

# HUMBOLDT COUNTY FIRE SAFE COUNCIL



Appointed by the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors  
Supported by  
Public Works, Natural Resources Planning  
**COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT**  
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## **Meeting Summary (Action Minutes) Humboldt County Fire Safe Council Meeting November 19, 2020**

A [Humboldt County Fire Safe Council \(HCFSC\)](#) meeting was held on November 19, 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 \(CWPP\)](#).

### **Fire Safe Council Members/Appointed Agency Liaisons Attending:**

**Bill Eastwood**, Southern Humboldt Fire Safe Council  
**Chris Ramey**, CAL FIRE  
**Ed Laidlaw**, Arcata Fire Protection District  
**Ian Sigman**, Lower Mattole Fire Safe Council and Honeydew Volunteer Fire Company  
**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  
**Manny Mello**, George Petersen/Northwest Insurance  
**Rod Mendes**, Hoopa Office of Emergency Services, Hoopa Fire Department  
**Tom O'Gorman**, Willow Creek Fire Safe Council

### **Fire Safe Council Members/Appointed Agency Liaisons Absent:**

**David Markin**, Six Rivers National Forest  
**Ryan Derby**, Humboldt County Office of Emergency Services  
**Tom Mattson**, Humboldt County Public Works (non-voting)  
**Will Harling**, Orleans/Somes Bar FSC, Fire Safe Council of Siskiyou County, Mid Klamath Watershed Council

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

**Ali Freedlund**, Lower Mattole Fire Safe Council and Mattole Restoration Council (Supervisory District 1 Alternate)  
**Cybelle Immitt**, Humboldt County Public Works (non-voting Director Designee)  
**Jason Butcher**, CAL FIRE  
**Jennifer Renner**, CAL FIRE  
**Josh Eichamer**, Six Rivers National Forest  
**Nancy Bailey**, Mid Klamath Watershed Council (Supervisory District 5 Alternate)

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

**Allan Wiegman**, California State Parks  
**Dan Wooden**, Bureau of Land Management  
**Debra Harris**, North Coast Air Quality Management District  
**Jake Taulbee**, Humboldt County RCD  
**Jill Demers**, Humboldt County RCD  
**Julia Cavalli**, Humboldt County Public Works / HCFSC Staff  
**Julia Sullivan**, Humboldt County RCD  
**Kathy Weber**, Southern Humboldt Fire Safe Council  
**Kelley Lincoln**  
**Lucas Titus**  
**Rosalie Carnam**  
**Shirley Laos**

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## AGENDA ITEM SUMMARIES

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

HCFSC Vice-Chairperson, Lon Winburn called the meeting to order at 10:06.

Meeting attendees went through introductions and a roll call of FSC members.

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 August HCFSC meeting minutes. Lenya Quinn-Davidson seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

### 3. Public Comments/Announcements/Correspondence

Where can we find updated containment percentages? Humboldt Del Norte public information line 726-1285 or Unit Chief, Kurt McCray. August Complex fire is 100 percent contained <https://inciweb.nwccg.gov/incident/6983/>.

### 4. Consent Items

There were no consent agenda items.

### 5. HCFSC Membership

#### HCFSC membership housekeeping

- **Action: Support the following nominations to fill vacancies:**
  - **Dan Wooden as non-voting federal liaison for the Bureau of Land Management**
  - **Greg Moon as Hoopa Valley Tribe member to replace Rod Mendes**
  - **Ali Freedlund as Supervisorial District I member to replace Ian Sigman**
  - Reminder: The FSC member vote is to indicate support for nominations when the nominations are taken to the Board of Supervisors for approval.
  - Motion: Kai Ostrow motioned to approve the Action. Bill Eastwood second the motion. Unanimously approved.

#### HCFSC [Board Resolution Update](#) and Next Steps

- Share findings about how other county FSCs are governed.
  - HCFSC is very different than other FSCs in that it is a committee organized at the pleasure of the Board of Supervisors (BOS) and has been since its founding in 2002. Many FSCs are non-profits governed by bylaws or very loosely affiliated groups such as Trinity County FSC (no formal membership or voting structure); work performed under their CWPP is completed by the Trinity County RCD.
  - Periodically this membership has been asked if they'd like to change the structure of the FSC; there's never been much capacity or interest to change
  - Currently governed by a BOS resolution
  - Self-nomination from a private firm brought up questions and gave pause. After consulting with the Clerk of the Board, staff had reservations about recommending support for the nomination given that it is inconsistent with the original intention of the FSC as a BOS committee comprised of agency, local fire, and community organization representatives. Non-members are encouraged to attend meetings and participate in work groups.
- Discussion: Covered under Humboldt County liability insurance?
  - If changed to non-profit, FSC would need to maintain its own liability insurance—a significant cost consideration.

