



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

**March 19, 2024 – 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
X	Heather Miller	Fire Rep 3	Oregon State Fire Marshal
	Melissa Steele	Fire Rep 4	Bend Fire and Rescue
X	Andy Meeuwsen	Insurance Industry	Country Insurance
	Chris Perry	911 Service District	Deschutes County
X	Kyle Collins	Community Development Dept.	Deschutes County
		Private Forestry	
X	Patti Gentiluomo	HOA Rep	Sunriver HOA
	Elizabeth Weide	HOA Rep	The Parks HOA
X	Dean Richardson	HOA Rep	Upper Deschutes River Communities
	Nathan Garibay	Sheriff's Office - Emergency Mgmt.	Deschutes County
X	David Morman	Citizen Rep	At Large - Red Cross
X	Oliver Tatom	Citizen Rep	At Large
	Gordon Foster	Oregon Dept. of Forestry	ODF - Unit Forester
	Sheldon Rhoden	BLM	Fire Management Specialist
	Shawn Jaca for Kevin Stock	COFMS US Forest Service	USFS
X	Ariel Cowan	OSU Extension Service	OSU Ext
X	Paula Simone	Central Oregon Comm. College	COCC
X	Kevin Moriarty, Chair	County Forester	Deschutes County
X	Patti Adair	Commissioner	Deschutes County
		Marketing	At Large
	Horace Ward	Business	At Large - Pacific Power
		Business	At Large
		Citizen Rep	At Large
X	Corinne Heiner, Director	Fire Adapted Communities Coordinator	Deschutes County

## **Public Present:**

Lon Leneve - Awbrey Butte  
Jodie Barram - Oregon Living with Fire  
Matthew Martin - City of Sisters  
Jessica Smith - Elkai Woods Fractional HOA  
Diane Holmes - The Bridges at Shadow Glen  
Christina Maier - Tollgate  
Adrianna Weickhardt - Sisters Ranger District  
Shela Boynton - Nottingham Square  
Jeff Puller - SCSFD  
Georgia Hill - The Ridge at Eagle Crest  
Carrie Karl - City of Bend  
Robert Pohly - Mountain High  
Cheryl Cone - Elkai Woods  
Jim Barrett - Brasada Ranch  
Les Adams - River Forest  
Robert Newey - COFMS  
Bill Boos - Bend Fire  
Sherrie Moen - Widgi Creek  
Craig Renkert - Deschutes Market Rd  
Austin Reimer - ODF

## **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 and told zoom attendees to please introduce themselves via the zoom meeting chat.

## **AGENDA AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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

- BLM Community Assistance Grant
  - The grant is available for communities adjacent to BLM land, within one mile.
  - Deadline for application is March 31st.
  - Total funds available are \$90,000.
  - For more information, contact Kevin. [Kevin.moriarty@deschutes.org](mailto:Kevin.moriarty@deschutes.org)
- Sweat equity project
  - Agreements with Republic and Cascade disposal have been made to rent bins/dumpsters across the county.
  - 16 communities are currently signed up for the pilot program.
  - The program is community-based, not for individual property owners.

- Requests for bins/dumpsters are accepted until the end of March.
- Grant Reporting
  - Reporting for the fall fuel reduction grant is due at the end of June.
  - The reporting form will be similar to the previous spring grant form.
  - Required information includes a narrative of work done, a budget, any matching funds provided, and documentation such as receipts and photos.
  - The reporting form will be distributed soon.
- Qualified Vendor Pool for 2024
  - The pool consists of 17 vendors, including some new ones.
  - The list will be distributed through Project Wildfire channels and neighborhood coalitions.
- Project Wildfire Annual Barbecue Event
  - 5-8pm on June 18th in Sunriver.
  - It's a recognition event for the community's hard work.
  - Finalized details will be shared through Project Wildfire
  - Please fill out the RSVP form, this event is catered and we need an accurate number for food. So please RSVP so you can eat!
  - Families welcome!
  - Lawn games
- There are still a few openings on the Project Wildfire Steering Committee, if you or anyone you may know is interested, please contact Corinne at [Corinne.Heiner@deschutes.org](mailto:Corinne.Heiner@deschutes.org)
- Spring Fire Free 2024 Dates
  - Knot Landfill
    - May 3 - 12
      - 7 days a week
  - Negus Transfer Station
    - May 31, June 1, June 3-8
      - Mon - Sat
  - Southwest Transfer Station
    - May 31, June 1, June 3-8
      - Mon-Sat
  - Northwest Transfer Station
    - May 31, June 1, June 5-8
      - Wed - Sat

## **MEETING TOPIC 1 - Ariel Cowan - Fire Resistant Plants**

Corinne Introduced Ariel Cowan from Oregon State University Extension.

Ariel introduced the OSU Extension program, with a specific focus on the OSU Extension fire program. She emphasized the critical importance of addressing wildfire risks in Central Oregon and highlighted the need to mitigate the flammability of landscapes and residential structures. Ariel unveiled the new publication, "Fire Resistant Plants for Home Landscapes," outlining its purpose and detailing the updates compared to its predecessor. She also explained the idea of the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). Ariel pointed out that everyone in Central Oregon should think of themselves as part of this interface because wildfires can easily spread from plants to houses. She said it's not just about preventing fires but also about keeping houses from catching fire, and she encouraged homeowners to take steps to make their homes safer.

Ariel then talked about what makes some plants more likely to catch fire, like dry leaves and oils, and what makes others safer, like moist leaves and sap that doesn't catch fire easily. She said the new guide has a list of over 150 plants that are less likely to burn, sorted into categories like ground covers, flowers, bushes, and trees. The guide also has symbols to show how much water the plants need, if they're good at adapting to different conditions, if deer like to eat them, and if they're native to the area. She stressed how important it is to take care of these fire-resistant plants by watering and pruning them properly. Ariel also talked about different areas around homes where fire risks are higher—close to the house, a bit farther out, and even farther away—and gave tips for making these areas safer. She talked about clearing away things that could help a fire spread and making sure plants are spaced and pruned in a way that reduces fire risk.

Ariel answered some common questions people had, like whether mulch is safe to use, if native plants are better, and how far apart to plant trees and bushes. She said it's important to think about how big plants will get when they're fully grown, how much they might add to a fire if they dry out, and to talk to neighbors about keeping everyone's homes safer.

She showed some examples of yards designed to be fire-resistant and talked about the benefits of keeping yards neat, clean, and filled with plants that don't easily catch fire. Ariel also talked about how landscaping can provide habitats for wildlife and gave some tips on choosing plants.

## **ROUNDTABLE**

David - Red Cross has selected a new person for the Red Cross Disaster Program Manager position who is to start March 25th.

Kyle - Introduced the new ODF Stewardship Forester, Austin Reimer, serving Deschutes County and Jefferson County west of 97.

Lon - Is excited to take part in the sweat equity program in May. Reminded everyone of the Project Wildfire Neighborhood Coalition meetings at the Road Department every third Thursday of every month from 2-3:30PM.

Dean - UDR has neighborhoods receiving \$250 sweat equity grant funding to help with fuel reduction for homeowners who need the assistance.

Corinne and Kevin thanked everyone for attending.  
The meeting adjourned at 9:30 a.m.