



Our mission is to prevent deaths, injuries, property loss, and environmental damage resulting from wildfires in Deschutes County.

**August 20, 2019 – Steering Committee – Regular Meeting – 8:00 AM – 9:30 AM
Approved Minutes**

Steering Committee Members & Staff Present:

	Vacant	Fire Rep 1	
x	Doug Green	Fire Rep 2	Bend Fire Dept.
x	Gary Marshall	Fire Rep 3	Deschutes Rural Fire Dist. #2
	Dan Daugherty	Fire Rep 3	LaPine Fire Dept.
	Gary Githens	Insurance Industry	Brown & Brown
	Vacant	Business Community	
	Erica Pelley	Marketing	High Desert Museum
	Chris Perry	911 Service District	Deschutes County
x	Zechariah Heck	Community Development Dept.	Deschutes County
x	Dan Galecki	Private Forestry	Spin Drift Forestry
x	Patti Gentiluomo	HOA Rep	Sunriver HOA
	Dave Gibson	HOA Rep	Black Butte Ranch HOA
x	Dean Richardson	HOA Rep	Upper Deschutes River Communities
x	Craig Letz, Vice-Chair	HOA Rep	Tree Farm
x	Ashley Volz for Nathan Garibay	Sheriff's Office - Emergency Mgmt.	Deschutes County
x	George Chesley	Citizen Rep	At Large - Retired
	Vacant	Citizen Rep	
x	David Morman	Citizen Rep	At Large - Red Cross
x	Gordon Foster	Oregon Dept. of Forestry	ODF - Unit Forester
x	Alex Robertson	COFMS US Forest Service	USFS
	Nicole Strong	OSU Extension Service	OSU Ext
	Paula Simone	Central Oregon Comm. College	COCC
	Vacant	Environmental Community	
x	Ed Keith, Chair	County Forester	Deschutes County
x	Tony DeBone	Commissioner	Deschutes County
x	Jodie Barram	Contract Director	Project Wildfire/FireFree

Public Present:

Nick Ahnen, ServPro

Mike Allen, KTVZ

Jeff Amaral, Bend Parks and Recreation District

Peter Brewer, Oregon Dept. of Environmental Quality

Greg Bryant, Deschutes River Woods #1

Suzanne Butterfield, Awbrey Park HOA

Jeff Conrad, Awbrey Park HOA

Cory Darling, Sunriver Police Department

Morgan Emerson, Deschutes Public Health

Jona Ensley, US Forest Service

Laura Gleim, Oregon Dept. of Environmental Quality

Kristin Heath, Red Cross

Georgia Hill, Ridge at Eagle Crest

Doug Johnson, Central Oregon Fire Management Services (USFS/BLM)

Stacey Lacy, Central Oregon Fire Management Services (USFS/BLM)

Bob Madden, Bend Fire Department

Ray Miao, Deschutes Rural Fire District Board/Woodside Ranch

Todd Peplin, Deschutes Soil Water Conservation District

Hayley Riach, Deschutes Sheriff's Office

Kevin Stock, US Forest Service

Kevin Sullivan, Office of Oregon State Fire Marshal

Glenn Voelz, UW & DESOSAR

Helen Webre, Woodside Ranch

Barb West, Bend

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting was opened by Ed Keith, Chair. Introductions were made by those in attendance (name/affiliation).

AGENDA, PAST MINUTES AND UPDATE

The agenda was briefly reviewed. Meeting minutes from July 16, 2019, were approved by consensus.

Jodie Barram updated on the Program of Work. Introduced Barb West.

BARB WEST PRESENTATION ON CAMP FIRE EXPERIENCE

Barb West started by showing a brochure that she grabbed along with insurance documents, pets, etc. when she evacuated in Paradise, California on the morning of November 8, 2018. As we prepared as a community she asked. A [July 31st article in the California Sunday magazine called Gone](#), did research way back to Pete Wilson days.

The area she lived in had a bad fire in 2008. It was a cold 42 degrees the morning of November 8, 2018. When the fire was in Pulga about 30 miles away, she thought about calling the police but figured they might be overwhelmed. She called the hospital where she used to work to see if she could get information. They don't have t.v. on in the morning. She called her elderly neighbors at 8:30 a.m. Then she got the reverse 911 call and rounded up her dog and cat. Barb's husband wasn't home didn't have time to take much once he got there. He only grabbed one bag of pistols from his extensive gun collection. They evacuated in separate vehicles.

