



# 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

### Humboldt County Fire Safe Council Meeting – August 18, 2022

A [Humboldt County Fire Safe Council \(HCFSC\)](#) meeting was held on August 18, 2022 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 \(CWPP\)](#).

#### **Fire Safe Council Members Attending:**

- \*\*Ali Freedlund**, Lower Mattole Fire Safe Council/Mattole Restoration Council
- Allan Wiegman**, California State Parks, North Coast Redwoods District
- Chris Ramey**, CAL FIRE, Humboldt-Del Norte Unit
- Elicia Goldsworthy**, Humboldt County Prescribed Burn Association
- Greg Moon**, Hoopa Tribe/Hoopa Fire Department and Office of Emergency Services
- Jill Demers**, Humboldt County Resource Conservation District
- Justin McDonald**, Humboldt County Fire Chiefs' Association, Arcata Fire District
- Kai Ostrow**, Briceland Fire Department and Southern Humboldt Technical Rescue
- Kathy Weber**, Crooked Prairie & Southern Humboldt Fire Safe Council
- Lenya Quinn-Davidson**, UC Cooperative Extension, Humboldt-Del Norte UCCE
- Manny Mello**, George Petersen/Northwest Insurance
- Nick Pape**, Southern Humboldt Fire Chiefs' Association, Shelter Cove Fire Department
- Patti Pedigo**, Willow Creek Fire Safe Council
- Will Harling**, Orleans/Somes Bar Fire Safe Council/Mid Klamath Watershed Council

#### **Fire Safe Council Alternates Attending:**

- Nancy Bailey**, Orleans/Somes Bar Fire Safe Council/Mid Klamath Watershed Council
- Regina Moon**, Willow Creek Fire Safe Council

#### **Non-Voting Agency Liaisons Attending:**

- \*\*Cybelle Immitt**, Humboldt County Public Works Director Designee
- Enhy (Brittany) Patterson**, Six Rivers National Forest Alt.

#### **Public and Agency Representatives Attending:**

- \*\*Julia Cavalli**, Humboldt County Public Works / Lead County Coordinator
- \*\*Mitchell Danforth**, Trees Foundation
- Bill Eastwood**, Southern Humboldt Fire Safe Council
- Debra Harris**, North Coast Air Quality Management District
- Karin Young**, Solano RCD
- Kelley Lincoln**, KMUD Radio
- Kerry Reynolds**, Trees Foundation
- Kurt McCray**, CAL FIRE Unit Chief

**Rachael Ostrander**, CA Fire Safe Council Fellow

**Seth Toerpe**, Six Rivers National Forest

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

# HUMBOLDT COUNTY FIRE SAFE COUNCIL

## Meeting Summary Humboldt County Fire Safe Council Meeting – August 18, 2022

### 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 am.

This meeting's recording will be [available online](#) until it is replaced by the next meeting recording.

*Per precedent set in previous Zoom meetings, the default for action items is for the Chair to ask for any objections. Where consensus is not attainable, a roll call vote will be held.*

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

- **Action: Review and Approve Minutes from the Previous HCFSC Meeting**

- **Motion:** Kai Ostrow motioned to approve the May HCFSC meeting minutes. Chris Ramey seconded the motion. **Vote:** None opposed.

### 3. Public Comments/Announcements/Correspondence

Will Harling – Deadline for TREX [applications](#) closes tomorrow, 8/19 at 5pm. Training will begin October 10<sup>th</sup>. (Cybelle forwarded Will's email announcement to members on 8/16)

Elicia Goldsworthy – Continuing to monitor [AB 1717](#) which proposes to expand the definition of “public works” to include fuels reduction, resulting in additional administrative requirements for publicly funded projects that could mean grant dollars won't go as far. Being read for the 3rd time. Very relevant and worth keeping an eye on.

