



Yuba Watershed Protection & Fire Safe Council Meeting Minutes – May 12, 2020

This meeting was held via Zoom Video Conference and Audio Teleconference only.

Public Comments:

- Curtis Canfield advised he has a letter to share from the Dobbins/Oregon House Improvement Foundation
- Merna Maricke expressed her concerns about NYWD sending out a newsletter not allowing homeowners to use irrigation water to protect homes for fire protection and suggested talking to Supervisor Fletcher

Presentation by Johnnie Foster-Downs of PG&E on Community Wildfire Safety Program

Ms. Foster-Downs presented the Council a PowerPoint presentation on Community Wildfire Safety Program. The PowerPoint was emailed out to our general email list. If you would like to receive a copy of the presentation, please email jupton@yubafiresafe.org.

Cathy LeBlanc inquired about the PG&E Vegetation Defensible Space Grant Program. She had requested \$99,000 and was reduced to \$20,000.

Teresa Royat advised she would like to meet with someone from PG&E to and really explain the situation with some of the hazardous trees that need to be taken down in the foothills and advised she could be a contact person to assist.

Tahoe NF (Yuba River RD): Gabe Foster

- Update on staffing and equipment
- Escaped burn piles have slowed down
- Request for RFP for hand cut/hand pile on 76 acres at Bullards Bar and a pre bid tour with 11 contractors – coupled with pre bid tour and Pendola/Garden Valley for about 400 acres – hope to start working late this season
- Monitoring all under burns
- Fire season is coming
- Working with North Yuba Partnership on scoping notice
- Trapper being signed – have a lot of potential for pass through non fed grant funding – specifically in Camptonville

Cathy LeBlanc inquired if the Yuba River Ranger District station is closing in 2025? Gabe advised to contact Lon Henderson for more information.

Cal Fire: Jim Mathias

- Update on weather conditions – going to be 20 degrees above average temps
- Update on staffing and equipment
- Providing defensible space inspections

- Fire Plan has been completed and submitted to Sacramento and should be up on website soon
- Providing training to look out volunteers on May 23
- Dozer lines around the fish and wildlife property have been completed

Steve Andrews advised he would like to have an offline meeting to discuss having a handout to pass out during inspections.

Curtis Canfield, Co-Chairman of the Dobbins/Oregon House Improvement Foundation (DOHIF) shared a letter from the Board of Directors.

- Last week DOHIF signed a new “emergency use agreement” with Justin and Captain Cruise from CalFire Station 60 in Dobbins to allow CalFire use of The Alcouffe Center for emergency staging and provide the services of our certified kitchen to feed the troops
- The fire hydrant next to our main gate was placed there to support CalFire and volunteer firefighters. The water from that hydrant is drawn from our well, at our expense and stored in 30,000-gallon tank on site. Water from our hydrant is available to all fire departments at no charge. This not only benefits our local community, but many other communities when an engine is called into service to assist CalFire and neighboring volunteer fire departments on local, mutual aid incidents.
- The Alcouffe Center supports the efforts of fire services in the foothills and beyond
- Six of our executive Board members are also volunteers for Oregon Peak Lookout, 4 are serving the local volunteer fire departments in some capacity and 3 are local retired citizens or still working professionals. Oregon Peak is a vital part of our community fire protection services as well, and the Board fully supports its operation and the volunteers who staff it and would like to see continued operation.

Sean Griffis hopes we can keep the lookouts staffed and up and running overall and work together towards the same goal.

Fire District Reports

Sean Griffis reported that Smartsville Fire Protection District is in the process of hiring a seasonal firefighter – still looking to hire some additional seasonal fire fighters. We would like to have two operators and firefighters for this season.

Yuba County Reports

Steve Andrews reported that Supervisor Fletcher had to move on to another meeting. He has been highly active interfacing with Public Works and Firesafe Council on road clearing projects. Public Works has received a significant grant to do roadside fuel reduction. The Firesafe Board has approved some of our funds to start work along Willow Glen Road – we hope to start work soon. Also, Public Works is in the process for submitting a Fire Prevention grant to CalFire. The Firesafe Council has also submitted a grant for a CEQA document in the amount of \$75,000 to YWA, this document will address treatments and mitigations associated with potential and existing roadside fuel reduction projects.