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- Many costs associated with running a non-profit to consider.
- No action was proposed by FSC members.
- Discuss adding the Yurok Tribe and CA State Parks as official member-slots to the HCFSC
  - Tribes background: The original board resolution included a Hoopa member slot, which was last filled by Fire Chief, Rod Mendes who has been active in updating the CWPP and other FSC projects. He is now working for the Yurok Tribe, which is interested in being added to the FSC and having Rod be their representative. Hoopa has nominated their new fire chief, Greg Moon. Staff recommend increasing Tribal inclusivity by amending resolution to include 2 Tribal member slots, which, once the BOS appoints a Yurok member, would be filled by Hoopa and Yurok (Tribes participating, or number of Tribes can be changed in future as needed).
  - State Parks background: FSC has approached the agency in the past but they did not have the capacity. They are now ready to participate.
  - **Action: Support amending BOS Resolution governing the HCFSC to include the Yurok Tribe as an official member-slot with Rod Mendes as their nominee.**
    - Motion: Kai motioned to approve the Action; Ed Laidlaw seconded. Unanimously approved.
  - **Action: Support amending BOS Resolution governing the HCFSC to include California State Parks as an official member-slot, with Allan Weigman as their nominee.**
    - Motion: Ed motioned to approve the Action, Chris seconded. Unanimously approved.
- Acknowledge Supervisorial District I Member Appointee, Ian Sigman for his service on the HCFSC
  - **Authorize Vice-Chair to sign certificate of appreciation**
  - Thank you, Ian!
- Appoint Chairperson
  - **Action: Vote to approve a Chairperson**
    - Current nominee: Lenya Quinn Davidson, UCCE
    - Motion: Bill Eastwood motioned to approve the current nominee; Kai Ostrow seconded. Unanimously approved.
- Nominate Candidates for a new Vice-Chairperson
  - February will be Lon's last meeting and a new Vice-Chair will need to be appointed.
  - Chris Ramey was nominated.
  - Additional nomination for vice-chairperson can be made by contacting staff prior to the February meeting, at which time a final vote will be held.

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

In the past, we've had presentations on special topics or updates from specific people. This time was more informal with any one able to provide an update. Following the hyperlinks below to view the corresponding Action Plan of the CWPP.

#### Implementation Updates, Challenges and Successes

##### [Fire Protection](#)

- Measure Z update
  - Capacity and needs assessment ongoing for Westhaven VFD.
  - CSA 4 service evaluation underway – network of service providers for CSA 4 residents, Trinidad Rancheria and City of Trinidad – all getting on the same page about how to sustain the services collaboratively even though there are three different jurisdictions receiving services from a variety of sources and providing varying levels of support for those services.
  - Re-engaging with the Avenue Co-op – inspired by BOS offers of tax sharing agreement (gives opportunity to gain more revenue if they enter into a district reorganization process) and the Salmon Creek VFD's renewed interest in forming a FPD or potentially joining forces on a larger reorganization
  - Provided support for updating fire related district charge lists to make sure they are accurately

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updated with changes – so they are taxing the right parcels and the right amounts. This needs to be submitted to the Auditor Controller every year.

- Provided some mapping support to the Arcata FPD to help with public outreach around their funding measure.
- Continuing to work on a LAFCo application for a series of small annexations for FPDs to include areas they already provide service to.
- Increasing capacity: Collaboration between County Planning & Building / Public Works / CAO, Chiefs' Associations, and Board of Supervisors has been exceptional. The Rio Dell annexation reported on last meeting has been officially completed – a huge accomplishment. Also, CSA4 evaluation will greatly increase sustainability. Measure Z continues to be a huge component of ensuring sustainability of resources for local fire. Examples of Measure Z funding \$500,000 of rescue equipment, building projects...
- Training: College of Redwoods and CAL FIRE are collaborating on Wildfire Academy. COVID has impacted academies a bit but still moving forward. Mobile training facility for North Bay area is up and running. Eel River Valley facility almost ready for install; Southern Humboldt facility will hopefully be installed before spring.