### 4. HCFSC Membership

- Cybelle gave background for those unfamiliar with the structure and mission of the HCFSC.
- Cybelle thanked Basho and Blaze for their service representing the Willow Creek Fire Safe Council. Though their time on the HCFSC was brief, they were engaged and active and will continue serving their communities through other avenues and we hope to continue to collaborate with them.
- Many people expressed their appreciation for Bill Eastwood's service to the Humboldt County Fire Safe Council over the last **10 years**. The members of the HCFSC are deeply grateful to Bill for his dedication and guidance through multiple Community Wildfire Protection Plan updates, involvement in the design, continued refinement of, and implementation of several grant funded wildfire mitigation programs, and ongoing participation in preparing Humboldt communities for wildfire. Bill expressed confidence that Kathy Weber will be an excellent replacement.
- Outgoing Members Basho Parks, Bill Eastwood, and Blaze Shannon were acknowledged for their individual contributions to the HCFSC.
  - **Action: Authorize Chair to sign certificates of appreciation.**
    - **Motion:** Kai Ostrow motioned to sign certs of appreciation. Seconded by Ali Freedlund.  
**Vote:** None opposed.

New members listed on the agenda were welcomed.

Serene White has moved on from Hoopa Fire and will no longer be serving as Chief Greg Moon's alternate.

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

#### A. [Disaster Preparedness](#)

- a. USFS (Seth Toerpe for Ben Hendricks) – As of today the Six Rivers Lightning Complex has burned 26,000 acres, is 33% contained, with over 2,000 personnel assigned. All fires are lined and they are now in the process of shrinking lines and increasing containment. Weather conditions favorable for further containment. For further info, see the [Incident Information System](#).
- b. CAL FIRE (Chris Ramey) – Lightning Complex Fire effects on the forest have been fairly healthy to date; lots of backing fires chewing up the understory. Unified command (between USFS and CAL FIRE) began August 9<sup>th</sup> when the Ammon Fire was threatening CAL FIRE Direct Protection Area boundary.
  - i. Positive outcomes: Contingency line from Hwy 299 to Grouse Mtn ~15 miles of significant fuels reduction that CAL FIRE will be able to maintain into the future.
  - ii. Success story: CAL FIRE fuels reduction project in Bigfoot Subdivision was tested by fire and it proved effective.
  - iii. First time in Chris's experience that they went into Unified Command and all reports were that it's been a very positive experience working together and positive outcomes in terms of fire effects.
  - iv. CAL FIRE ramping down looking to come out of Unified Command this weekend; strike teams will stay on to keep an eye on the ground.
  - v. Green Diamond grateful for the communication to adjacent landowners.
  - vi. Question: Fair to say that the fire behavior was healthy for the forest? good fuels reduction?
    - i. Yes, overall fire has cleaned up the understory in many places; much like a prescribed burn. Not much of a flaming front or torching of trees. There will still be plenty of smoke in the green pockets, but the forecast looks favorable for keeping fire behavior to a minimum.
  - vii. Will highlighted that weather was key here in terms of keeping the fire manageable. No start-up costs, liability, or environmental compliance to mitigate wildfire. We need to focus on breaking down the barriers to prescribed fire so we can achieve 20,000 acre burns and not have to rely on suppression. Also highlights the opportunity that wildfire can be for reducing fuels.
- c. OES (Cybelle for Ryan) – Ryan unable to attend. Cybelle shared Zonehaven map to illustrate the status of the evacuation orders and demonstrate how this new tool is being put to the test.
- d. Lessons learned? Or things the community could do to be better prepared?
  - i. Some Zonehaven zones may need to be modified/refined
  - ii. More landmarks for quick reference on the Zonehaven basemap would be helpful
  - iii. Add in Trinity County information/evacuation zones
- e. Other?
  - i. Patti reported that there are *a lot* of firefighters in Willow Creek – very grateful. Some looting in Salyer. Biggest problem now is the smoke. Very pleased with how smoothly things have gone considering the scale of the effort.
  - ii. Regina appreciative of good communication via social media.
  - iii. Trinity County Zonehaven? Trinity uses a different system. See their [OES website](#) for more.

#### B. [Wildfire Preparedness](#)

- a. Feature Presentation: Hoopa FSC/Fire/OES
  - i. Cybelle introduced Greg's presentation of a model of what we hope to do more of in future meetings: presenting on ongoing work and how it relates to the CWPP Action Plans.

