



HUMBOLDT COUNTY FIRE SAFE COUNCIL

Appointed by the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors

Supported by

Public Works, Natural Resources Planning

COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

1106 Second Street, Eureka, CA 95501



Meeting Summary (Action Minutes)

Humboldt County Fire Safe Council Meeting February 11, 2020

A [Humboldt County Fire Safe Council \(HCFSC\)](#) meeting was held on February 11, 2020 via Zoom. The HCFSC was appointed by the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors (BOS) to guide maintenance and implementation of the [Humboldt County Community Wildfire Protection Plan \(CWPP\)](#).

FSC Members/Appointed Agency Liaisons Attending:

Ali Freedlund, Lower Mattole Fire Safe Council and Mattole Restoration Council

Allan Wiegman, California State Parks

Bill Eastwood, Southern Humboldt Fire Safe Council

Chris Ramey, CAL FIRE

Dan Wooden, Bureau of Land Management

David Markin, Six Rivers National Forest

Ed Laidlaw, Arcata Fire Protection District

John Miller, Humboldt County Planning & Building

Kai Ostrow, Briceland Fire Department and Southern Humboldt Technical Rescue

Lenya Quinn-Davidson, UC Cooperative Extension

Lon Winburn, Humboldt County Fire Chiefs' Association, Fortuna Fire Protection District

Lyn Javier, Van Duzen Watershed Fire Safe Council

Nick Pape, Shelter Cove Fire Department

Ryan Derby, Humboldt County Office of Emergency Services

Will Harling, Orleans/Somes Bar FSC, Fire Safe Council of Siskiyou County, Mid Klamath Watershed Council

FSC Members/Appointed Agency Liaisons Absent:

Manny Mello, George Petersen/Northwest Insurance

Tom Mattson, Humboldt County Public Works

Tom O’Gorman, Willow Creek Fire Safe Council

Yana Valachovic, UC Cooperative Extension

Fire Safe Council Alternates Attending:

Cybelle Immitt, Humboldt County Public Works

Jason Butcher, CAL FIRE

Jennifer Renner, CAL FIRE

Josh Eichamer, Six Rivers National Forest

Justin McDonald, Arcata Fire Department

Nancy Bailey, Mid Klamath Watershed Council

Public and Agency Representatives Attending:

Arturo Gasdik, Six Rivers National Forest

Christopher Baker, CA Fire Safe Council

Debra Harris, North Coast Air Quality Management District

Elicia Goldsworthy, Green Diamond Resource Company

Jill Demers, Humboldt County RCD

Julia Cavalli, Humboldt County Public Works / HCFSC Staff

Kathy Weber, Southern Humboldt Fire Safe Council / Crooked Prairie Fire Safe Council

Mitch Hunt, Green Diamond Resource Company

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AGENDA ITEM SUMMARIES

1. Call to Order – Welcome, Zoom Orientation, Roll Call/Introductions, and Agenda Review

HCFSC Chairperson, Lenya-Quinn Davidson called the meeting to order at 10:02.

Meeting attendees went through introductions and a roll call of FSC members. **Participants consented to having the Zoom session recorded. Participant introductions end at 7:54.**

Given the virtual meeting format, it was decided that action items would be voted on by consensus. Where consensus was not attainable, a roll call vote would be held.

2. Approval of the meeting Agenda and Minutes from the previous HCFSC meeting

Lyn Javier motioned to approve the November HCFSC meeting minutes. Ali Freedlund seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

3. Public Comments/Announcements/Correspondence

Christopher Baker, Northern Region Coordinator for the CA Fire Safe Council introduced himself. He represents 27 counties north of Sacramento and is working to support fire safe councils within those counties (100+ contacts identified so far). His counterparts are Elizabeth Lamar and Mala Arthur. They have identified 263 fire safe councils across CA and 400+ fire safe alliances (fire-related collaboratives, i.e. firewise, fire-adapted, etc.) They are also working with five CivicSpark fellows; Lillian will be helping with outreach in the Northern Region and may be reaching out to those on the call.

