

Humboldt County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) Workshop: Mid-Klamath Planning Unit

Panamnik Building, October 30, 2017, 5:00-8:00 pm

Information Table, Sign-In, and Shared Meal

- Community pre-fire planning maps displayed for initial review and updating
- Handouts and brochures available on wildfire-related topics
- Laptops available to review: Open Humboldt Survey (https://www.peakdemocracy.com/portals/131/Issue_5560) (deadline to fill out survey is Jan. 31, 2018), Humboldt Alert Emergency Notification System (<https://humboldt.gov/alerts>), and Humboldt County WebGIS to view online maps (https://webgis.co.humboldt.ca.us/HCEGIS2.4_CWPP).

[Signed in: 55]

Welcome and Introductions by Cybelle Immitt, Staff Support for Humboldt County Fire Safe Council

- **Meeting objective:** to share information on wildfire preparedness and to gather input, local knowledge, and concerns from community members from the Mid-Klamath Planning Unit, as identified in the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). The CWPP is updated every 5 years, with this year being an update year.

[Agenda, Sign-in sheet, Feedback form, Wildfire Preparedness Survey flyer, comment cards passed around]

Two-part Agenda:

1. Provide information:

- Fire protection capabilities and needs.
- Prevention of unplanned human-caused wildfires.
- Wildfire and emergency preparedness.
- The role of wildfire in our local environment.
- The Humboldt County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP).

2. Seek Information:

- Obtain local knowledge and concerns to include in the updated CWPP.
- Provide an opportunity for direct input into priorities for community fire safety.

Big Picture Overview

- Humboldt County Fire Safe Council (FSC) established by the Board of Supervisors in 2002 to develop, implement, and maintain the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP)
- FSC: diverse representation from many sectors
- Living with Wildfire an example of FSC's collaborative work; excellent resource for preparing, <http://humboldt.gov/DocumentCenter/View/59108> [Copies of LWW handed out]
- CWPP Purpose: Guide and inspire action related to wildfire preparedness; Asses risk (community input and rigorous analysis)
- CWPP: 14 planning units, each with a Unit Action Plan that can be used independent of the Countywide Plan
 - Mid-Klamath Planning Unit includes: Orleans and all residences in the surrounding area
- FLASH program funding available (partial reimbursement for fuel reduction by landowners; 0.5 acre minimum)
- Fire hazard severity: Humboldt county is vulnerable, we have been lucky in recent years, just a matter of time

Message from Will Harling, Orleans-Somes Bar FSC/Mid-Klamath Watershed Council/Humboldt County FSC Member

[PowerPoint presentation]

- Fire engrained in the region
- Tribal folks are the litmus test, are we doing a good job?
- Showed a number of before and after pictures showing the effects of fire suppression

- Showed a series of maps showing how little land has burned compared to historical level of fire; 100 years of fire suppression + wettest year on record was a terrible combination
- Orleans/Somes FSC is working to get fire on the landscape
- Firewise workdays and outreach
- Prescribed fire is being used as a tool to get ahead of the next wildfire
- Klamath River TREX, began in 2014, has the goal of people/neighbors managing fire → fuels reduction, maintaining fire break
 - 1500 acres burned so far; no escaped fires
- Western Klamath restoration partnership, began in 2007 → local, fed, state, tribal, collaboratively identified planning area; building support at all levels to facilitate restoration
 - 3 projects ongoing, goal of minimizing devastation from wildfire, fire has entered project areas and the work already done helped reduce impacts
- Focusing on Shared Values
- Overlay Assessment: 24 layers including roads, structures, wildlife, ecological resources → shows where efforts need to be focused, where to concentrate resources [map on wall]
- Successes: TREX featured on the news, Salmon River & Orleans Complex fire FB page, Catching Fire (google it), WKRP projects, NEPA on private land
- Currently on a path from conflict to collaboration!
- Tonight's goal is to collect local knowledge to integrate into the CWPP that will guide community actions

Message from Six Rivers National Forest Fuels Planner, Andrew Spain

- Reiterated that WKRP overlay assessment is a great tool
- Implementation Grant to fund WKRP work
- Forest Service all about scaling up their fuels program; NEPA process is a long one
- Program has been scaled up a lot in recent years, accomplishments have increased in kind
- Focus on scaling up and finishing up ongoing projects

Message from Karuk Tribe, Deputy Director of Eco-Cultural Revitalization for the Karuk Tribe, Bill Tripp

- Progress encouraging on getting people on the same page
- Significant investment from BIA in Wildland Hazard Reduction program, mostly fuels reduction
- National Cohesive Wildland Management Strategy; policy is shifting
- Strategic alignment, collaborative engagement, program alignment
- Fire sees no boundaries

Message from Chief of Orleans Volunteer Fire Department, Jesse Meyers

- Recent challenges and accomplishments
- Recruitment and retention and income are the main challenges
- Good crew currently, but can always use more
- New requirements, county wide insurance requirements
- Financial stability and funding
- A lot of fees, up-keep, maintenance, training all cost money; not a lot of income
- More staff could help bring in more income
- Journal article, getting some press
- Lots of EMTs new recruits
- 4th Tuesday of the month, firefighter trainings
- Firewise outreach with schoolchildren
- Painting fire hydrants, blue dots, signage
- TREX went well
- Measure Z half-penny sales tax funding has been helpful → new fire engine this past year; next big thing is the firehouse (1 acre donated by neighbors)
- FEMA grant used toward rescue vehicle

