



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

**November 19, 2019 – Steering Committee – Regular Meeting – 8:00 AM – 9:30 AM
APPROVED Minutes**

Steering Committee Members & Staff Present:

	Vacant	Fire Rep 1	
x	Bill Boos for 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
	Dan Galecki	Private Forestry	Spin Drift Forestry
x	Patti Gentiluomo	HOA Rep	Sunriver HOA
x	Dave Gibson	HOA Rep	Black Butte Ranch HOA
x	Dean Richardson	HOA Rep	Upper Deschutes River Communities
	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	Gordon Foster	Oregon Dept. of Forestry	ODF - Unit Forester
x	Doug Johnson for 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
	Tony DeBone	Commissioner	Deschutes County
x	Jodie Barram	Contract Director	Project Wildfire/FireFree

Public Present:

Nick Ahnen, ServPro Bend

Gregory Bryant, Deschutes River Woods #1

Alison Green, Central Oregon Cohesive Strategy Initiative

Georgia Hill, Ridge at Eagle Crest

Maggie Jaegger, Tillicum Village

Ron Klein, Ridge at Eagle Crest

Marianne Kramer, Elkai Woods HOA

Stella Larson, Woodside Ranch

Ray Miao, Woodside Ranch/DCRFPD2

Bert Neumaier, Tillicum Village

Todd Peplin, Deschutes Soil Water Conservation District

Joe Stutler, Deschutes County

Boyd Turner, Eagle Crest HOA

Helen Webre, Woodside Ranch

Chester Wompoldt, Bend citizen

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 October 15, 2019, were approved by consensus.

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

- Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs) - The Sisters CWPP is ready for adoption. The La Pine CWPP is underway. Meetings will be from 1:00-2:30pm today, January 21, 2020 and February 18, 2020 at the La Pine Fire Station on Huntington Road.
- FireFree – The total cubic yards for the fall were 8,776. That is down 2,043 cubic yards from last year.
- Outreach/Education/Networking – Jodie did five individual home assessments in the Bend area. Presentations were made at the North Rim HOA annual meeting, Dry Creek HOA annual meeting, Ponderosa Cascade HOA annual meeting, Awbrey Butte HOA annual meeting and the Tree Farm HOA annual meeting.
- Communications – Social media postings.
- Firewise USA – Jodie did a community assessment for Elkai Woods at Widgi Creek with Susie Maniscalco of the Bend Fire Department. In Sisters, she did a four-star assessment with Doug Green, Beverly Halcon and other volunteers.
- Steering Committee – Recruitment for vacancies is ongoing.
- FAC Net – Following the Unhoused/Transient Population call, Jodie sent Stacey Lacy a document that was shared. Stacey will begin working on a draft educational document to be shared locally. She, Ed and Alison helped host a Learning Exchange with people

from Oregon, Washington, Colorado, California and Hawaii. She continues to participate in the Network.

- Evacuations – She and Nathan Garibay visited Sundance Meadows to review an alternative evacuation route along an irrigation easement.
- Deschutes Collaborative Forest Project – She participated with the Sponsorship sub-committee and the Outreach Committee.

HISTORY AND GOVERNANCE OF PROJECT WILDFIRE

Gary Marshall started things off by sharing that some people have been around since 1996 like **George Chesley**. The Awbrey Butte Fire was one of the biggest in the area in a long time. Then the Skeleton Fire in 1996. It was caused by a lightning storm, the winds changed, and it destroyed 19 homes. That was in his first year as Fire Marshal. Back then they weren't very good at telling people that their homes were lost. They took people out on a bus from Bend High. Following that fire he got a call from SAFECO Corp. He wrote them off as just another insurance company. They offered to buy the department a fire truck. He suggested a different way to impact more people that would last for many years focused on public education and prevention.

