

PLACER COUNTY FIRE SAFE ALLIANCE

CDF Bowman Station – Fire Prevention Training Room
13760 Lincoln Way, Auburn, CA 95603 (530) 889-0111

MONDAY, April 27th, 2009

10:00 A.M.

Minutes

1. Call to Order:

In Attendance: Rich Gresham, Ryan Bellanca, Darcy Brown, PCRCD; Roy Robinson, PSFSC; Josh Huntsinger, Placer County Ag Commission; Jeff Dunning, Leigh Witzke, Allstate Insurance; Gary Kirk, Luana Dowling, Tyler Harkness, FHFSC; Dominic Panno, USFS; Edward Crans, CalFire; Joanne Drummond, FSCNC; Jane La Boa, Society of American Foresters; George Alves, Fire Mitigation Coordinator; Brett Storey, Placer County.

2. Approval of Minutes:

Minutes approved as they stand.

3. Approval of Agenda:

Agenda approved with the addition of Forest Care, Nat'l Forest Assn.

4. Public Comment:

No public comment was given.

5. Information / Non Action Items:

A) Sub-committee update

Sub-committees:

Public Education (May 2 is Colfax Green Day);

Defensible space assistance program;

GIS: regional fuels mapping from Sierra to El Dorado, now state wide. Ryan is writing another proposal. This is an effort to streamline data into one format available to everyone. The end goal is to make this information available to fire suppression crews.

B) State and Federal grant availability/status

The grant funds are going to be released. Hopefully we'll hear something this week. RCD is waiting on one award. Nevada County Fire Safe Council is waiting on two awards.

50% of funding has to go toward road maintenance, etc.

C) Discussion with local Insurance representatives about Defensible Space. Discuss the impact and interpretation of SB1595.

There is a question about who will enforce defensible space and what the consequences of non-compliance will be. The insurance companies have more pull than anyone else. Allstate is trying to enforce the defensible space rules. SB 1595 (Keyhoe) is an attempt to develop guidelines for defensible space and limit the insurance companies to enforce only what is in the law (4291), unless they go through the local fire agency. Allstate has agreed to honor inspections from a local agency or a Fire Safe Council.

CalFire is not going to use their forms to conduct inspections right now. The inspections being requested for insurance purposes are looking at defensible space beyond 100'. There is a question as to whether an RPF is needed to make recommendations beyond the 100' clearance around structures.

It was suggested that Allstate should take their issues to RCRC.

D) Weed Abatement and Noxious Weed discussion with Placer County Ag representative
County Ag Commissioner is responsible for regulating nurseries, performing pest inspections, and eradicating pests. They have a mandate to eradicate certain weeds, like star thistle. Broom is a "C"

rated pest. They are not mandated to eradicate broom. The County Ag Commissioner is writing a letter to make Nevada County a “rejecting county” for broom species. The justification is the “Broom Challenge”. There is currently concern about the nursery at Home Depot in Auburn. There is a peer pressure campaign going on to convince nurseries not to sell broom species.

6. Action Items:

A) None

7. Project Updates:

A) Pending/Developing Grant Proposals

B) Biomass projects update

The county has two small grants from APCD to remove piles throughout the forest in Foresthill and Lake Tahoe. There is a small amount of money available for the box program. There is a large earmark from Feinstein to create a biomass facility in Tahoe.

There was a suggestion to provide green waste drop sites in Placer County so that residents don't have to use Nevada County's sites.

C) Legislative Update

Montgomery and Holmes will meet with the State Lobbyist to decide what positions the committee should take in the future.

D) Other

8. Fire Safe Council Reports:

CA Fire Safe Council

Foresthill/Iowa Hill Fire Safe Council

The pipeline grant for 63 acres is in the process of completion. Todd Valley fuel break has been very successful. Rooster Ridge should be funded soon. A committee has been working on the “Wildfire in the Divide” event. This will be a community event involving as many people as possible. The poster program will be back in schools soon.

Placer Sierra Fire Safe Council

The council hasn't had a quorum in a while. They are working on getting more people to come to the meetings so that they can get more done. The meetings are held on the fourth Thursday every month. May 2, 10am – 3:30pm is Green Day in Colfax.

Greater Auburn Area Fire Safe Council

No meeting today.

Fire Safe Council of Nevada County

Busy with Title 3 grant. Trying to increase the number of Firewise Communities. Working with Tahoe-Donnor area. Received solicitation for I-80 fuel break. Putting on a benefit production with a local playhouse on May 6. Also partnering with local restaurants for dinner before the show. In June there will be another Wine and Culinary Adventure.

9. Agency and Stakeholder Reports:

Placer County OES

Multihazard mitigation plan in the works.

CDF/CalFire

Start firefighter training next week. Fire season starts May 15. There will be a training burn at the UC Field Station. Waiting on CFIP money.

USFS

Fuels work has consisted of 700 acres of burning, mostly understory. About 70 large piles have been burned. Plans for masticating and fuel break work along the Divide and Sugar Pine Rd. A lot of the money that the USFS in this area has asked for would go toward fuel treatments. So far, all of the stimulus money has gone to Southern California, but the local FS is expecting to get some money. There has been a change in Federal wildland fire policy. Fire use will not be used anymore. Wildland fire can be suppressed or managed. A human caused fire can now be managed for resource improvement.

BLM

BOR

Placer County FMC

ARWG

RCD

Equipment safety training will be held on May 9 at the Nevada County Fairgrounds. That will be the last training of the season.

NRCS

Firewise

They are still working with Foresthill. No funding is coming from Firesafe Councils. Their funding is up in December.

Others

NorCal SAF: Openings at FIT sessions. August 7-8 field days on forestry. Working on the Home Depot issue. SAF is opposing the biomass definition in the Waxman bill. Working on creating a publication of the before and after the fire issues of the Forestland Steward newsletter.

10. Roundtable – Discussion of items of mutual interest, introduction of new issues, and proposed future Agenda items:

No additional items were discussed

11. Next Meeting Date and Adjourn:

May 18, 2009