Contact info:

- Phone: (916) 834-0967
- Email: cbaker@cafiresafecouncil.org

4. HCFSC Membership

HCFSC Board Resolution Update and Welcome New Members

- The HCFSC Resolution was updated, and new members appointed at the Board of Supervisors meeting, February 9. Staff worked with the Clerk of the Board to consolidate certain member positions; Supervisors will retain their appointees. Two Tribal positions were added; Hoopa currently occupies one slot and the Yurok Tribe will be nominating a member.
- New members include Chief Greg Moon for Hoopa Valley Tribe, Chief Nick Pape for Southern Humboldt Chiefs' Association, Allan Wiegman for CA State Parks, and Ali Freedlund for Supervisorial District I. Welcome!
- HCFSC sunsets October 2021 and new Resolution to be developed prior. This will be an opportunity to revisit whether there are new affiliations that should be added, or removed if not necessary or seemingly redundant.

HCFSC Membership Housekeeping

- **Action: Support nominations to fill vacancies**
 - The Humboldt County Chiefs' Association agreed to nominate Arcata Fire Chief Justin McDonald, with Samoa Fire Chief Dale Unea as his alternate, as their HCFSC representative to replace Lon Winburn. Rod Mendes, formerly the Hoopa rep, will be nominated by the Yurok Tribe at the next Tribal Council meeting. There is still a vacant slot for the Humboldt Prescribed Burn Association. Staff will continue to seek nominations to fill vacancies as needed and work with the Clerk of the Board to appoint the current list of nominees between now and the next meeting.
 - **Motion:** Lyn Javier motioned to approve the nomination of Justin, Dale, and Rod. Ali Freedlund seconded. All in favor.

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Acknowledge Fire Chiefs' Association Appointee, Lon Winburn for his service on the HCFSC

- **Authorize Chair to sign certificate of appreciation**
 - Lon has been a member since 2012, representing the Humboldt County Chiefs' Association. He contributed significantly to the CWPP update, particularly the fire services related content. He has also been an active participant in the fire services sustainability work supported by the Chiefs' Association Measure Z grant planning task. He has been an invaluable advisor and resource to departments all over the county and to the FSC.
 - Lyn - thank you for opening the door to having a CERT team in Bridgeville. I wish you the best in retirement!
 - Will - Enjoy retirement, Lon! You have been a rock for the HCFSC for so long!
 - **Motion:** Ed Laidlaw motioned to authorize the signing of the certificate of appreciation. Kai Ostrow seconded. All in favor!

Appoint Vice-Chairperson

- **Action: Vote to approve a Vice-Chairperson**
 - Lon Winburn is the current vice-chair. Chris Ramey was nominated at the last meeting in anticipation of Lon's retirement and is the only nominee.
 - **Motion:** Lon Winburn motioned to approve the current nominee; Ed Laidlaw seconded. Unanimously approved.

5. Updates: Humboldt County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) Implementation/Maintenance and Associated Partner Activities

The shorter Zoom meeting format provides a space for quick updates from members/partners on work related to the six goal areas of the CWPP. Follow the hyperlinks below to view the corresponding Action Plan.

CWPP Maintenance Update and Reminders

- Staff reminded members that the CWPP has a "living" component to it. Part 4: Planning Unit Action Plans and the CWPP GIS database of projects are both intended to be updated as projects and priorities evolve. A project input and update process was approved by the FSC and is posted to the [CWPP webpage](#) under the Implementation tab. In short, proposed updates are brought to the attention of staff who help prepare the proposal for presentation to the FSC as a consent agenda item for the next FSC meeting. Contact Julia with any questions or proposed updates.