He put together a committee, designed a workplan and got \$120,000 for materials, education, and outreach. It was promoted as everyone's problem, not jurisdictional. They brought in 100 volunteers. In July 1997, FireFree kicked off. Through that program they learned that people were picking up and removing the wrong type of debris. Some were focused on removing things further out and keeping flammable plants near their homes. SAFECO invested for about 3 years.

Tom Fay applied for a grant with Project Impact for \$225,000. They developed a steering committee and how to use funds. Those funds started the emergency notification system, grew FireFree, funded remote weather stations, and influenced the wood shake roof ban ordinance. In 2004 when funding ended, Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF), Bend Fire, Deschutes County Rural Fire Protection District 2 & Deschutes County co-funded **Katie Lighthall** to be the Program Director. The name was changed from Project Impact to Project Wildfire. His District hasn't lost a home to wildfire since 2002 (140 square miles).

Joe Stutler, former County Forester, acknowledged Gary, George and **Dennis Luke** for their foresight. He was selected as Vice-Chair then Chair a month later for the steering committee. Their first strategy was to apply for grants. They were very successful. From 2004-2013 they went after a lot of money and got it. Back then there were incredible opportunities for biomass and they used subsidies for that. They also expanded FireFree out of just Bend and went county-wide. The coordinator went from part-time to full-time.

In 2005 they looked at the make-up of the steering committee. The County ordinance was amended to diversify and bring in more intellectual property. They put together a

contingent (Gary, **Patti Gentiluomo**, Joe, others) to go back to Washington, D.C. and got \$3.5 Million from that visit. They presented at the Fire Congress then went to Spain. They made a trip to Seely Lake, Montana, and shared there. People around the world were interested in the structure and success.

Katie continues to work with Joe on the Cohesive Strategy. **Alison Green** was brought on last year with a focus on Central Oregon. The coordinator role is key for this kind of work. There is a need for a point person.

Alison Green stepped in after Katie and explained the role of the Project Wildfire coordinator, being that point of contact. He/She is the person that holds all the strings and connects people, offering education and presentations as well as the day to day business pieces. Being the coordinator you realize you are not on an island. You get to meet with partners and take intellectual property to share with everybody else.

One of the biggest roles is the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) coordination. In the early 2000s those plans were one of the only ways to get funding. There were two communities that needed a plan, so Project Wildfire stepped in and helped those communities define their own plan around the risks on the ground.

A huge role of Project Wildfire is coordinating FireFree. People used to bring it to the road instead of the drop-off it is today. Piles and the program got big fast. It was lucky that Deschutes County Solid Waste stepped up as a key partner. Then a Fall event was created with Deschutes Recycling for a half-price program. FireFree is not just events, it's year round education.

Alison explained the evolution of Firewise USA in Deschutes County. Fall River was the first Firewise site in Oregon, Squaw Creek was the 100th. There are over 30 sites in Deschutes County. Firewise sites help cement broader impact. There's been \$12-15 Million in grants for sweat equity and more since it began. Recently some grants haven't been just for fuels reduction, they've been for education and outreach like the website centraloregonfire.org and leading prescribed fire tours.

Cohesive Strategy is a national framework that came from the Federal Land Assistance, Management and Enhancement (FLAME) Act in 2009. Its three tenets are creating and maintaining resilient landscapes, fire-adapted communities, and ways to integrate a better wildland fire response. The idea behind that framework is that we are better together, across boundaries and jurisdictions.

Local to national recognition is tied into it in places like Texas, Washington, California, and Minnesota. People make it their own. BBC even did a radio program about Project Wildfire. That we are working as a village resonates.

Ed Keith thought people in the room were probably picking up on themes as each person has shared about the foundation of Project Wildfire. It's been looked at as a model for how to convene around wildfire. CDC has a non-profit foundation and came calling in 2013 looking for a national model for natural disasters. Project Wildfire was

chosen to participate to forward its model. This resulted in a toolkit that Katie started and Alison finished. Then it was shared with everyone. That was followed by an invitation to participate in the Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network (FACNet). FACNet is 19 different geographies that share learning, best practices, etc.