Teresa Royat inquired if the Firesafe Council had looked to grant funding for brush clearing equipment and suggested Yuba County should purchase such equipment.

Sheriff’s Office - Steve Andrews advised that they assigned a new Sargent for the foothill area: Fernando Machuca

Yuba County RCD: Gary Fildes

Working on the foothill clean up grants – looking for additional funding source

- Continuing working on consolidating with Sutter County RCD and will be forming a task force to continue that process
- Putting AB38 Program on hold – until we get some interest from the realtors

Steve Andrews reported the Firesafe Council with some of the funds we received from Yuba County in the Wildfire Prevention Grant has committed funding to the RCD - some for operational budget and capacity building – they will be bringing on a part time staff person that both Yuba and Sutter County RCD will share and we will continue to fund that capacity.

Camptonville Community Partnership: Cathy LeBlanc/Allison Thompson

- Working full steam ahead to break ground this summer
- Working on a CCI Grant to help with fuel contracting
- Commented on PG&E's presentation today – PG&E is charging us \$2.4 M to connect to their lines
- Hopefully next time this year we will be starting our training program – to help with local economy and provide good paying job with benefits

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Allison Thompson

- Working on putting CCI Grant together
- CCP released a video for Earth Day – it is on CCP Facebook Page and YouTube

Charles Tyler reported that he will be running the power plant. We are working on feedstock contracts, anything we can get as far as wood would be beneficial.

YWP&FSC Reports

Outreach-Education Committee: Beverly Cameron

- Youth Take Action Film Project was launched on May 12. This will be a 4-week program with a group of 7 students that will work Radu Sava to produce fire safety PSA's. Also looking at other ways to get students involved – maybe pictures for the calendar, paint road signs posters, tow chain covers and other potential projects
- Still looking photos for the 2022 calendar
- Tow chain covers – YWA donated \$2000 for 200 covers – we are looking to restock locations and hopefully have a spot a Dark Day at Bullards Bar
- Continuing to put together Wildfire Mitigation Advisors handouts
- Looking forward to having face to face meetings to handout important information

Cathy LeBlanc noted that Sutter Behavioral Health was a funding sponsor on our Youth Take Action Film Project.

Board Report: Sean Griffis

- We have a fully operational Board with 5 Board members
- Steve Andrews is stepping down as Executive Director and we are in the process of hiring a new one and moving forward with hiring the Executive Director and Administrative Assistant as FireSafe Council Employees of the Board v. contractors
- Did some training with 34 North on the new data platform – going to have a lot of functionality for us in the future and being beneficial to Firesafe Councils in general
- Working on a number of projects and will refer to Steve for his report

Executive Director Report: Steve Andrews

- Received an email yesterday from one of zoom training attendees - Jessica Morris – Deputy Secretary for California Resource Agency she sent along the names of several CalFire, Department of Conservation and resources agency personnel to have a presentation on the Yuba County Platform. We are working on additional training for people using this platform.
- Efforts ongoing on the CalFire Healthy Forest Grant – we have activities currently going on 4 partner landowners and 2 more to start soon. We are starting to see significant amounts of work getting done (mastication, bio mass chipping, hand cut work and herbicide application to start).
- Residential Chipping Program picking up – we have done 25 residences to date
- Reflective Address Signs – we have ordered 200 more signs
- Working on another potential project – roadside work on Willow Glenn Road from Marysville Road to Frenchtown Road in the near future
- The Board meeting did approve hiring Allison and Jeanene as employees of the Firesafe Council.

Gary Fildes reported that he has done 5 more Wildfire Mitigation Reviews and two of our trainees Teresa Royat and Beverly Cameron Files are now qualified advisors. May have a couple of potential trainees in the future.

Teresa Royat suggested that we add a note on how to install the Residential Address Signs.

The next meeting has been scheduled for June 9, 2021.