Smoke from the fire made it pitch black in the morning. It took four hours to go one mile during the evacuation. She kept hearing explosions, and knew fire was on all sides. She and her husband were in contact by cell phone. He wanted to turn around and take a different route. The whole scene was eerie. No one was coming in and some people were zooming by. When she got in the left lane cars were coming from other direction. She finally got to Skyway and saw a blue light of what she thought was a police car. Cell reception had gone down at that point, so she'd lost communication with her husband. She was emotional seeing the blue light because she realized she wouldn't die alone if the police were there.

Barb explained the Skyway road system designed to slow down traffic for businesses. She saw five fire trucks trying to get through against traffic. In the midst of the chaos, there was a hero. He maybe worked for public works, and was wearing a weak-looking safety vest in what she called the suicide lane. He was screaming "all lanes open, go, go, go". She got to the lower part of Skyway and town was gone. Buildings were on fire. She turned on emergency AM radio and heard the mayor just repeating a message without useful information. She tried called the police non-emergency number and no one answered. She found out later that the sixteen police that make up the department all lost their homes. Fire was everywhere. There was a purple-orange glow. Power lines were down. The car's heat warning signal came on. She was thinking she was going to drive straight into the fire. She still had no contact with her husband.

She passed a senior housing complex with 50 foot flames, the Paradise sign in flames, a burned out car, and a horse trailer. She looked back to Neil road where the 2008 fire was that destroyed 76 homes. She saw wood structures with flames going off of them. Then, Barb saw blue sky, realized she was going to live, and broke down. Then a cell phone call came through. Her husband had made it out. They met up. In Chico they were evacuated again.

The Wests had game cameras, and two in front of the house survived. They captured her neighbor Joel's house as it burned. Since the fire, a private Facebook group for the Camp Fire has been very helpful. \$28,000 to remove trees after the fire was the cheapest estimate they could get. She shared the photo of things that were in a safe during the fire. A jeweler offered to clean up jewelry for free. There's a company that comes and will go through ashes to find things for you. They give you a bible and pray before going through. Barb said she heard the fire burned at 3,000 degrees. Her roses came back after the fire. Flowers came out of ashes. She remains positive. She and her husband got 30 days of skiing in. She likes that you don't have to think when you're skiing. She wants people to know life is good and life does go on.

Barb offered some tips and things to think about. Help with defensible space and 100-year fires in Deschutes County. She would encourage more FireFree days. When it comes to roads and evacuations she's worried about two lane roads. Protecting in place never crossed her mind; that she could go to an open area like WalMart or Albertson's parking lots. She is the biggest

proponent of reverse 911. Sign up. It's simple & can save your life. Be prepared. Luckily in July she had prepared. She said you don't think in an emergency. She had a note on the outside of a box with a list of items to put in like check books, passports, hard drive, pet food, and will. Plan for a long escape. You may need a litter box for humans and pets in the car. Pack two shirts and a jacket. Have fuel in the car. Watch Facebook for updates. Take photos of possessions which help with insurance. She recommended the Keeper app for \$30 a year. Have the police non-emergency number in phones. Know your zone for evacuations if you have it. On insurance, be sure you have it if you are a renter. So many people impacted by the Camp Fire didn't have insurance or were underinsured. Review your policy. Check that you have replacement costs, and loss of use coverage.

Peter Brewer asked if they had defensible space. Barb replied yes.

Georgia Hill asked about her husband evacuating a different way. Barb wishes they had gone together. She acknowledged the irrational thinking that occurs in a crisis. She didn't feel she should leave her new car behind and the animals were loaded and ready. In hindsight, the car was insured and would have been covered in a loss.

Laura Gleim asked if the radio worked the entire time. Barb answered yes, but it was just the mayor repeating to go. There was no real information. Laura wanted to know what other information would have better helped. Barb would have loved an evacuation notice sooner. Also, she kept hearing explosions and didn't know what they were.

Hayley Riach said it sounded like Barb was prepared and asked what motivated her to be prepared. Barb responded that she's spent 45 years in that town and in July decided to put the list on box. Having a pet folder with information and vaccination records was helpful for coming to a new area. Their Pomeranian died two months after the fire.