Another theme is the need for a robust and diverse steering committee. The basis is in County Code. The biggest role of the committee is participating in the program of work. Finally, it's clear that the Project Wildfire group continues to stay alive and vibrant because it has evolved showing how a local success can lead to a national model.

That evolution is continuing today. This monthly meeting topic was planned before the decision was made to transition the role of the Project Wildfire Program Director from contracted to a full-time employee after 15 years. This will institutionalize the program. The recruitment just closed.

Doug Johnson said the access to federal funding through CWPPs has been invaluable. They get funding but can ask for more. The Deschutes National Forest has garnered \$15-20 Million for additional work to be done on forest lands near the CWPP boundaries.

ROUNDTABLE

Ed Keith reminded people it is County Code that forms the Project Wildfire group and membership. He reiterated the importance of recruitment and ran down the list of vacancies. Categories include insurance, business, marketing/communications, environmental, Homeowners Associations, At-Large, and OSU-Extension. Up to 10 people could be appointed by the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) by the end of the year. Online applications will be taken to the BOCC. It would be great to have some people that have been engaged to apply formally to be on committee. Steering Committee members who are up for renewal this year include Gary Githens(N), Insurance; Erica Pelley(N), Marketing/Communications; Dave Gibson(Y), Craig Letz(N) and Dean Richardson(Y), HOA's; Gary Marshall(Y) and Dan Daugherty(Y), fire departments; Dan Galecki(Y), Private Forestry; George Chesley(Y) and David Morman(Y), At Large; Alex Robertson(Y), USFS/BLM; Nicole Strong(N), Extension; and Paula Simone(Y), COCC. Jodie and/or Ed confirmed that each of the above would like to continue with another term and wish to participate in the Steering Committee as noted by the Y or N next to their name. His second update was about the new Firewise Grant opportunity. The BOCC dedicated \$40,000 of lottery funds for fuels reduction. The purpose is to create defensible space and fuels reduction particularly for communities that have organized around Firewise, have a plan and are ready to do projects. It helps if a community has a potential match, knows what type of work they want to do and how the work links to a plan. He's excited about the opportunity. He asked people to help spread the word.

Nathan Garibay mentioned the access and functional needs exercise done recently about public safety power shut offs. **Jodie Barram** attended that exercise. At it, they

talked about people with medical needs and equipment. **Mike Mammick** and **Shad Campbell** presented with him at the Northwest GIS conference, about using public information map ESRI to communicate evacuation information. They were the last presentation of the day and lots of people were interested. They will continue to improve the project to get timely information to the public. The disaster recovery project has kicked-off with **Hayley Riach**. It identifies 200 stakeholders. They have reshaped the strategy. Deschutes County was invited to participate with Oregon Department Of Transportation (ODOT) on intelligent transportation system plans. ODOT is interested in evacuation planning and how to use best technology including emergency management needs.

Patti Gentiluomo said that Sunriver Owners' Association is still cutting trees and will until the snow is deep. She's heard lots of positive comments about the Forest Service doing mowing. She thanked Doug Johnson for that.

Alison Green updated the group that January 9th and 10th will be the next COCC Home Mitigation Strategies class. She asked that people recommend and send folks that they know. The class will be offered again in May.

Ron Klein reported that the Ridge at Eagle Crest had a lot of debris due to winter storms. The board expanded and did more than just the FireFree event this year removing 3,300 yards of limbs, Juniper, debris, and smaller stuff. They are finishing a logging operation. Joe Stutler got them started years ago. Now that canopy separation is done they will do more Juniper thinning next year and fine tune areas. Then they'll maintain and the budget will go down.

Georgia Hill thanked the group for the presentation.

Bert Neumaier oversaw his first limbing project in Tillicum Village. They took away four truckloads in five hours. The end result was beneficial. He wanted to remind the committee what is possible.

