



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

**October 15, 2019 – Steering Committee – Regular Meeting – 8:00 AM – 9:30 AM
DRAFT Minutes**

Steering Committee Members & Staff Present:

	Vacant	Fire Rep 1	
x	Doug Green	Fire Rep 2	Bend Fire Dept.
	Gary Marshall	Fire Rep 3	Deschutes Rural Fire Dist. #2
	Dan Daugherty	Fire Rep 3	LaPine Fire Dept.
x	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
	Dan Galecki	Private Forestry	Spin Drift Forestry
	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	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	Boone Zimmerlee for Gordon Foster	Oregon Dept. of Forestry	ODF - Unit Forester
x	Stacy Lacey for Alex Robertson	COFMS US Forest Service	USFS
	Nicole Strong	OSU Extension Service	OSU Ext
x	Paula Simone	Central Oregon Comm. College	COCC
	Vacant	Environmental Community	
x	Ed Keith, Chair	County Forester	Deschutes County
	Tony DeBone	Commissioner	Deschutes County
x	Jodie Barram	Contract Director	Project Wildfire/FireFree

Public Present:

Nick Ahnen, ServPro Bend

Greg Bryant, Deschutes River Woods #1

Pete Caligiuri, The Nature Conservancy

Georgia Hill, Ridge at Eagle Crest

Bert Neumaier, Tillicum Village

Todd Peplin, Deschutes Soil Water Conservation District

Jim Phillis, Tillicum Village

Janel Ruehl, Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council (COIC)

Lars Santana, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Helen Webre, Woodside Ranch

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 September 17, 2019, were approved by consensus.

Jodie Barram updated the committee on the Program of Work in the following areas:

- Fuels Treatment Program – Chipping is wrapping up in DRRH1-5.
- Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs) - The Sisters CWPP is in its public comment period until October 31st. The La Pine CWPP is underway. Meetings will be scheduled and shared.
- FireFree - The fall press release went out, flyers have been made, and updated charts of historical collection data are on the website. FireFree is October 28th through November 9th.
- Outreach/Education/Networking – She hosted an information table at Teachers' Night Out at the High Desert Museum and the Lowe's Fire Safety Event (with David Mormon). She followed up with attendees of the COCC Fire Mitigation Strategies Class. Presentations were made to the Boonesborough HOA and the La Pine City Council. Ed is working with the Wildfire Mitigation Advisory Committee.
- Communications – Sent out the FireFree press release and gave two radio interviews (FireFree & CWPP).
- Firewise USA – Indian Ford Meadows East and ClearPine Firewise USA Community Assessments are completed and they are seeking recognition. Boonesborough would like to become a Firewise USA Site. Tetherow is willing to mentor the new resident leader of Broken Top. Deschutes River Woods 1 will be mentoring Dry Creek, a Crook County Firewise Site. Jodie is helping sites with renewals.
- Steering Committee – Recruitment for vacancies is beginning. Current members expiring will be asked about renewing. Jodie will begin making a Facebook event for monthly meetings to encourage more public awareness. She thanked David Morman for helping with the Lowe's Fire Safety event.

- FAC Net – She is participating on the Unhoused/Transient Population conference call this Thursday. She attended the Smoke and Public Health quarterly meeting. She and Ed received the grant and workplan approval for the 2019-20 Fiscal Year. She continues to participate in the Network.
- Evacuations – She is coordinating with Nathan Garibay to incorporate more detail for critical transportation routes into CWPPs.

DISCUSSION ABOUT UNHOUSED AND TRANSIENT (TOURIST) POPULATIONS

Nathan Garibay discussed unhoused populations camping. It is unlawful to reside on public lands. People can camp for up to 14 days. It's been observed that people move around from place to place. The Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and Sheriff's Office work together to enforce the applicable laws. The Sheriff's Office can't enforce the Forest Service's Federal policies. They can pursue issues like garbage and dumping. They use inmate work crews to clean up abandoned campsites.

Deschutes County owns a tract of land on the east side of Redmond that has had a public safety issue that necessitated significant action. Unfortunately, problems can pop up at new locations as people are displaced.

Sheriff's Officers are sworn to enforce State and local laws. When it comes to residing on Federal lands, it requires a Federal partner to make contact to enforce. Similarly, they can't enforce State and local laws. That said, there is a lot of discretion and grey area depending on varied circumstances.

Doug Green shared that his departments respond to emergencies and medical issues. Getting to people in remote areas is difficult. They are also concerned about fires in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). He mentioned a recent RV fire. The big risk is from camps where there are people smoking, warming fires, and batteries to charge many things.

Nathan said they even do snowmobile checks, offering people a ride out, but people often ask if they can get propane delivered instead. Fuel treatments in areas by town help by moving people out of the way for safety and to clean up the area to protect firefighters.

Helen Webre remembered November 13th of last year they had a transient camp fire get away near Woodside Ranch. She asked if there is something overarching being done. She cited a Seattle study on unhoused populations that found a lot of drug problems.

Nathan answered that they are looking at a lot of factors like mental health, substance abuse, and poverty. The Homeless Leadership Coalition of Central Oregon is focused on the humanistic side of helping folks. Establishing a stabilization center to assist with issues and help keep people out of jail is one step. They want to give a hand up when someone commits a crime.