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- ii. Greg presented on the great variety of work he is involved in to prepare Hoopa for wildfire—from community outreach and education to hazardous fuels reduction, to evacuation. Details included in the attached slideshow presentation.
  - iii. Additionally, he shared links to a [one-minute PSA](#)/preview of a [longer video](#) designed to enhance community responsibility when using cultural and traditional fire. Check it out!
- b. Local FSC / Firewise Activity Updates
- i. Willow Creek FSC Update
    - 1. Funds received from Humboldt Area Foundation for office rental (A-frame next to the old Early Bird) and chipper; may get a truck from Green Diamond! Chipping efforts have been delayed by the ongoing fire. Last meeting was likewise delayed, looking to recruit new members by September.
    - 2. Hired Geoff Churchill to help the WCFSC Volunteers coordinate work funded through a CAL FIRE grant received by Humboldt County.
  - i. Lower Mattole FSC Update
    - 1. NEST Team fundraising for new alternative communications system brought in \$10,000! Assessing best tools to invest in. NEST reps will be able to relay messages at the neighborhood-level.
    - 2. Finished Save the Redwood Leagues 250-acre ridgeline fuel break.
    - 3. 2-acre fuels reduction completed on Sanctuary Forest property.
  - ii. Southern Humboldt FSC Update
    - 1. 8 neighborhood groups, a ninth group in Redway is coming online now. Garberville effort nearing completion on achieving Firewise Community status.
    - 2. Lots of interest in the FLASH Program locally.
    - 3. Continuing to build list of Local Defensible Space Professionals for Hire ([first link](#)). Lots of interest from contractors who want to be on the list.
    - 4. Mail Ridge project moving forward with help of HCRCD. Planning to apply for CAL FIRE Forest health funding - Wiyot/Founder's Grove stretching south across county line on east side of highway; very ambitious; SHFSC's role moving forward will be landowner outreach.
    - 5. Southern Humboldt Forest Health Collaborative – Salmon Creek area developed a project with the help of HCRCD and MRC. The Mattole and Salmon Creek Forest Health Grant was awarded and contracted. The team is eager to start the Salmon Creek Shaded Fuel Break on Chapman Ranch, in footprint of 2003 Canoe Fire, ASAP. Waiting for final OK from CAL FIRE Forest Health on environmental compliance.
    - 6. PG&E continues to be of concern; fewer issues following advocacy by Supervisor Bushnell, Sanctuary Forest and others.
    - 7. China Creek/Blue Slide Creek Rd – applied for PG&E funding but were not successful but now have a shovel-ready project ready for funding. Would allow off-season firefighters to be hired/help build local workforce capacity.
    - 8. Road signs – working on this throughout the area. Many roads without signs are an emergency response issue.
    - 9. Palo Verde FSC group – fuels reduction on Bell Springs Rd; active on Mail Ridge project
    - 10. Garberville Firewise working with Benbow Firewise to support Garberville FPD annexations; likewise Salmon Firewise group with their district
    - 11. Garb group also working with DHHS to coordinate outreach to campers on reducing ignition risk
  - iii. Van Duzen Watershed FSC Update – no representation
  - iv. Orleans-Somes Bar FSC Update