### Disaster Preparedness

- Staff will help organize a wildfire season debrief for the next meeting.
- WCFSC has done a lot of work around Willow Creek, particularly on west side of town where CSD recently purchased property. Happy Camp has done a lot of work to prepare for fire, but they were still devastated by the Slater Fire – interested in lessons learned that can be applied to Willow Creek.
  - Chris Ramey, CAL FIRE – Slater was not a CAL FIRE incident but can work on gathering more info that can be shared at the next meeting.
  - Josh Eichamer, USFS – Slater involved several national forests, BLM land, and others and involved a lot of structure loss. Many environmental factors we can't control. Believes communities are on track with their fuels reduction but increasing pace and scale will be critical and will be a focus of the USFS. Still working on synthesizing lessons learned.

### Integrated Planning

- Fire Safe Regulations
  - John Miller:
    - John is tracking the Board of Forestry (BOF) process of updating state level Fire Safe Regulations. The update is expected to have a significant ripple effect on county permitting. There has been a lot of interest in Sonoma County's bid to have their locally adapted regulations certified by the Board (only local agency currently looking to do so). It doesn't look like this will happen as the BOF certification process will likely be removed as part of the updated regulations and replaced with something else.
    - Office of Planning & Research has issued new guidance on reducing fire hazards. County will reference this when updating the Safety Element of the General Plan.
    - USGS is creating regulations in tsunami areas regarding development. They will include a series of in-depth checklists on community planning, site evaluation for specific projects res/non-residential, etc. John thinks something similar could be helpful for development within different FHSZs.
  - Chris Ramey:
    - Chris is also tracking the BOF process. BOF is holding another [public workshop](#) Nov. 24 9 am – 1 pm to discuss proposed changes [see CSAC [PowerPoint](#) of key changes]. Plan to produce a draft by December 1. Will submit final draft to BOF in January 2021.
    - Newly passed AB 38 requires defensible space and retrofits on real estate transactions within very high fire hazard severity zone using a phased in approach.
    - FHSZ maps being updated, expected 2021.
    - CAL FIRE Unit Plan is complete and posted to [County website](#). Staff will stay in touch with Jen Renner about the 2021 update.
  - Dan Wooden – Arcata Field Office initiated Resource Management Plan revision, which will reevaluate all the planning decisions under which the field office is being managed. It will be a long process (last updated late 90s). Good opportunity to gather public input on priorities (e.g. fuels management).
- Streamside Management Ordinance (SMAO) Update

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- Cybelle has been working with John Miller [Yana has been a helpful resource for this process as well] and CDFW to identify pathways that would remove/decrease disincentives for managing hazardous vegetation within Streamside Management Areas. John is also talking to the CEQA group who developed CalVTP and others who would have performance standards or prescriptions that can be potentially adopted into the SMAO.

### Wildfire Ignition Prevention

- Defensible Space Inspections
  - Inspections halted due to fire season but are starting back up. Hiring 4 DSIs. Got funding to fund DSI positions for 9 months (big increase). Retention of DSIs is challenging (often take firefighting positions). Get in touch with Jen if your community needs inspections.

