



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

**April 21, 2020 – Steering Committee – Zoom Meeting – 8:00 AM – 9:30 AM  
DRAFT Minutes**

Steering Committee Members & Staff Present:

X	Ken Kehmna	Fire Rep 1	Redmond Fire Chief
	Gary Marshall	Fire Rep 3	Deschutes Rural Fire Dist. #2
	Dan Daugherty	Fire Rep 3	La Pine Fire Dept.
X	Doug Green	Fire Rep 4	Bend / Sisters Fire
	Vacant	Insurance Industry	
	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
	Dean Richardson	HOA Rep	Upper Deschutes River Communities
X	Nathan Garibay	Sheriff's Office - Emergency Mgmt.	Deschutes County
X	George Chesley	Citizen Rep	At Large - Retired
X	David Morman	Citizen Rep	At Large - Red Cross
X	Oliver Tatom	Citizen Rep	At Large
X	Gordon Foster	Oregon Dept. of Forestry	ODF - Unit Forester
X	Alex Robertson	COFMS US Forest Service	USFS
	Vacant	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	Nick Ahnen	Marketing	Serv pro
	Brandon Fogleman	Business	
X	Ken Kehmna	Fire Rep 1	Redmond Fire Chief
X	Jessica Laberge	Business	
X	Robert Pohly	Citizen Rep	At Large Retired

X	Boone Zimmerlee	Director	Deschutes County FAC Coordinator
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**Public Present:**

Ken Kennedy, Wild River  
 Lars Santana, NRCS  
 Greg Bryant, DRW  
 Doug Johnson, COFMS  
 Georgia Hill, Ridge at Eagle Crest  
 Bert Neumaier, Tillicum Village  
 Emily Troisi, Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network  
 Chase Duncan , ODF  
 Brenda Hallmark, USFS region 6  
 Peter Brewer, DEQ  
 Alison Green, Oregon: Living With Fire  
 Ray Miao, Woodside Ranch & DRFPD#2

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The meeting was opened by Ed Keith, Chair. Introductions were made by new Steering Committee members in attendance (name/affiliation/background).

Bob Pohly

Retired from Telecommunication with AT&T since has been volunteering with a national group, Red Cross and now with PW as business rep. Been attending since Dec with some involvement before then. Very happy to be part of PW and the steering committee.

Nick Ahnen

Will be serving as a marketing rep. Been attending for a year. Has been interested and involved because of fire danger in his neighborhood near Smith Rock. Currently works for Servpro disaster restoration here in Central Oregon originally from AK, spent some time living overseas. Majority of hi background is in advertising and marketing.

Ken Kehmna

Redmond Fire Chief since Nov 2018. Prior to that lived in Santa Clara 31 years working for the fire department. Lots of experience in wildfire since the Santa Cruz Mountain Range was within his district. Other experience included running a communication center utilizing the mutual aid agreements and moving large amounts of resources around the state. Ken was also a WMAC member. He is exited to bring experiences here.

Jessica Laberge

New since last 2 meetings. She has 20 years of Fire experience working in Emergency Management. For the past 4 years she has been working in the private sector conducting outreach. She has lived in Oregon most of her life and has been in Bend for the past 1.5 years. She is looking forward to meeting all of us.

Oliver Tatom

Grew up here. His family lost their house in Skeleton fire and he has a direct connection with the need to prepare for wildfire. Traveled the United States gaining his education and moved back 5 years ago. He is currently a paramedic with St. Charles. He has also sat on the board of directors for COCC for the past 5 years.

Brandon Fogleman

- Absent from this meeting

## **AGENDA, PAST MINUTES AND UPDATE**

**Boone Zimmerlee** updated the committee on the Program of Work in the following areas:

- Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs) – Sisters CWPP is complete with signatures. La Pine CWPP is ready for signatures. Opportunities to get signatures from both La Pine city council and the Board of County Commissioners is being worked out in light of COVID-19. Sunriver CWPP is having last revision meeting and will be planning to go into 30 review period shortly.
- FireFree – County Commissioners met last Wednesday and approved plan for May 9<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>. This will be for all County transfer stations and the landfill during regular business hrs. Westside location, Brooks Resources near The Tree Farm, will be open weekends only during that time frame.
- Firewise USA – Community assessments have been paused for COVID. Need to work out plan with ODF to move community assessments forward.
- FAC Net – Changed our COCC classes from in person to virtual. Seemed to have gone quite smooth. We are also planning a “Firewise Basics” Zoom webinar (1 of a few) to strengthen the network of current and evolving Firewise communities.

## **Meeting Topic**

### **Fires in Australia**

**Alex Robertson – Fire Staff, Central Oregon Fire Management Service**

**Brenda Hallmark – Forest Service Regional Office Fuels**

Alex-

Usually Australians come here. Orders came early this year. Australia had been in a 4 year drought cycle. Australia doesn't use a coordination system like our NMAC where we disseminated orders here, Provinces operate independently. Victoria and New S Wales made separate orders. Orders were different in the different areas. Only Federal employees (no AD's) were used and must have a passport. US sent folks over in mid Jan. Alex was ordered to Victoria. Not a lot of differences in qualifications. Initially Australia ordered 3 Incident Management Teams (IMT) Type 1, they were very specific in positions needed. NMAC sent Alex as agency rep. not as IC of his team. The Agency Rep role is not used here as much as it used to be used in US, but look like there would be a need in Aus. This was middle of their season. Went to strategy of point protection of high values of risk versus the usual “Anchor, Flank and Pinch”. Lots of discussion about risk and high level conversations about how to take

care of responders. This was more about how can we help them vs trying to force them to do it our way. Similarities in politics. Provinces are like states. Country Fire Authority (CFA) was similar to Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) or Cal Fire, while the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) was similar to our federal agencies, and Victoria Park was similar to our State Parks. Within the providences they would come together similar to us with a single mission and objective.

Strategy and tactics in response had a large shift in mid-February due to rain. The focus had an extreme shift to dealing with flooded roads, landslides and clogged culverts and bridges. Mission went to keeping communities accessible. As Australia changed our crews changed missions with them.

Brenda-

Brenda went over as planning section chief in New South Wales. Re-iterated that it was hard to move resources across lines however, within providences there was good coordination. There were a fire fighting force of 40,000 volunteers, even the residents fought fire. Brenda arrived Feb 9<sup>th</sup> when big rain hit. Thought they were likely going home, but Australia still needed help coordinating flooding. Australia used one data management system to create a common operating picture for fire managers, everyday live updates go straight to the emergency operations center. The Australian version of the National Situation Report is also updated 1 to 2 times a day. It would be nice if we had this tool “would be amazing”.

Brenda spent more of “planning ops role” which is different than what we do here. Not huge adaption, also, because of rain not as crazy and stressful from fire. Made it easier to be helpful.

Alex-

Volunteers were amazing, it was incredible that they could coordinate that many volunteers. Great willingness to help one another, didn't matter who you were everyone greeted each other. Community accepted one another.

Bob Pohly-“What types of fuels did they have?”

Alex-Fuels were different oily and dry when runs happened there was no stopping them. Drought and peak summer conditions allowed for night time runs. Eucalyptus forest, spotting distances were hard to fathom, spotting up to 40 Kilometers. Large pieces of bark combined with convective lift allowed for unexpected distances. Because of the distance and scale it was hard to determine if these were new starts or spot fire from existing fires.

Do anticipate orders in the future with our crews.

Bob Pohly- “Do they have anything in their country like our Firewise program?”

Alex-They do in Victoria, but not as robust. 2009 changed much of their system “Black Saturday” they lost 175 folks. Lots of “planned burning” similar to our prescribed fire. They have the same problems with smoke, they are trying to increase burning. Logging has also been declining and having similar problems.

Ray Miao- What are the take homes to learn from and how did they get all the volunteers?

Alex- Drooled over their technology with real time updates and they do day time IR flights in real time. They also have unmanned aircraft program they use too. Really big game changer if we could to that level of common operating picture.

Volunteers- That is how their society is wired. People were generally nice and willing to help others. Some choose to help others by serving as a volunteer fire fighter.

## ROUNDTABLE

David Morman- Red Cross is working on how to move forward with fire season, COVID, and possible shelters. Usually do motels, this year will plan to do up to 50 in hotel then a mass shelter will be needed. This number of people in a hotel is up from years previous.

Nathan Garibay- Have meeting today for COVID 19 and shelters. Been in planning using PACE model. Non-congregate shelter is preferred. Discussing transfer of risk to firefighters as well. Into week 7 of fully activated have about 65 folks assigned working nearly all virtually. Logistics and IC are at EOC, but most are virtual. Makes things complex. Big issues, supply chain issues, but improving. Price gouging and poor quality. 5-6 X price for example isolation gowns have gone from \$.71 to \$9.00. Looking at reusable gowns instead. Impacts to community aggravating current/ongoing issues like homeless. Different parts of country are experiences different things, community reactions are based on experiences. Working on re-opening strategies, likely still closed for several more weeks. Also did virtual search and rescue academy this year.

Alex- Working on how to do wildfire response and taking care of responders. Zoom meetings are at all time high pace. Strategy of isolating modules, in contrast to past training of getting together and communication all the way to leaders intent. Because of COVID taking stance of limiting interactions with one another. Had a fire recently, 5 acres, that was testing some of their policies. Fewer people in trucks and more exposure to driving risk. Still working through how that will work.

Closures- open burning is closed and being consistent through all agencies. Doing what they can to reduce human caused fires. More messaging coming soon. Unprecedented restrictions with messaging to local media. Trying to sort that out public use restrictions coming soon as we dry out. More dispersed camping, more camping in places that are less "hardened".

Georgia Hill- VIA Chat Box: "Using the \$1500 Project Wildfire, Deschutes County grant awarded to the Ridge at Eagle Crest we contracted with PatRick Fire and Nelson Contracting to remove 63 cubic yards of ladder fuels and approximately 190 trees to establish more effective wildfire defensible space on the Ridge. This work was completed last week and resulted in 12 cords of firewood being donated to Beulah's Place. Again, we thank you for the grant. We are now gearing up for FireFree events. This year we are emphasizing the Home Ignition Zone. During FireFree May 1-11 residents will be able to deposit flammable limbs and other wildfire hazardous yard debris street-side; we will then pick up and dispose of. Residents can also deposit bags street-side but we've designated 5 different bag drop-off points on the Ridge where bags can be taken, observing the COVID-19 guidelines for Social Distancing."

Gordon Foster- 3 IMT's deployed by ODF for COVID in Salem over the past month. Preparing for fire season. Full staffing planned and continuing as normal as they can given COVID.

Bert- VIA Chat box: "Tillicum Village HOA spent the Fuels Reduction Grant to remove several hazard trees, thin 50 junipers in natural areas, limb up many trees and stump grind. Removed approximately 200 cubic yards of ladder fuels. The grant efforts prompted significant matching HOA and volunteer work to work on ground fuel. This year's total ground fuel removal will be approximately 500 cubic yards. Report is forthcoming."

The meeting adjourned at 9:33 am.