Implementation Updates, Challenges and Successes

[Wildfire Preparedness](#)

- County CFSC 2019/CAL FIRE grants: CWPP Implementation Phase II update
 - COVID has an outsized impact on project work. Many community liaisons are elderly/not able to access technology/internet and staff roles have had to shift to accommodate different needs related to COVID response. Still feel confident we'll be able to complete projects but may need an extension.
 - Project includes defensible space model project, community chipper days, and roadside clearance
 - In some areas, contractors are actively working (Mattole, Mid Klamath). Some contractors in the pool created through an RFP haven't been activated yet because of the difficulty connecting with liaisons to plan the work.
 - Plan to request an extension because of COVID impacts.
 - Home Hardening Brochure
 - A draft was presented to the FSC. It was developed with the help of Yana Valachovic who used her expertise to home in on key priorities; she consulted with national expert, Steve Quarles, to develop succinct language identifying the main vulnerabilities and where

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- to prioritize. Kathy Weber provided illustrations for a local, familiar feel. Big thanks to the team!
- FSC members are invited to comment on the draft over the next week (significant changes may not be possible).
 - The brochure can be adapted to suit the needs of FSCs and communities, such as making the inside cover a poster.
 - They will be professionally printed and will also be available online for home printing.
- Question: A MKWC board member lost their house to the Slater Fire. Embers were collecting in a roof valley (Spanish tile roof). What could have been done?
 - Called out in brochure as “roof to wall intersections” and are particularly vulnerable to embers. Roof is the first and best line of defense. Little details, like flashing, are not costly but can make a big difference.
 - Question: When will these be available?
 - Design will likely be finalized next week. Will work with a professional printer to print in the next couple weeks.
 - Public Works, UCCE, and Planning & Building will print some in the meantime and have them available. John Miller will also look into having a large format print made for the Planning & Building lobby.
- County CAL FIRE Grant: FLASH Program update
 - Staff are preparing program guidance and have incorporated Kathy’s art there as well.
 - Developing a home hardening workshop for FLASH Technicians and others with the help of UCCE.
 - RFP resulted in a pool of qualified contractors; several are fully contracted and will soon be oriented to the program and begin to schedule site visits.
 - More interest in FLASH than there’s funding for. Documentation of interest will help justify future requests for funding.
 - The project goes through 2024. Having initial site visits done soon will maximize time to get work done.
 - MRC/Lower Mattole FSC
 - Completed roadside clearing on Chambers Road as part of CWPP Phase II project with help of PG&E matching funds. Cleared the worst, densest fuels Ali has ever seen – thick eucalyptus next to the road, thick brush on the other. Each site is so unique, and this was a particular challenge. Thanks to County, FSC, CAL FIRE, and PG&E for making it possible.
 - MKWC/Orleans Somes Bar FSC
 - Moving a little slow but are excited about FLASH.
 - In planning stages of roadside clearance as part of Phase II project. It’s a little complicated since part is on USFS land and additional environmental compliance is needed.
 - Very little community engagement occurred during 2020 and are now getting a handle on more creative thinking to engage the community.
 - Southern Humboldt FSC
 - SHFSC has been doing a lot of work to develop their organization. Bill has been preparing for FLASH.
 - SHFSC organizational development is impressive, google group seems to be really successful and gives an avenue for cross-pollination. Whale Gulch FSC is starting up and it is great to see so much activity down there.

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- Have received a lot of interest in FLASH and will need to make some hard choices to prioritize projects.
- Humboldt County Resource Conservation District
 - Working with SHFSC and CAL FIRE on implementing east Garberville shaded fuel break. Expecting to break ground next week or week after. Environmental compliance and landowner agreements are in place.
 - CAL FIRE Conservation Camp will be assisting with the fuels reduction.
 - Have CAL FIRE CCI grant with Yurok for forest restoration in Pecwan Creek. Fuel break work will likely move forward this year. Yurok is working on environmental compliance.
- Other updates
 - Van Duzen Watershed Fire Safe Council – focused on developing CERT: gathering tools, trailer supplies, and interest in joining the team.
 - CAL FIRE – working with RCD on Garberville fuelbreak. Moving forward with Redway VTP EIR and are making good progress. Funding is all but secured for Redway fuelbreak, though not certain. Continuing to maintain other projects in the Southern Humboldt area, continuing defensible space inspections, and developing several new VMPs that include prescribed fire, notably for Bald Hills and Stuart Ranch.
 - A lot of interest in VMP; struggling to keep up with demand but still moving forward.