### Restoration of Beneficial Fire

- Lenya re PBA : PBA did not do any fall burns and is instead focusing on planning winter burns. Lenya has been spending time on supporting state policy changes and recently hosted Jim Wood on a field tour. He is very interested in the local work and increasing prescribed fire use.
- Lenya also testified before State Assembly Natural Resources Committee. Legislation is being drafted – coordinating with Lenya, Bill Tripp (Karuk), and Margo Robbins (Yurok). At least a couple bills expected in 2021 session addressing prescribed fire; legislators are in touch with Lenya, Bill Tripp, and Margo Robbins for their input. CA State Certified Burn Boss Program mandated by SB 1260 will be rolled out mid-spring 2021; curriculum going through final review. The course will be held in the north (Humboldt), central, and southern part of the state. The goal is to get experienced practitioners certified by the state.
- Lenya re CAL FIRE grant – funds for hosting local trainings. COVID threw a wrench in training plans and sop project team is now thinking up creative ways to move forward. Planning trainings for early 2021.
- Bill re Kai's meeting – Kai has been working with 3-4 oak woodland landowners with Doug fir encroachment at the top of Alderpoint Road. It will be an impressive and big burn, using Alderpoint Rd as control line. Total of 24 people attended.
- Chris – worked with Kai on burn permits and burn plans. Also permitted private burning prior to rain. Went from fire season right into narrow window of Rx fire. CAL FIRE had some successful burns on/with State Parks; unprecedented fire behavior on a prairie that gave pause on continuing without more rain. Many units prepped, just need more rain.
- Nancy, MKWC – thank to CAL FIRE for burn permits even though wildfires were still ongoing. It was a different kind of TREF this year due to COVID; training was focused on local crews. High success with a complex burn on the edge of town. PIOs and community liaisons were a big asset to bringing peace of mind to community. Continuing to do a lot of pile burning despite the rain recognizing that hundreds or thousands of piles that can sit for years (due to lack of funding or capacity) and can themselves become a hazard.
- Jake Taulbee, RCD – Forester Larry Wilson finished ERF for Garberville fuel break, now will be sent to Sacramento. RCD will be reaching out to Southern Humboldt FSC to organize hand crew and masticator work for winter and spring. Will be compiling list of qualified contractors.
- Jill Demers, RCD – Coordinating with Yurok Tribe to implement 13 miles of fuel break along Blue Creek and replace a bridge with CCI funding. Were hoping to begin this fall, delayed due to COVID. On track for spring. Working with Tribal Wildlife Department to do prep work in response to recent marten listing.
- NCRP Regional Forest & Fire Capacity grant – planning to get North Coast ready for state investment in implementation projects by identifying priorities; Want to make sure Hum Co priorities make it into the plan.
  - Next NCRP meeting will be December 11, 2020. See [NCRP website](#) for details and email list sign-up.
  - The North Coast RFFC program is funding 13 demonstration projects demoing a variety of strategies that will generate lessons learned useful for Humboldt.
  - First round of technical assistance completed to prep projects for future funding; successful Humboldt proposers include MCSD and Hum Bay Municipal Water District. There will be more rounds! All are encouraged to take advantage of upcoming opportunities to receive technical assistance.

### Wildfire Preparedness

- Photo Library – the HCFSC Photo Library, hosted on Flickr, is an asset staff are working to build over time to draw from for educational materials, website, next iteration of the CWPP, LWW, etc. [demonstration was provided. See attached Guide.]
- CAL FIRE Ph III CWPP Implementation: FLASH
  - The website has been updated and includes [Program Requirements](#) developed with help from FSC

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- members familiar with the program; staff are collecting interest forms through the web
- Rebate program for defensible space around homesteads and access routes
- (over \$370K - Estimated 300+ acres with a minimum of 67 participants – the smaller the individual property owner projects the more participants we will have.
- Have until March 15, 2024 to get all the work done
- Issued an RFP for contractors and received 6 proposals – the plan is to review and rank and then pull from the qualified pool, as needed depending on where there is demand based on the interest forms and FSC waiting lists. Evaluation expected to be complete by December 7.
- In the meantime, we will ramp up our outreach to get as many interested landowners to fill out an interest form as possible – big push through December
- Early January will evaluate the interest forms and prioritize the lists based on our criteria (elder, low income, alter abled) – influences the order of operation – those who meet more of the criteria will be first in line with a site visit and will stop visits when the reimbursement funds have been fully allocated. Some may be left on a waiting list. Need to be very clear with folks about this process.
- Likely will be contracted with FLASH Techs and conducting initial site visits before the end of January. That is the target, however we have learned to be cautious about committing to timelines – so many unexpected delays.
- **Action: Form an ad hoc committee to evaluate responses to FLASH Technician RFP.**
  - Volunteers: Jen/Chris, Lenya; Cybelle nominates Yana
  - Motion: Lyn Javier motioned to approve formation of an Ad Hoc committee; Kai seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.
- CAL FIRE Ph II CWPP Implementation
  - Roadside clearance work is moving forward in the Mattole, work in other units is getting lined out. Has been a big learning curve being one of the more complex programs run. COVID has also had an impact on home visits and coordination with local liaisons; creating delays.
  - Staff is working with Kathy Weber and Yana on artwork that Yana will use for an educational brochure for community members that is more reflective of what Humboldt homes typically look like. Hope to have the brochure by next meeting.

### 7. **Action: Review, amend as necessary, and approve proposed 2021 meeting schedule.**

The February meeting was moved to February 11 to avoid Presidents' week. Lenya motioned to approve the amended schedule; Chris seconded. Unanimously approved.

### 8. **Confirm next meeting date and location and adjourn.**

**Next meeting proposed for February 11, 2021. Location TBD.**

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