



## **Yuba Watershed Protection & Fire Safe Council Meeting & Board Meeting Minutes – September 8, 2021**

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

**Welcome/Agenda:** Executive Director Allison Thomson welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**Public Comments:** No public comments were made

### **Partner Reports:**

#### **Cal Fire: Rob Bartsch**

- Updates on the Dixie, Caldor, Bridge and Glen Fires
  - o Yuba County: Glen Fire, off of Willow Glen Road, started August 11. Just under 200 acres, but could have been much worse. Once it got to the top of the ridge, air attack and especially tankers were able slow it down enough the dozers could get in, in combination with some lighter fuels helped put the fire out. Local fire districts all worked together really well. About 2500 people were evacuated from Willow Glen Road to Frenchtown Road, plus out New York House Road to the northeast and down Frenchtown Road down to Marysville Road – larger evac area than probably needed, but it has to do with road networks and escape routes.
- Update on equipment and staffing
  - o 19 out of NEU’s 20 frontline engines are on the Caldor Fire. Still have at least one engine at every station, but many of those are reserve engines. Have hired neighboring agencies to maintain staffing levels at all Yuba County stations.

#### **Board of Supervisors: Allison Thomson reported for Supervisor Fletcher**

He attended the RCRC Board of Directors Meeting on Wednesday, August 18th.

- The RCRC Board of Directors reviewed and approved the formation of a new joint powers authority, the Golden State Connect Authority (GSCA), for the purpose of expanding broadband access and affordability in rural counties.
- Several efforts have been underway in the Legislature and various state and federal agencies to address California's persistent catastrophic wildfire events. The state is undertaking a number of actions designed to respond to California’s increased fire activity in both the near and long-term, and the federal government has also begun taking measures to respond to increased wildfire activity nationwide.
- **The Wildfire and Forest Resilience Expenditure Plan:** The California State Legislature approved \$1 billion in funding in the 2021-22 State Budget Package passed in June.

- **Wildfire Emergency Declarations:** Governor Gavin Newsom has issued Emergency Declarations for several wildfires across California, including the Dixie Fire, the Lava Fire, the River Fire and the Tamarack Fire. While the Governor has requested Federal Emergency Management Agency grant assistance for these events, no federal emergency declaration requests have been made to date.

#### **Oregon Peak Lookout Tower VIP Program: Gary Fildes**

- Still need staffing for several shifts
- Changing staffing times to 10:00 am – 6:00 pm
- Recruiting more volunteers for next year

#### **Yuba County RCD: Gary Fildes**

- Working with Sutter County RCD on Cal Recycle Grant
- Received Audit proposals, the cheapest we could find is between \$4500 - \$5000. We currently have \$4500 in our bank account – not sure how we are going to proceed
- Working on Foothill Clean Up Grant

Gretchen Cupp from Yuba Sutter Domestic Animal Disaster Assistance commented that they took in 5 dogs during the Glen Fire and Yuba County OES was prepared to take people in – but not animals.

#### **Special Report: Wildfire Mitigation Review Program: Gary Fildes**

Gary Fildes, Program Coordinator provided an overview of the Council's current Wildfire Mitigation Program. Gary was prepared to show two YouTube videos, but we experienced technical difficulties. Here are the links to videos below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zx9-pZvKW2U&t=349s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eyl8713wqk&t=55s>

If you are interested in having a Wildfire Mitigation Review of your home, please visit our website at [www.yubafiresafe.org](http://www.yubafiresafe.org)

Allison Thomson advised that the Council will be submitting a grant today to the California Fire Safe Council for a \$100,000 for a new home hardening cost share program.

#### **YWP&FSC Reports**

##### **Outreach-Education Committee: Beverly Cameron**

- Provided a live presentation to YES Charter Academy 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> graders
- Still looking for pictures for the 2022 Calendar
- Working on a tri-fold brochure that highlights all of our programs
- Address Signs – seeing more and more in the community
- Continue working on articles for the Camptonville Courier
- Thank you to Cal Fire Station 61 for the fire hose
- Thousand Trails continues to be a huge consumer of our tow chain covers

Curtis Canfield advised that September 11 event at the Alcouffe had not been cancelled and inquired if we were going to have table at the event.

##### **Board Report: Sean Griffis**

- Has been assisting at the Monument Fire
- Welcome Steve Andrews to the Board and our new Vice Chairman

**Camptonville Community Partnership: Cathy LeBlanc**

- Project is moving forward – we have stepped in the queue to receive our power purchase agreement; this is a huge milestone for the project
- We received a grant from the Council for \$20,000 to match PG&E funding for the Special Needs Defensible Space Program for 4 additional homes. We have completed 5 homes to date

**Executive Director Report: Allison Thomson**

- Roadside clearing work on Willow Glen Road from Marysville Road to Frenchtown Road – they have been out there for the past month. Last week the contractor completed the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of that project
- Submitting a grant application to California Fire Safe Council for \$100,000 for the Yuba Foothills Home Hardening Cost Share Program, which would provide a 50% cost share match to residences for home hardening upgrades. If awarded this project would start in January 2022
- Update on the Residential Chipping Program – they are chipping this week. Continue to submit your applications for chipping.
- Stevens Fund Fuel Break Project – still have not started but will be starting soon
- Presented to the Yuba County Board of Supervisors a couple of weeks ago to update them on our various programs they provided funding for under the Yuba County Wildfire Prevention Grant 2020. The report was well received and there is positive interest in continuing to support the Council

Mike Lee, with Yuba County Community Development advised that the County is recruiting for Fire Prevention Officer – we hope to have someone on board next month. This person will be able to assist with grants as well.

Cathy LeBlanc requested that maybe this person could assist with the Data Platform. She also thanked Mike Lee for the paving road work in Camptonville.

Beverly Cameron requested volunteers for the September 11 event – please contact her if you can assist.

Rani Isaac announced that if there were a fire in the area, she would be able to get administrative leave from the Department of Insurance to help volunteer.

## **Regular Board of Directors Meeting**

10: 52 a.m.

### **Attendees**

Sean Griffis

Steve Andrews

Pam Cook

Stephen Heter

Creighton Avila

Allison Thomson

Jeanene Upton

Creighton Avila was absent.

- 1. Consider approval of minutes from the August 11, 2021 Regular meeting and August 27, 2021 Special Meeting.**  
Upon motion of Director Heter, seconded by Director Cook, and carried, with Director Avila being absent, the Board approved the minutes as written.
- 2. Consider approval of Wildfire Mitigation Review Program Operational Procedures and Safety Protocol.**  
Under discussion, the Board advised they would like to make the document available for comment to our general membership and bring back for approval at our next Board meeting.
- 3. The meeting was adjourned at 10:59 a.m.**

**The next meeting has been scheduled for October 13, 2021.**