

FOR 2/12/20 PUBLICATION

Plumas County Fire Safe Council Meeting 2/13/20

The Plumas County Fire Safe Council's February meeting will feature a presentation by CAL FIRE Captain Shane Vargas about changes to the State's fire safe regulations. The meeting will also include information about the County Planning Department's Safety Element update and the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. Fire Safe Council meetings are open to the public and held on the second Thursday of each month. Meetings include regular updates from organizations and agencies working together to address the Council's mission "to reduce the loss of natural and human made resources caused by wildfire through Firewise community programs and pre-fire activities."

In 2020, six new members of the Board of Directors bring a wealth of experience and insight to governing the Council and highlight the diversity of interests the local Fire Safe Council addresses:

Following a career in book publishing Kathy Kogge, the Council's newly elected Vice Chair, moved to Plumas County in 2016. Kathy is motivated by her love for the spectacular natural beauty of the Sierras and a desire to protect it. She is the Chair of the Gold Mountain Firewise Committee and hopes to use her background to further the goals of the Fire Safe Council and Firewise USA.

Tracey Ferguson is Plumas County's new Planning Director. She has a 20-year career in planning and enjoys collaborating with the public to help solve planning challenges. She believes that the wildland-urban interface is an opportunity where certain land-use decisions, plans, and policies—for example the Plumas County Communities Wildfire Protection Plan—can help residents and communities reduce wildfire risk and be more resilient.

Ron Heinbockel represents the Plumas County Fire Chiefs Association. He has been a member of the Meadow Valley Fire Department since 1977 and is retired from a 43 year career working for the U.S. Forest Service. Chief Heinbockel was an early member of the Plumas County Fire Safe Council and looks forward to working with the Council to take part in serious efforts in solving the national problem that "does have solutions."

Richard Stockton is Quincy's State Farm Insurance Agent and a resident of Plumas County, on and off, since 1964. As a long-time county resident Richard has become interested in the Plumas County Fire Safe Council because of the good work this council has been doing for our local communities by helping to effectively reduce and prevent wildfire losses. He believes joining this council is one way to help impact the severe wildfires and the restrictions imposed by the homeowner's insurance industry in California.

Ryan Tompkins, the University of California Cooperative Extension Forestry and Natural Resources Advisor, joins the Board with an 18 year federal career as a forester and certified silviculturist with Plumas National Forest and experience in the Fire Effects program at the National Park Service. Ryan is currently a Registered Professional Forester and the UC Cooperative Extension Forester for Plumas, Sierra, and Lassen counties where his research focuses on forest restoration and post-fire restoration.

Brad Graevs first moved to Plumas County in 2012, bringing with him a background in wildlife biology. After three years working for Plumas Audubon Society, Brad transitioned to District Manager of the Feather River Resource Conservation District. In that role Brad has collaborated with the Fire Safe Council on planning and fuel reduction projects, and co-coordinates the Plumas Underburn Cooperative. Brad looks forward to furthering this partnership as a member of the Board.

These individuals join Board members: John Reynolds, Board Chair and Grizzly Ranch Firewise member; Don Gasser, Secretary/Treasurer Registered Professional Forester; Julie Ruiz, Air Pollution Control Specialist for the Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District; Dan Martynn, Natural Resources Conservation Service; Trina Cunningham, California Water Commission/Mountain Maidu; Mike Callaghan, Gold Mountain Firewise member; Chuck Bowman, Graeagle Firewise member; Jim Hamblin, retired fire chief; and Ryan Bauer, Plumas National Forest Fuels and Prescribed Fire Program Manager.

Get to know the Board at the next meeting on Thursday, February 13th, 2020 at 9:00 am at the Plumas County Planning & Building Services office, 555 Main Street in Quincy.

For more information about the Fire Safe Council Board or the upcoming meeting, visit plumasfiresafe.org or contact Hannah at 927-5281.