



MEETING SUMMARY

Humboldt County Fire Safe Council Meeting – August 14, 2025

A [Humboldt County Fire Safe Council \(HCFSC\)](#) meeting was held on August 14, 2025 at the UC Cooperative Extension Office in Eureka. Members of the HCFSC are appointed by the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors (BOS) to guide maintenance and implementation of the [Humboldt County Community Wildfire Protection Plan \(CWPP\)](#).

The HCFSC is coordinated by the County Coordination Team, comprised of staff from Humboldt County Public Works and the Humboldt County Resource Conservation District. **Team Contact:** Julia Cavalli, Lead County Coordinator | jcavalli@co.humboldt.ca.us | 707-296-1498

Fire Safe Council Members Attending:

Members listed as follows: name, member seat, additional affiliation

****Jill Demers**, Humboldt County Resource Conservation District
Ali Freedlund, Supervisorial District 1 Appointee, Lower Mattole Fire Safe Council/Mattole Restoration Council
Anna Rogers, Supervisorial District 2 Appointee, Sanctuary Forest
Chris Emmons, Supervisorial District 3 Appointee, Arcata Fire Protection District
Chris Ramey, CAL FIRE, Humboldt-Del Norte Unit, HCFSC Vice Chair
Jeff Stackhouse, Humboldt County Prescribed Burn Association
Lenya Quinn-Davidson, UC Cooperative Extension, Humboldt-Del Norte UCCE
Lyn Javier, Local FSC/Firewise Community, Van Duzen Watershed Fire Safe Council
Manny Mello, Supervisorial District 4 Appointee, George Petersen Insurance
Peter Lawsky, Telegraph Ridge Volunteer Fire Department
Rod Mendes, Tribal Representative, Yurok Tribe/Yurok Fire Department
Ross Mathewson, California State Parks
Ryan Derby, Office of Emergency Services
Will Harling, Supervisorial District 5 Appointee, Orleans/Somes Bar Fire Safe Council/Mid Klamath Watershed Council
Yana Valachovic, UC Cooperative Extension, Humboldt-Del Norte UCCE

Fire Safe Council Alternates Attending:

****Cybelle Immitt**, Humboldt County Public Works Director Designee and Board of Supervisors Liaison
****Katrina Henderson**, Humboldt County Resource Conservation District
****Olivia Lopes**, Local FSC/Firewise Community, Willow Creek Fire Safe Council
Eric Darragh, Supervisorial District 5 Appointee, Mid Klamath Watershed Council
Jason Butcher, CAL FIRE, Humboldt-Del Norte Unit
Ross Dollarhide, CAL FIRE, Humboldt-Del Norte Unit

Non-Voting Agency Liaisons Attending:

N/A

****Members of the County Coordination Team**

Public and Agency Representatives Attending:

****Julia Cavalli**, Humboldt County Public Works / Lead County Coordinator
****Tanner Speas**, Humboldt County Public Works
Alicia Phibbs, Bridgeville Community Center
Arturo Gasdik, Six Rivers National Forest
Garret Gregory, CAL FIRE, Humboldt-Del Norte Unit
Jess Helm, McKinleyville CSD
Kacy Tuel, North Coast Air Quality Management District
Kim Mamaradlo, Yurok Fire Department
Lathrop Leonard, State Parks
Samantha Karges, Cal OES
Zoe Ziegler, Humboldt County Resource Conservation District

Zoom Participation

Ali O. Lee, Humboldt Area Foundation
Blaze Shannon, eastern Humboldt prescribed fire coordinator
Harry Vaughn, Local FSC/Firewise Community, Southern Humboldt Fire Safe Council
Mika Cook, Van Duzen Watershed Fire Safe Council
Skylar Fisher, Trinity County RCD / Fire Safe Council

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

HCFSC Chairperson, Lenya welcomed all and convened the meeting at 2:00 pm. Quorum (11) was confirmed, and introductions were made in-person. Zoom participants introduced themselves. The Zoom recording is available on the [Public Works – Natural Resources channel](#) and will be available until it is replaced by the next meeting's recording.

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

- **Action: Review and Approve Minutes from the May 2025 HCFSC Meeting**
 - **Motion:** Jeff Stackhouse motioned to approve the May HCFSC meeting minutes. Lyn Javier seconded the motion.
 - **Vote:** All in favor.

3. Public Comments/Announcements/Correspondence

- Bridgefest is this Saturday, August 16 in Bridgeville. Lyn will be engaging residents in disaster preparedness games and activities.
- Yurok Tribe Salmon Festival is also this Saturday, August 16.
- Prescribed burn at Butler Flat planned for Monday, August 18; aims to build off recent wildfire footprint.
- Lenya will be teaching the State Certified Burn Boss qualification training in Chico. Application to be released soon; interested individuals can also email Lenya directly.