Zechariah Heck updated that the Wildfire Mitigation Advisory Committee is focused on determining a map that identifies the wildfire hazard zone. It has been somewhat controversial. There has not been a final decision on a map depicting a wildfire hazard zone so far. Second is decision points for codes. Even if you have a wildfire hazard zone that encompassed the entire county there can be exceptions granted by the local jurisdiction. There are robust discussions on those exceptions. It's a good group with diverse opinions. He looks forward to sharing results. It will be an important time for Project Wildfire to weigh in. If people have interest, they can follow online <https://www.deschutes.org/cd/page/wildfire-mitigation-advisory-committee>.

Nick Ahnen offered thanks for presentation and background. He applied to be on the steering committee. Through his job with ServPro of Bend he works with insurance agencies and will spread the word.

Boyd Turner had several people ask him about the grant opportunity. Their community did meet their Firewise goals this year. Homeowners spent more time contracting work than volunteering. It could be because of the quantity of work due to storms.

Marianne Kramer thanked the presenters.

Chester Wamboldt also thanked the presenters.

Dean Richardson said the presentation was a great history lesson. The Upper Deschutes River Communities meeting is this Thursday with updates from the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management about what's been done and planned. They are working with highest communities at risk like DRRH6. They did a sweat equity program that was hugely successful. In addition, the County is helping by doing fuel reduction on their own lots including wetlands, which he was very grateful for. The senior, low-income defensible space plan is coming along. A little over a dozen people are doing that. They extended the grant opportunity into the greater La Pine area. They decided this week to include disabled persons who aren't seniors. He will attend the La Pine CWPP meetings. He would like to see someone from South County on the Steering Committee.

Gordon Foster is continuing to work with the Community Assistance Grant program on the unit as well as one in Crook County. The Oregon Wildfire Council convened and their report is with the Governor. He perused through it but doesn't have detail. He believes it's a good report.

Joe Stutler shared about Chimney Top Fire in Gattlinberg. They came up with a refrigerator magnet that has a QR code on it that you can scan for visitors to get emergency alerts. He loves the language on Cohesive Strategy in the Governor's report. He said that a San Diego utility is starting a new program. They are working with a company that is using wood chips and plastic for a fire-resistant product. He's very excited about that. Alison Green shared that a similar company is looking at starting in Prineville and they can use products from federal lands.

Ray Miao updated that the Pilot Butte fire station will be opening in December. He thanked Nathan Garibay for evacuation information for their newsletter.

Gregory Bryant has absent owners in Deschutes River Woods (DRW) and is going to see if they can mitigate. He will apply for the fuels reduction grant.

Doug Johnson reported that the Forest Service completed 3,000-4,000 acres of prescribed fire treatments. They are doing pile burning now. The Pacific Northwest is down one Incident Management Team (IMT) due to a lack of an Incident Commander for that team. They will have ten total. March 30th to April 2nd, 2020 is the IMT conference here in Bend. They hope to educate communities about the importance of IMT work.

George Chesley shared that the Project Wildfire history highlights the community of people working on this.

Dave Gibson thanked Jodie for reengaging him in the committee. He represents a lot of people. It's been four years and homeowners are doing work.

David Morman has been working with the American Red Cross on smoke alarm installations. Redmond is still important. They are doing DRW this month.

Stella Larson has been gone for six months due to her daughter's cancer diagnosis. She still writes a column and will share. It's published in Santa Barbara for disaster preparedness. She thanked the committee for inspiration on topics. Her heart is here. She's looking forward to public policy influence like firescaping for buildings. She will apply to be on the committee. She has a new email address.

Helen Webre finally launched a Firewise e-newsletter for their neighborhood. It was sent to dues paying members and they have had requests for others to be added to distribution list. Tomorrow night Barb West will be speaking to their HOA at the East Bend library.

Maggie Jaegger said thanks for the presentation.

The meeting adjourned at 9:39 am.