- New funding, new requirements, new challenges
- Defensible space, need access to locked gates, water tanks and proper fittings
- Blue Dot program
- Good time to sweep chimneys
- Future goals: keep OVFD alive and active! District formation, tax toward fire department now that SRA fee is abolished potentially
- If you're available, please sign-up to volunteer with OVFD

Message from Mid-Klamath Watershed Council, Nancy Bailey

- [called attention to accomplishment poster on wall]
- In 2013 when Orleans fire came through town, it was awake up call
- More momentum in the last 5 years
- Firewise funding from county Title III, PGE, volunteer
- Collaboration OVFD, tribe, FSC, USFS very positive
- Nancy is a FLASH technician; FLASH is a program that reimburses landowners for fuels reduction work on their own property
- National recognition for Firewise program

Message from Office of Emergency Services, Emergency Services Manager, Dorie Lanni

- Humboldt Alert: County-wide emergency alert system, <https://humboldt.gov/alerts>
 - Best way for emergency personnel to alert you about emergencies, i.e. evacuation
 - Alerts can be sent to landlines, cellphones (call or text), and email (personal info is confidential)
 - Redundancy is a good thing. Inputting all 3 into the system will ensure you get the message.
 - More efficient than emergency personnel knocking on doors
 - It is geographically targeted, meaning you will only receive alerts relevant to your geographic area
 - System can hold multiple addresses under one account (ex. home, office, child's school)
 - Can be used as a resource for fire dept. to notify community (contact OES directly)
- Household preparedness: in Humboldt we need to plan for at least 2 weeks food/water, have a reunification plan with family in case of downed communication
- Two-tiered evacuation:
 - Voluntary Advisory: Danger is close-by, be prepared to evacuate; leave now if you have pets/livestock, small children, one way in/out from your location
 - Mandatory Evacuation: Danger is imminent, leave immediately
- Tonight's mapping exercise: OES wants to know where one way in/out roads are, potential evacuation shelter sites, interest in Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)

What's on your mind?

- How can I sign up for Humboldt Alert?
 - Our laptops, call OES, sign-up at home
- Community liaison for working on CWPP plan? Suggests having a neighborhood liaison
 - Contact: Nancy or Will
- How to deal with fear of fire and frustration with smoke?
 - TREX participant smoke modeler tracked smoked everyday this summer and was able to show that smoke impacts were the worst in the state but during TREX was 0.02% of smoke during that time → prescribed fire should not be where frustration should be directed
 - Air filters are available to community members
 - Forest & River News magazine article Fire as Friend, Fire as Foe written by Will
- Incentive based program for landowners do work on their land that positively benefits their neighbors, maybe a tax write-off?
- PGE easements through private property
- Use PG&E money to look at their infrastructure
- Seems like there is a zero-tolerance policy for prescribed fire escaping, any potential for that to change? Some

reduction in liability?

- Relationship building component and policy component
- Shared liability is the future but we're not there yet
- CAL FIRE member suggested cleaning up infrastructure and out buildings in addition to your house
- Abuse of fireworks, lack of enforcement
- Roads like Downs Ranch Road (start of rd off Hwy 96) are missing a street sign. How do we get new ones? There are many roads like this.
- 2.5" national hose thread fittings on your tanks
- importance of community liaisons for success of county plans

Mapping Exercise

1. During the mapping exercise, participants worked together in groups according to neighborhood/community to add new information and to update information collected during previous CWPP workshops.

Information to update/add includes:

- Values/Assets at Risk
- Hazards
- Protection Capabilities
- Potential Projects

Participants were asked to identify potential projects by answering the question: What projects would you like to see implemented in your community and Planning Unit over the next 5 years?

2. The following table shows new projects proposed during the workshop.

New Projects
Road collapsing - Red Cap Rd, needs stabilization
Outreach to growers, encourage participation in community
LePerron fuels reduction
Upper Red Cap Creek fuels reduction
Owl Mine, burn jackpots
New fire hall
Lower Red Cap: 2 wooden bridges
Education re: hazards of wooden fences
Snow downs a regional issue, high fuel build up after heavy winter
Fuels reduction, Create buffers between USFS and Private land
Systematic fuels reduction at Tishanik
Harden home and support prescribed burns: Gold Dredge Area
Harden home and support prescribed burns: Camp Creek Area
Burn jackpots in winter (NEPA use moisture gradients)
FS winter time chews crews

Wrap Up and Next Steps

Thank you for your participation and input! Information gathered this evening will be reviewed, refined, identified, prioritized, and reflected in the Mid-Klamath Planning Unit Action Plan and will inform the broader focus of the Humboldt County Wildfire Protection Plan.

Project Details: Summary Table and Web GIS

Visit Humboldt County's GIS portal to view an interactive map with more detailed information on completed and proposed projects; community-identified hazards, values/assets at risk, and protection capabilities; fire history, severity, and much more: https://webgis.co.humboldt.ca.us/HCEGIS2.4_CWPP. To easily view a specific project, enter the Project ID number into the Search Tool in the top left corner of the webpage.

A Web GIS User Guide is available here: <https://humboldt.gov.org/DocumentCenter/View/56189>.