4. HCFSC Membership

- HCFSC Membership Housekeeping
 - Members were asked to review their titles/affiliations for accuracy. [Updated roster](#) available on the HCFSC website.
 - On August 12, 2025, the Board of Supervisors approved changes to Local FSC/Firewise Community representatives for the Willow Creek Fire Safe Council:
 - Olivia Lopes was bumped up from an alternate to the primary member.
 - Jim Cotton was welcomed as the new alternate member.
 - Outgoing member, Patti Pedigo, was thanked for her service and wished well.
 - Cybelle reminded members to get in touch with her if they want to recommend membership changes to the Board of Supervisors and reiterated the importance of members coordinating with their alternate, both to keep them engaged and to ensure meeting quorum when the primary member cannot attend.
- **Action: HCFSC Chair & Vice Chair (Executive Committee) vote**
 - Current nominees: Lenya for Chair and Chris for Vice Chair.
 - **Motion:** Ryan Derby motioned to approve the chair and vice chair appointments. Rod Mendes seconded.
 - **Discussion:** Chris indicated a desire to revisit Executive Committee appointments in 2026.
 - **Vote:** All in favor.

5. Consent Agenda

- **Action: Vote to approve Consent Agenda Items**
 - Several proposed updates to the CWPP Project Database included in the [meeting materials](#) regarding completed treatments.
 - **Motion:** Olivia Lopes motioned to approve the Consent Agenda. Chris Ramey seconded the motion.
 - **Vote:** All in favor.

6. County Coordinator Team Update

- The members of the County Coordinator Team (CCT) shared about their respective roles and responsibilities:
 - Julia is the lead and primary contact for the team.
 - Tanner is the Regional Firewise Coordinator and assists new and existing Firewise Communities.
 - Cybelle serves as the liaison with County Board of Supervisors and manages HCFSC membership.
 - Katrina and Jill described RCD staffs' CCT role in assisting wildfire mitigation organizations with project development and implementation support. Olivia is new to the RCD and will be point on outreach/social media for the CCT.
- While participation on the CCT is just one part of their day jobs, they can do a lot with a little!
- CCT is pursuing CWPP supplementary funding from the CA FSC, specifically to develop resources to help implementers leverage the spatial data and tools that will result from the update, expand outreach, and fund the development of a fourth edition of the Living with Wildfire Magazine.
- Julia attended the Listos California Disaster Preparedness Summit last week alongside Anna and Lyn and presented on Listos' Neighborhood Block Party Kit, which includes outreach materials, games, and prizes for local events. These kits are completely free and can be ordered [online while supplies last](#).
 - Anna Rogers: got a kit for the Whitethorn Fire event this Saturday at Whitethorn Construction and is planning to integrate it into their event.
 - Ryan Derby: Humboldt OES is a central shipping location, and kits can be ordered through him.
 - Lyn: kit will also be used at Bridgefest this Saturday. Notes it is designed for 20 participants.
 - Ali agreed to take one of the demo kits and test it out with the Lower Mattole FSC.
- New Hubsite Resources page coming soon to make CCT offerings more explicit.
- Roadside Treatment Planning Guide ready for HCFSC review and will be made publicly available to implementers conducting roadside vegetation treatments.
- Qualified Entities Training survey to be sent out soon, assessing interest in a CAL FIRE training on defensible space and home hardening.
- Harry Vaughn asked about the Spanish version of the Preparing Your Home for Wildfire pamphlet. They are currently available and the CCT will get some to the Salmon Creek community.

7. CWPP Update Report

- Julia provided an update on the consultant selection process and results and thanked the review committee members for their time reviewing proposals and participating in interviews.
 - The Request for Proposals process resulted in the selection of Dudek for assistance with both Planning & Facilitation and Spatial Analysis & Mapping.
 - Dudek has a strong track record in CWPP updates statewide. Experience with spatial risk assessment, public engagement, and StoryMap/Hubsite development. Confirmed understanding of the HCFSC's desire for a highly collaborative process.
 - Professional Services Agreement is currently being developed.
- CWPP ad hoc committee met Tuesday - discussed ideas to bolster accomplishments tracking and contacts database ahead of the CWPP update; and where to focus consultant effort given limited budget.
- Quick review of pathways for reporting CWPP implementation Progress/Accomplishments and the importance of understanding progress to inform design of the next countywide actions plan(s) and celebrating success!
- Rod Mendes: Asks how the update will address gaps in community representation due to low capacity. Suggests that "Wildfire Prevention Plan" makes some communities feel like it isn't pertinent if they feel that wildfire isn't a serious risk to them.

- Julia and Cybelle answer by explaining that the design of a Public Engagement Strategy is priority for the local implementation partners/community liaison groups and consultant. The Strategy will be collaboratively developed to ensure use of locally appropriate communications channels and messaging.
- Blaze Shannon: suggests that the HCFSC host an outreach townhall on the CWPP in general, and the update process.
 - Julia responds that there will be community workshops, webinars, and a recorded presentation that can be shared with communities.
- Yana Valachovic: remembers the last update process in which they did community outreach meetings that had mixed results. Discussion around the challenges associated with planning at a countywide scale, but also the new available tools that can help.
- Ryan Derby: Emphasizes the need for strong purpose statements and objectives.