Dean Richardson inquired about the neighbors that were elderly. Did she know about their experience. She said they did get out. They didn't get the reverse 911 even though they were signed up. She also encouraged people to not be shy about getting counseling after an event like the Camp Fire. EMDR has helped her.

ROUNDTABLE

Doug Johnson reported that COFMS is looking ahead at prescribed fire. They are in the middle of hiring. The outlook is a Preparedness Level 2 nationally, which is uncommon. Alaska is still taking resources.

Greg Bryant shared about the annual meeting in Deschutes River Woods, where Jodie presented, and neighbor did as well.

Jeff Amaral updated the group on the Shevlin Park fall prescribed fire. A tour is being organized for it.

David Morman discussed the Red Cross outreach so people know what to do in disaster. They have a strong relationship with emergency services. Emotional needs are served as well. Single family home loss is the most common event they see.

Gordon Foster reported that the detection camera is up and running. It came online last week. There is a prevention conference in Sunriver in February.

Kevin Stock is helping with Bend Parks and Recreation District burning, and work adjacent to the High Desert Museum on Kerr property,

Ashley Volz shared that there is tons of information on Deschutes Alerts with some pamphlets in Spanish coming. A gap was identified in their emergency operations plan addressing how they would stand up a mass shelter if the Red Cross is maxed out. She introduced Hayley Riach.

Hayley Riach will be working on Deschutes County's long term recovery plan. She was hired temporarily for a community engaged process.

Ray Miao mentioned that the Deschutes County Rural Fire Protection District #2 board meeting had an interesting discussion on the structure of Project Wildfire. The entire board agreed that it should stay the same. If it ain't broke don't fix it.

Nick Ahnen shared that September is Preparedness month.

Tony DeBone and the Board of Commissioners are reviewing Project Wildfire to see what is being done and what can be better. It's going well and he encouraged people to give feedback to Ed. On a personal note, he's already thinking of next month. South county parcels are engaged in an effort around wetlands. They are working through a process to do fuel reduction.

Ed Keith is following up on wetlands. If people have input on how to make Project Wildfire better or different, it would be good to hear in the next week or so.

Georgia Hill reported that they are working on the 2020 budget.


Jeff Conrad said that Awbrey Park is wanting Firewise certification. They are dealing with apathy and a sense of "it won't happen here". It seems to be a challenge all neighborhoods have.

Glenn Voelz was curious about sheltering in place and asked Ashley about messaging. She said it's being worked on.

Zechariah Heck highlighted the Wildfire Advisory Committee that being formed. They are taking applications with a due date of Monday August 26th.

Patti Gentiluomo shared that Sunriver has completed 130 acres of tree thinning. Fuels reduction work will be going right up to when it snows.

Morgan Emerson is working with partners on vulnerable populations to get signed up for reverse 911.

Laura Gleim mentioned there is an OregonAir app for phones as an easy resource to use for air quality. 

Dean Richardson discussed a couple programs for assisting people with defensible space. One is about maxed out. A newer program is in a trial year for senior disabled. The UDRC board is expanding to accept projects in LaPine. It was an eye opener for him to see the risks outside of UDRC area, like trees that had been limbed up years ago or long driveways that were overgrown. He thought about what would happen if people had to evacuate now. He would like to see involvement from south county for the CWPP this fall.

Alex Robertson shared the fun fact that 125 fires burned 500 acres from lightning the other week. Cooperation and access to resources because of a slower fire season helped. A couple fires had the potential to be a problem and weren't because of moisture and the system working.

Doug Green updated the group that Sisters is finishing its CWPP. City Council is adamant about wildfire mapping and codes for the City. He had a great meeting with Jayden Homes on their subdivision. They are adopting fire standards in a mid-priced neighborhood from the beginning. The Bend Fire Department is working with City Council on its resiliency plan.

Bob Madden said there is a joint meeting with City Council and the County Commission today on wildfire resiliency. He feels outreach should keep going, because we want to prevent something like the magnitude of Paradise and maintain awareness.

Kevin Sullivan reported that the Office of the Oregon State Fire Marshal was directed by the Governor to conduct listening tours. The result has been a substantial report. Highlights include improved support of codes and standards, staffing, and comprehensive prevention materials. A lot of areas aren't as organized and driven as Deschutes. He will give Jodie the report to distribute.

Todd Peplin said that work continues to get stakeholders together. It was Project Wildfire that spearheaded the grant that got the effort underway, increasing awareness for owners.

9:29 am. adjourned