’s CWPP as well as support the county wide Hazardous Fuels Assessment. PCFSC is requesting \$250,000.
- 5. Other Updates & Upcoming Events
 - NSAQMD Burn Wise Event – 9/24/22 from 11am – 3pm @ Portola Veteran’s Hall
 - UC Cooperative Extension: Reforestation in a Burning Landscape Field Tour – 9/28 – 9/29/2022
 - FRSC Frank’s Valley Tour – 9/9/2022

Adjourn - Next meeting October 13th @ 9am.