David Morman said from the Red Cross perspective, they help with home fires to get through the first 48 hours regardless of if people are in a 5,000 square foot house or a tent. There's been an uptick to those types of responses. They are disproportionately responding to campers parked out back on someone's property.

Nathan reminded the group that the Rabbitbrush Fire was caused by someone camping on another person's property. It's not just the camps in the woods. People are living with high-risk behaviors that they may not even know is high-risk.

Ed Keith asked if there a need for materials or a strategy to focus on how to be safe – fire focused. Project Wildfire can't solve all of the social components.

Nathan said that evacuation messaging like signing up for 'Cofire' text alerts might help but their office can't do reverse 911 because it needs a physical address. It's hard to use forest service roads as a location point because people don't always stay there. They've mapped over 100 camps on the east side of Redmond. Within a month, people moved and shifted.

David said that could be a question for the Forest Service. Phil's Trail area has a lot of trailers camping. Nathan said there was pressure to move west because the China Hat area is busy. People are moving and dispersing to avoid conflict or dangerous situations.

Dean Richardson was curious about the amount of population that might be veterans and could Veterans Affairs help. Nathan answered yes, there are a number of veterans and he works with Central Oregon Veterans Outreach (COVO). Keith from Deschutes County works with veterans services.

Dean asked if prescribed burning helps. Nathan replied that they move right back in and he'd rather people live where it's safer like an area that's already been treated.

Helen said that the area off China Hat was one of the worst of the homeless camps, but it is improving. Law enforcement has been out a lot. Nathan said they are focusing on what can be done to mitigate ignitions and lessen the impact when they do occur.

Janel Ruehl asked how many Firewise sites are next to the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) and/or camps. **Jodie Barram** will look into getting that number. Nathan and Doug felt that if you live near public land or private land that isn't managed, you likely have people camping near you.

Helen shared that in talking to Kevin Larkin from the Forest Service, she learned they manage over 1 million acres and only have one patrol officer. Nathan said people will often get a fine, but not jail. The enforcement can be ineffective. He asked what other strategies can we use to help.

Nick Ahnen has worked with City of Bend to clean up areas. He sees one of the biggest concerns is hazardous materials. People should be careful.

Paula Simone asked if COFire gives information for evacuation. Nathan said they could use it for that but haven't. Ed said it just needs to be determined when is it appropriate to send notifications. It's easy to do as long as there is a protocol.

ROUNDTABLE

Lars Santana reported that NRCS is primarily working with private landowners. When it comes to Project Wildfire they have conservation strategies. He is putting together a Joint Chiefs proposal to partner with the Forest Service on projects in Deschutes County.

Dean Richardson felt progress is being made with prescribed burns. It'd be great to see more acres done. He was impressed by aerial ignitions. He attended the Home Ignition Strategies Workshop at Central Oregon Community College (COCC). It was better than he thought it would be. Ed, Alison Green and Boone Zimmerlee were well prepared. A lot of the focus was on the structural component.

Zechariah Heck shared that the Wildfire Mitigation Advisory Committee started up. They had their first meeting last night. There were a lot of questions, particularly around R327 and building codes. They have a project website Deschutes.org/wildfirecommittee. The County Community Development Department is working with Commissioners to create an ad hoc housing committee to look at what the County can and cannot do as it pertains to affordable housing. Several counties have gone through existing condition reports.

Ed Keith had close to 80 people attend the COCC class over two days. They got good feedback and will improve for future classes.

Paula Simone said COCC will host the classes again the first week of winter term and the first week of spring term. She reported that COCC is not doing away with the wildfire program. They sunsetted the degree because there aren't fuels manager positions locally. All wildland and structure classes will be under Fire Science. They are just restructuring, so it will not be packaged the way it used to be.

Nathan Garibay said that the FEMA Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan is still waiting for funding. He really liked the COCC training. It was a good reminder to worry less about your neighbor's property and more about yours. He's using the Sisters CWPP to update his evacuation route prioritization method.

Craig Letz is working with a couple of developers. Regardless of the County's policies, developers are moving forward with fire mitigation measures. He had an opportunity to drive through Paradise, California, recently. Almost all of the debris and rubble has been removed. What's interesting to him is what didn't burn. The canopy and overstory trees were still in tact in a lot of areas. What burned were structures.

George Chesley is impressed by the variety of issues this group has taken on. He wants to keep that in mind as the next program of work is put together.

Todd Peplin shared that the stakeholder engagement grant is getting put together. He appreciates this group's input for South County. He's proposed seven sessions to educate residents in South Deschutes County and north Klamath County. OSU Extension, Oregon Department of Forestry, Project Wildfire, Deschutes County, NRCS and others are helping. Submittal is due by the 28th. He hopes the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board will grant it.

Bert Neumaier introduced himself for Tillicum Village. He attended the class and this is his first Project Wildfire meeting. He appreciated the exercise that had them actually apply what was learned in the lecture. He's doing a walkthrough in his neighborhood on Friday.

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 am.