Restoration of Beneficial Fire

- County CFSC 2018 grant update
 - The Restoration of Beneficial Fire project granted by the CA FSC is intended to increase awareness around the benefits of prescribed fire and support training of volunteer fire departments in Rx fire. Because this project is so outreach/education focused, COVID caused some significant delays. An extension request was approved, allowing time for training and completion of other deliverables.
 - Lenya: CA state certified burn boss curriculum officially approved (!). First course to be held in May. [Email Lenya](#) if you have experience and are interested in becoming certified; UCCE will cover the cost of the training.
 - Last week of June and first couple days of July, HCPBA will be hosting a fire training (ID'd as a big need of the local VFDs) and is a prerequisite to burn boss certification.
 - Senator Dodd introduced a bill that would tie a gross negligence liability standard to burn boss certification. Lenya has been hoping for this for a long time and is looking for letters of support for this bill. There is little more that would be more helpful to expanding Rx.
 - Hoping to do burning in Spring for medusa head eradication and other objectives. Has been doing some oak woodland burning in small groups over winter.
 - Southern Humboldt update, Kai: Put together a board for So Hum PBA, great group to meet unique challenges. Oak Knoll station project outside of Garberville was lined up but burn boss insurance fell through. Will try again along with some smaller burns that will help galvanize SHPBA.
 - Working with Mitch Hunt of Green Diamond on timber industry collaboration where objectives align.
- Letter of support
 - Indicate general support for [SB332](#) and have staff prepare a letter to BOS?
 - Certified burn boss and landowners would be held to gross negligence rather than simple

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- negligence standard.
 - No opposition.
- Prescribed Fire Activities update
 - BLM – burning piles today in Lack’s Creek; lots of thinning and mechanical work for old growth protection. Had some success on Prosper Ridge burning big piles with MRC.
 - NCAQMD – Deb encourages all who receive grant funds for Rx from the state to report on burn authorization to help keep that funding alive; make sure you report accomplishments and burn number. Deb reports quarterly to the state legislature. The North Coast does more burning than any other district in the state. Nov/Dec – she gave over 700 burn authorizations.
 - MRC – Working with Save the Redwoods League under a CAL FIRE CCI grant to create a fuelbreak that will serve as a wildlife corridor. Work is dependent on rain and access across the river. Hoping to burn in the next available window. Thank you to SHPBA for use of their tools (great benefit of membership!).
 - MKWC – Continuing to exercise an All hands All lands approach, prepping environmental compliance so they can jump on any burn windows. Hoping to do some burning before April and in early summer. Yurok neighbors have been increasing burning and are planning their spring TREX (dates TBD/weather dependent). Yurok are also a strong link in coordinating work in their planning unit under the Phase II grant project.
- General RFFC update
 - The RFFC project includes development of a prioritized list of projects that can be connected with future funding. Risk/hazard analysis is ongoing. Encouraged all to sign up for updates from [NCRP](#).
 - Demonstration project workshops are coming up and advertisements will be shared with FSC.
 - Technical assistance is also being provided. There will be another round of funding for prepping projects for implementation. If you have questions, contact Cybelle or NCRP directly.
 - MKWC Demonstration Project – Chris Dunn is working on PODs development for strategic wildfire management. Will be meeting with NCRP and forest service leadership tomorrow on how their work can tie in with this project. A draft layer will be disseminated to local groups to facilitate discussion about managing wildfire for resource objectives and how we balance risk to communities. RFFC Regional Priority Plan will also discuss recommendations on how funding should be prioritized for fuel breaks. Dunn is interested in feedback from CAL FIRE and level of interest in PODs development. Conference call tomorrow CAL FIRE would be welcome to attend.

