

**Placer County Fire Safe Alliance**  
**October 27, 2008**

**1. Call to Order:** George Alves called the meeting of the Placer County Fire Safe Alliance to order at 10:10 a.m. at the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CALFIRE), Bowman Station, 13760 Bowman Road, Auburn, California.

**a) Introduction of New Members:** No new members were present.

**b) Self-Introductions:** George Alves, Placer County Fire Mitigation Coordinator and Brett Storey, Office of Emergency Services (OES); Rich Gresham and Jane Keillor, Placer County Resource Conservation District (Placer County RCD); Ed Crans, CALFIRE; Tyler Harkness, Foresthill Fire Safe Council; Robin Yonash, Citizen; Bill Mendonca, CALFIRE.

**2. Approval of Minutes:** Some minor changes were made to the minutes. Changes will be reviewed and approved by a quorum. The revisions will be available at: <http://www.placerfirealliance.org> Brett Storey noted our procedures need to be defined and he will obtain clarification from County Council.

**3. Approval of Agenda:** The Agenda was approved as submitted.

**4. Public Comment:** None

**5. Information/Non-Action Items:**

**a) Sub-committee Update:** Defensible Space Assistance- Four names are now on his contractor list.

Education: Robin Yonash noted that while Joann Drummond's schedule prevented her from participating in the Education Committee last month, Joanne did highly recommend the video "Marin On Fire".

GIS: Fuel projects at Foresthill and Todd Valley continue.

**b) The Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan:** Updates are to be completed by December, 2008. George will make sure projects have been completed.

**c) RCD Submitted Grant for Placer Sierra Fire Safe Council-** Rich Gresham reported the grant has been submitted and we are waiting for the results.

**d) "Fire on the Divide" Summary-** Tyler Harkness reported on the outcome of the yearly event. The good news is that representatives from many agencies participated including those from the Forest Service, CALFIRE, CHP, Home Depot, Department of Insurance, etc. The down side is that very few citizens participated in the event- perhaps 20-30 people. They will be discussing how they can improve the event for next year to get more folks out to participate.

**6. Action Items:**

**a)** None

**7. Project Updates:**

**a) Pending/Developing Grant Proposals-** The window of opportunity for grants opens in November. George will gather information about this. A grant response from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy is expected any day. Foresthill has numerous grants in the works.

**b) Biomass Projects Update-** Brett Storey announced that Channel 10 will be filming projects in Foresthill today. The County has also produced a 6-7 minute video on Biomass that was shown to the Board of Supervisors last week.

**d) Legislative Update-** Brett discussed how funding is broken down within the rural schools legislation. New requirements have been added including the establishment of a 15 person executive council who would determine where the monies would be disbursed. The County will accept the money but will not spend it until clarifications are made to the legislation. The County may need to be declared a "Fire Wise County" for funding purposes.

Robin Yonash discussed SB 1595, which expands the focus of PRC 4291 from vegetation management to "Fuels Management." The legislation has been signed by the Governor and

takes effect next January. Another part of the legislation limits what insurance companies, which will no longer be allowed to make the landowner clear land beyond their property line. Ed Crans added that one house with 5 acres cannot use an exemption.

e) **Other-** No information

#### **8. Fire Safe Council Reports:**

- *California Fire Safe Council-* 1) Robin reported the first part of the CFSC board morning meeting, held on October 22, was a joint session with the California Fire Alliance and was closed to the public. When that meeting adjourned, the CA Fire Alliance, including Bruce Turbeville, moved to another room for their meeting, and the public was allowed into the CFSC BOD meeting. What had originally been scheduled to be an hour meeting was cut to a half hour because the preceding session went overtime. Frank Stewart reported that the issue of fire safe councils vs. Firewise communities has been raised to the agencies. This has become an concern because when the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 (PL 106-393, aka HR 2389) was renewed as part of the omnibus Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008, the wording the Title III section was changed to limit use of these funds to Firewise Communities (see [http://www.house.gov/apps/list/press/financialsvcs\\_dem/essabill.pdf](http://www.house.gov/apps/list/press/financialsvcs_dem/essabill.pdf) ) The rest of the BOD session was devoted to a presentation by Farmers Insurance where they invited the CFSC "members" to join the Farmer's Credit Union, not realizing that the CFSC is a non-membership organization, as are most local FSCs. (2) The trademark issue was discussed and Robin is hopeful she will hear shortly from the attorney for the Mountain Rim Fire Safe Council with the outcome. (3) Robin attended a meeting with the Fire Safe Council of Nevada County and Senator Dave Cox. In the meeting, they conveyed to Senator Cox the need to make the CFSC "open and transparent" so all of the fire safe councils can know what is going on. As a result, Senator Cox is seeking input from other fire safe councils about the the CFSC. Robin read the sample letter which is being sent to selected local FSCs for them to use in developing their own letter to Senator Cox. After a discussion on the structure of the Placer County FSCs and whether or not BOS approval would be required before the FSCs send letters to Senator Cox, the group approved Robin's sending of the draft letter to the Placer FSCs for their consideration. Brett Storey didn't think that the full BOS needed to be involved, but recommended copying to Supervisor Holmes and Supervisor Kranz. The Placer County RCD may
- *Foresthill/Iowa Hill Fire Safe Council-* No other information.
- *Placer Sierra Fire Safe Council-* George will be meeting with Karen Calvert tomorrow evening.
- *The Greater Auburn Fire Safe Council-* Their meeting will be today at 4 p.m. George Alves will bring up the letter to them that should be addressed to Senator Cox regarding the role of the CFSC.
- *Fire Safe Council of Nevada County-* No report.

#### **9. Agency and Stakeholder Reports:**

- *Placer County OES-* Brett said the Chipper funding is coming to a halt and it may not be offered as a free service next year. His recommendation is that fire safe councils find other ways to secure funding to continue this and other projects. The County will not receive anymore defensible space money. FEMA grants can be submitted next year and local fire safe councils can submit grant applications.
- *CDF/CALFIRE-* Bill Mendonca reported the U. S. Bureau of Reclamation will terminate their contract as of December 31, 2008. There is pressure from Washington to cut funding. There will no longer be oversight on fuel management programs and including the fuel break for Auburn.

Ed Crans said this will be the last year to obtain Proposition 40 funds with funding ending at the Fiscal Year 2009. \$750K will be funded through 2011. \$3.6 Million has been spent on fuel

reduction efforts. The Federal government will pump in \$70 Million for programs with most of the funding going to Southern California.

- *USFS*- No report
- *BLM*- No report
- *Placer County FMC*- No other information.
- *ARWG, RCD*- Rich Gresham reported the ARWG is applying for a \$20K grant to the Rose Foundation for the financial support of a Watershed Coordinator. The group is working on a UCD project to study the condition of fish in the watershed. Another proposal, going through CABY, will take a look at unpaved roads that may be causing erosion in the watershed.
- *NRCS*- No report.
- *Sierra Forest Legacy*- Not present so no report.
- *Other*- No reports

**10. Roundtable:** None

**11. Adjournment and Next Meeting:** The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 8, 2008 at 10 a.m. at the same location. **No meeting will be held in November.**