8. Feature Presentations

- **Trinity County CWPP Update Progress Presentation (Video Time Stamp: -52:27)**
 - Presenter: Skylar Fisher, Trinity County Coordinator
 - Skylar presented on Trinity County's CWPP update process to date, including reflections on the last plan and how that feedback is being incorporated into the next iteration. Project Background and Findings
 - Discussed project prioritization based on a set of criteria, and the pros and cons of each criterion.
 - Incorporating an action plan for the first time – in fact, two action plans: one for agencies responsible for plan implementation and one designed for use by community members, including an annual checklist of wildfire preparedness actions.
 - Will Harling encouraged consideration of managed wildfire and coordinating response across county lines in particular.
 - The presentation slides will be included with the meeting notes.
- **Current Fire Season Panel Discussion (Video Time Stamp: -30:35)**
 - Panelists: Eric Darragh (MKWC), Arturo Gasdik (USFS), Rod Mendes (Yurok Fire), Ross Dollarhide (CAL FIRE)
 - How has coordination between agencies, community groups, and fire practitioners evolved this season? Any lessons or growth areas?
 - Rod: Collaboration and coordination between agencies is better – a trajectory he's observed over five decades. Grant opportunities have brought collaborators together and enhanced hazard reduction.
 - Ross: Much more alignment on goals and mutual understanding of the wildfire environment in CA that translates into the treatment/operational space. Pushing for the same things (e.g., community protection and restoration of beneficial fire where possible). More pre-season coordination has also enhanced alignment and readiness.
 - How did prescribed fire or cultural burning play a role in recent fire events? What does this tell us about the role of proactive fire in community protection?
 - Eric: This year presented a unique opportunity to utilize the summer burn window and they were successful with ambitious prescribed burn plans. The Butler Fire began during burning, and through early coordination with the incident management team, they were able to continue burning ahead of the wildfire, thereby preventing its forward progress. Huge community involvement in the burn, including residents, youth, and interns. Cultural burning took place just across the road during the same opportunity.
 - Permitting for prescribed fire in August?

- a. Eric: It is complicated but doable (especially with state/fed/air district buy-in). Open communication and early completion of required paperwork were key. Important to look at conditions rather than calendar dates.
 - b. Arturo: Six Rivers' mission is suppression and prescribed fire where they can and is supportive of taking advantage of the upcoming burn window to close the gap in unburned area between the prescribed fire and wildfire footprint.
- What have you observed about community readiness and response during recent wildfires? What do you wish property owners would do so firefighters/ or other resources didn't have to during a wildfire response?
 - Arturo: the residents are more seasoned and educated than in the past due to repeated experience with fire.
 - Eric: The responsibility of fire response personnel is protection, not preparation. The more work residents do throughout the year (not just during peak fire season) makes it possible to protect assets at risk and give firefighters more strategic opportunities and safer conditions to operate in.
 - Ross: Has observed that residents in areas with Fire Safe Councils and Firewise Communities tend to be more ready and educated. Expresses the year-round need for proactive outreach and discourages complacency. Reminds that the most destructive wildfires in CA occurred in fall and winter.
 - Rod: The hazardous fuels reduction and collaboration/coordination between fire response and prescribed burners is better than ever and facilitate the opportunity to burn during an active wildfire. Noted the economic barriers to fuels reduction for individual residents and the need for ongoing programs to bolster preparedness and the challenge of keeping those programs funded with competitive grant awards.
 - Will: Described the history of proactively burned area and how it has served as a fuel break during past wildfires due to that proactive work. Encouraged communities to take advantage of opportunities for prescribed fire and managed wildfire to create defensible space. Noted how inspiring it was to burn alongside those with personal, ancestral connection to the area, and with his kids – engendering responsibility and respect for fire in the next generation is something we should continue to strive for.
- Are there barriers (policy, funding, other support) that you think still need to be addressed to scale up the use of good fire?
 - Ross: Has observed a shifting perspective within the agency. CAL FIRE has typically used prescribed fire as a tool for community protection but would like to see this used more – showcasing these successes is key to change in policy.
 - Arturo: Stressed the importance of community buy-in. Has been leading a wildfire prevention team focused on implementation of a national public outreach campaign “Spark Safety, Not Wildfires”, educating the public on how to get involved and prepared. Offered to share a final report on campaign outcomes.
 - Eric: MKWC is producing a video and other materials about the recent success.

9. Confirm next meeting date and location and adjourn

- Next meeting is proposed for November 13, 2025, 1-3pm at UCCE Office, 5630 S Broadway St, Eureka.

Meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm.