



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

**February 21, 2023 – Steering Committee – Hybrid - in person and virtual – 8:00 AM – 9:30 AM  
Meeting Minutes**

Steering Committee Members & Staff Present:

	Tom Mooney	Fire Rep 1	Redmond Fire
X	Gary Marshall	Fire Rep 2	Deschutes Rural Fire Dist. #2
	Dan Daugherty	Fire Rep 3	La Pine Fire Dept.
	Doug Green	Fire Rep 4	Bend / Sisters Fire
	Andy Meeuwsen	Insurance Industry	Country Insurance
	Chris Perry	911 Service District	Deschutes County
	Kyle Collins	Community Development Dept.	Deschutes County
	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
	Nathan Garibay	Sheriff's Office - Emergency Mgmt.	Deschutes County
	David Morman	Citizen Rep	At Large - Red Cross
X	Oliver Tatom	Citizen Rep	At Large
	Ben Duda for Gordon Foster	Oregon Dept. of Forestry	ODF - Unit Forester
	Shawn Jaca for Kevin Stock	COFMS US Forest Service	USFS
X	Ariel Cowan	OSU Extension Service	OSU Ext
	Paula Simone	Central Oregon Comm. College	COCC
	Kevin Moriarty, Chair	County Forester	Deschutes County
X	Patti Adair	Commissioner	Deschutes County
	Nick Ahnen	Marketing	At Large
	Brandon Fogelman	Business	
	Jessica Laberge	Business	
X	Robert Pohly	Citizen Rep	At Large Retired
X	Corinne Heiner	Director	Deschutes County

**Public Present:**

- Gregory Byant - Deschutes River Woods
- Jodie Barram – Oregon Living With Fire
- Frank Ammirata - Tillicum Village HOA
- Melissa Steele - Bend Fire and Rescue
- Joe Stutler - Deschutes County
- Elizabeth Weide - The Parks HOA
- Jacob Derksen - Black Butte Ranch
- Wendy Howard - Firewise Committee River Rim Community
- Elie Gaines - DRW Firewise Coord #2
- Patty Cassidy, from the Cliffs in Redmond
- Betsy Leighty-Johnson - Firewise Community Junipine Acres
- Heather Miller - Oregon State Fire Marshal
- Craig Letz - Tamarack Wildfire
- Carolyn Dahlberg - Tollgate HOA
- Erin KilCullin - Deschutes Soil and Water Conservation District
- Bill Boos -Bend Fire
- Kevin Robinson - FS Fire Prevention Specialist for the Ochoco and COFMS
- Todd Peplin- Deschutes Soil and Water Conservation District
- Elie Gaines - DRW community member
- Mike Mulligan - Ridge at Eagle Crest
- Robin Church - Three Pines HOA
- Boyd Turner - Eagle Crest Estates HOA
- Susanne Holmes - Elkai Woods Fractional HOA
- Boyd Turner - Eagle Crest estate
- David Gutt
- Glenna Larsen

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Corinne - Welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave an introduction to the meeting and outlined the agenda. She asked everyone to introduce themselves starting with the room introductions and told zoom attendees to please introduce themselves via the zoom meeting chat.

**AGENDA**

Corinne - Covered the agenda for the meeting and gave updates and announcements which included:

- Oregon State Fire Marshal Grant for \$72,000
  - Applications will open soon
  - Money will be funded by June
- Fire Free 2023
  - Bend Knot Landfill
    - May 6-21

- La Pine, Sisters and Redmond Transfer Stations
  - June 3-17
- Press releases are coming mid March
- Updates for the Upper Deschutes River CWPP have started with the first meeting on 2/27/2023, please email Corinne for information. We are also going to be updating the East/West CWPP later in the Spring.

Corinne then Introduced Melissa Steele from Bend Fire and Rescue for the meeting presentation on Winter Fire Hazards.

## **Meeting Topic - Melissa Steele - Bend Fire and Rescue**

### **Winter Fire Hazards Presentation and Discussion**

Melissa greeted the committee and began her presentation on Winter Fire Hazards.

About 1,700 fires are caused by portable space heaters each year, with about 80 deaths caused by these fires each year. It is important to be sure that your space heater is UL Listed.

About 20 fires are caused each year by home candles, in 60% of cases these candle fires are caused by materials that ignite from being too close. About 11% of candle fires that occur each year happen in December and January. If you have children or pets be sure to be careful while burning candles as they can easily be knocked down.

Electrical malfunctions are important to be aware of with electrical outlets and the use of extension cords.

Melissa showed some examples of fires in the winter and their causes on the slides. Fire related incidents in Bend in 2022 included:

- Cooking - 12
- Heated outbuilding/shed - 2
- Chimney/Flue - improper maintenance - 9
- RV/Camper - heaters - 8
- Electrical wiring/ short circuit/ overload - 11

UL Listing means that UL Solutions has tested samples of a product and determined that the product meets specific, defined requirements.

UL Approved is NOT a correct reference to UL Listed/tested items and these products are often found at discount stores such as Big Lots or Ross. Be aware of these items and make sure that you are purchasing items that have the proper logo.

It is important to only plug in one heat producing appliance directly into a wall outlet at a time, and never use an extension cord with a heat producing appliance, unless you are using a UL Listed surge protector. In the US approximately 45,000 home fires are caused by electrical fires.

1 in every 5 Christmas tree fires were caused by a heat source being too close to the tree. You want to be sure to keep any heat source at least 3 feet away from your Christmas tree.

Bend Fire and Rescue offers a flameless candle service, if you would like some for your event without the risk of fire you can contact Bend Fire for more information.

Portable generators are another source for winter fires, make sure and use heavy duty extension cords that are UL Listed when using generators for appliances.

It is important to be sure to get your chimney serviced each year to prevent fire from debris buildup. Don't allow soot or ash to build up in your fireplace, don't overload your fireplace and don't go to bed without making sure you damper your fire down before leaving it unattended. Try to avoid using cardboard because pieces can get caught in your chimney and start a fire. For gas fireplaces you want to make sure and get them annually serviced to prevent any fire risk.

**Tips to stay safe in the winter with house fires being more common:**

1. Make sure you have working smoke alarms in your home. Check the dates, or mark when you replaced the battery.
2. Don't keep anything within 3 feet of your space heaters and turn them off before going to bed or leaving them unattended.
3. Don't leave cooking unattended and never heat your house with an oven.
4. Avoid using extension cords with any appliances that produce heat.
  - a. Christmas lights
  - b. Heated blankets
  - c. Space heaters
5. Electric blankets should never be left unattended.
6. Always have a fire extinguisher on hand. Bend Fire will do a presentation on correct use at request.
7. Practice candle safety.
8. Have a home evacuation plan in place. Smoke from a fire in your home can easily cause disorientation and difficulty seeing. Having a known home evacuation plan for all household members is very important, and having a meeting place outside so that you can account for everyone is an important piece of this tip.

Melissa showed a video of a non UL Listed extension cord that was bundled up on top of a linen, it sparked and ignited a fire very quickly. Cords that are coiled together can be a risk for fires because they can cause more heat in the area.

The next video was to show how quickly a Christmas tree ignited and then started a very large fire within about 30 seconds. Don't try to extinguish these fires on your own, always call 911.

Melissa then opened up to questions and discussion

Jodi - Shared a lesson learned from rodents being in gas fireplace areas, rodents can end up in these areas while looking for heat but can also be a fire hazard.

Patty - Asked about fake Christmas trees and their risk for fire. Melissa stated that synthetic materials can often pose a higher risk. While some trees are marked as fire resistant it is important to still practice fire safety tips, such as those we learned about today, because fire resistance can wear off quickly and the whole tree can ignite.

Ariel - Asked about outlets and the different types, three prong or two prong. Should those be updates to all being the same. Melissa answered by expressing the importance of making sure to keep your outlets updated, especially in older homes. Also to make sure they are not loose. It is also important to check your circuit breakers and keep them updated and check them often as well. If you see burn marks on older outlets make sure to get those replaced.

At this time Melissa asked if there were any other questions or discussion, there were not so we moved on to roundtable updates.

## **ROUNDTABLE**

Corinne asked if anyone had any updates for the committee, starting with going around the room, then Zoom attendees could raise their hand if they would like to share something in the roundtable.

Bend Fire - Put in for the OSFM grant, waiting on awards. Has a plan to do goat grazing, as well as Juniper ridge and DRW project plans. Getting new signs for fire danger rating. Bend Fire and Rescue is starting up SOS program outreach for seniors post covid. Program includes going to homes to look at hazards and complete an assessment either individually or for groups. If you have any ideas for partners please email Melissa Steele at [msteele@bendoregon.gov](mailto:msteele@bendoregon.gov).

FS - Hiring is complete and looks good for the 2023 season. Working on budget and has a lot of work to be done on the group for 2023 with vegetation management. Gearing up for prescribed fire training, burning will be around communities and will do outreach beforehand so all are aware.

Erin - DSWC received \$300,000 in grants and is working with homeowners on fuels projects, hoping to have projects complete by June 2023. DSWC is hiring a full time position for program and operations coordinator.

Ariel - OSU extension is getting involved with the TREX prescribed fire training. Is a part of the Central Oregon Education group and excited to announce funding for Spanish translation materials and PSA's. The Fire resistant plant guide is submitted to the publisher and will update when there is more information.

Jodi - Oregon Living with Fire is doing updates to the County Commissioners, WFLC is coming to Klamath county in March. WUI conference is at the end of March, during Spring Break, and is a very valuable conference and encourages interested parties to attend. Is aiding in the TREX program. Jen is currently tracking grants for the county.

Patty - Tim Deboot testified for Juniper removal with grant funding and has taken that information to Washington D.C. Added, not to use your central vacuum for ashes!!

Robin - Doing research on partner opportunities with businesses here in Bend. Planning some activities for Wildfire awareness month.

Joe - Excited to say he has never seen so many opportunities for funding availability and OLWF is working on finding grants for the 4 counties a part of OLWF. High Desert Museum possibly going to get a 3.2 million dollar grant for a sprinkler system. Applicants for county funding will be required to include updated W-9 information with their applications, and make sure management and information is up to date to streamline awards.

Greg - DRW has partnered with Heart of Oregon for projects and has sent out a grant application for the OSFM grant.

No other updates.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:20 a.m.