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1. Launching CWPP Update effort – kickoff meeting next week; neighborhood meetings to follow.
  2. Funded for WKRP Plan update – will help turn the current 2014 plan into more of an operational plan.
  3. WKRP planning a 12,000-acre project, setting the stage for the return of ceremonial burning.
  4. Implementing mechanical portion of Somes project 2,000 acres treated; paving the way for USFS to complete larger projects
  5. TREX and WTREX planning – 100 applicants each /50 select for women’s TREX; 100 for regular TREX so far; prepping units, good line up deadline closes tomorrow
  6. Expanding community liaison program into other neighborhoods around Orleans/Somes Bar
  7. \$30 M over 10 years through WKRP coming online – looking forward to scaling up!
  8. Nancy reported on the completion of multiple defensible space project, also recent brushing near community water system and elementary school. Nancy expressed gratitude to CAL FIRE for allowing removal of junk/debris to facilitate access for defensible space development. Held 2 Firewise events at the elementary schools.
- v. County Update
1. County involved in many of the efforts and projects described so far.
  2. Reminder: Preparing Your Home for Wildfire brochures are available if members want to pick up a bundle to share with their communities. Arrange with Cybelle for Living with Wildfire pickup.
  3. [Hazardous Vegetation Reduction Interest Form](#) – encouraging people, especially in Southern Humboldt and Willow Creek focal areas to submit. Dual purpose: connect those interested with existing services and/or help us better understand the level of demand for these programs and the eligibility requirements people are meeting throughout the county to incorporate into future grant proposals; depending on response, interested individuals may be referred to the [FLASH Program](#).
  4. Working with CAL FIRE and USFS to get an Air Curtain Burner in Willow Creek. USFS looking for a longer-term burner.
  5. New funds from CA FSC for additional road signs and evacuation equipment (e.g., electronic signage).
  6. Very full load of grant projects ongoing; appreciative of our partners/contractors for keeping things moving.

### Reports as time allows:

C. [Wildfire Ignition Prevention](#) – none

D. [Fire Protection](#)

- a. Huge Garberville Fire Protection District (FPD) annexation approved by Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) contingent on special tax being approved by voters on March 7<sup>th</sup>. Outreach campaign ongoing now to explain the benefits. End of September, Board of Supervisors will consider a county cost-sharing/tax exchange agreement with the District to help them develop a more diverse portfolio of revenue. Same with Salmon Creek, LAFCo approved their FPD formation proposal. Several other annexations moving forward.
- b. Question: Gap between Garberville proposed annexation area and Briceland FPD boundary. Portion of timberland not included – any update?
  - i. Ongoing issue/no resolution due to Fire Protection District law that won’t allow industrial timberlands to be included in a fire district; also a matter of whether the Fire District would be able to access the area– has bearing on whether they include it in their district/want to take responsibility for that area.

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### E. [Restoration of Beneficial Fire](#)

- a. MKWC working to get Cal VTP (for CEQA compliance) set up under CAL FIRE CCI grant. Board of Forestry has contracted Ascent to help develop models for the VTP. Working with them to understand the implications of large-scale prescribed fire. Would get environmental compliance down from 2 years to 6 months. Shasta RCD a bit ahead working on compliance for 11,000 acres.
- b. MKWC: Working draft of PODs layer just released for public use and can be used to site fuel breaks during wildfires and to plan prescribed burns. PODs layer still needs further review, both in GIS and in the field, by partners to ensure no cultural or ecological resources are damaged through implementation.
- c. Hum Co PBA's recent meeting paired with workshop; great turnout – 45 ppl, many new to the group.
- d. Lenya working with Senator Dodd on SB926: Prescribed Fire claims fund, which would be the vehicle for operationalizing that fund of \$20M previously set aside; tool for State certified burn bosses.
- e. Lenya hosting a state certified burn boss course the week of December 5<sup>th</sup> in Chico.
- f. Kai working on burn planning in Southern Humboldt through contract with Hum Co (CA FSC grant) and also working to increase capacity of others in the PBA sphere to plan burns.

### F. [Integrated Planning](#)

- a. SRA Regulations update – still in progress.
- b. New FHSZ maps will be launched soon; in Unit review; there don't appear to be any significant changes in the HUU area.

## 6. Confirm next meeting date and location and adjourn

- Next meeting will be November 10, 2022.
- **Discussion:** This will be a celebration of the HCFSC's 20th anniversary. Consider planning an in-person, 2-4pm meeting with 4-6pm reception after.
  - Looking into venues in Eureka.
  - Will be asking current and previous members to record a very brief video
    1. We are looking for prompt suggestions. Please send to Lenya or Julia if you have ideas.
    2. Some initial ideas:
      - a. How has being involved in the HCFSC and CWPP been a benefit to you and your work?
      - b. Reflecting on your involvement with the HCFSC, what makes you most proud?
  - Deb is happy to help with planning
  - Green Diamond (Brita/Elicia) can also contribute