Wildfire Ignition Prevention

- Burn pile permitting issue: A County Board member received a plea for less restrictive burn hours so that pile burning can be completed quickly and reduce the number of 911 calls about smoke. Have FSC members experienced/witnessed issues with restrictiveness of burn hours? Recommendations for BOS members on the Air Quality Committee?
 - Humboldt and Del Norte Standard Burn Permits allow burning from 6 am – 12 pm (Non-Standard allows 6 am – one hour before sunset). Trinity allows 6 am – one hour before sunset outside of declared fire season.
 - Deb (NCAQMD) – This question has been raised several times. Fire departments were involved in determining hours for burn permits. Small parcels (less than 0.5 acres) are limited to use of standard permit with limited hours. Because Trinity is more rural, hours are to one hour before sunset outside of declared fire season.

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- Fire Chiefs' Association – opportunity to discuss with Chiefs' Association? Kai suggests smaller group discussion with local fire, CAL FIRE, Deb. No objections.

Integrated Planning

- General Plan Safety Element and SRA regulations update
 - Timeline is becoming limited to comment on the SRA regulations update by the Board of Forestry (BOF). Developing recommendations to the BOS is out of the question as comments are due by February 17. Comments could come directly from the Planning & Building Director, potentially. RCRC has been compiling comments, could funnel comments through Director to RCRC.
 - Edits are confusing and time to review is limited, which is disappointing given the impact these changes will have.
 - County Boards asked BOF to add tiers that would specify when certain access requirements would apply. In the prior draft, all development in SRA would be treated the same and, regardless of the size of the development (building permit or major subdivision), the development would have to meet all road requirements, which would effectively result in a building moratorium. It makes sense to limit development in high-risk areas but not wholesale.
 - Legislation from 2018 required BOF to update the regulations. Intention is good but the devil is in the details. John has done a great job of calling attention to issues. Yana is convening a meeting today to discuss with key county groups to see where modifications can be made.
 - Chris, John, Yana are already working on this. Anyone else that could bring a helpful perspective? A Fire Chief would be useful and/or CSD who provides water service. Chief Nick Pape volunteered (Nick will also discuss this with Shelter Cove RID General Manager).
 - **Action: Form ad hoc committee to support Integrated Planning**
 - Chris Ramey motioned to create an Integrated Planning Ad hoc to include Yana, Chris, John, Nick. Kai seconded. All in favor.

Disaster Preparedness

- 2020 Wildfire season debrief
 - Ryan (OES) – OES updated the Everbridge system with new Humboldt Alert contacts just prior to August Complex. Mass alert system now has just under 133,000 people registered (vast majority of the county). Coordinating with So Hum CERT and FSC to plan for evacuation in areas with limited cell coverage. Volunteer force, like DART (large animal evac), was essential to August Complex evacuations.
 - This year, planning to reinvest in evacuation mapping and take maps to the communities for refinement.
 - Looking into means of marking cleared evacuation routes and developing a mobile siren system.
 - CERT – working with a volunteer management program to keep engagement and swearing in streamlined so deployment is straightforward.
- CAL FIRE debrief
 - August Complex was a whirlwind. Quick transition from planning/contingency to suppression mode.
 - Looking at areas adjacent to USFS lines and DPA lines to insulate the County and more rural communities with fuels reduction projects.
- MKWC debrief
 - Will was on the Slater Fire for 26 hours straight, 50 mph winds, 3% humidity, burned 30 miles in a day. Times have really changed. Several homes with recent prescribed burns around them were lost, highlighting the need for a different/enhanced approach; Rx footprints need to be 10x bigger; embers were a big factor in home losses. Need to focus on fuels rather than ignitions and local, state, feds need to work more closely together.
- There is much more to say on this topic. It will be the first goal category discussed at the next meeting.

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Fire Protection

- Fire services committee is continuing ongoing efforts to support fire service sustainability, including assistance with fire district formation, annexation, reorganization, and needs/capacity assessment.

6. Confirm next meeting date and location and adjourn.

Next meeting will be May 20, 2021.

Meeting date confirmed. Meeting will most likely be virtual. Meeting adjourned at 12:00 pm.

DRAFT