

Mariposa County Fire Advisory Committee
Special Meeting
January 4th, 2024

1. Roll Call – Secretary

John Patton, Melinda Barrett, Tara Fouch-Moore, Mike Keyser, Raquel Sandoval, Wes Smith, Lacey Sharp, Russ Marks, Alison Deak, Will Fassett, Christina Decko, Barbara Cone, Danette Toso

2. Approval of Minutes: November 15, 2023

Motion by Russ Marks, Seconded by Tara Fouch-Moore, Approved unanimously

3. Public Comments

None

4. Regular Agenda: Discussion and Possible Action/Recommendations

a. CWPP update and recommendation to take to board – John Patton

The 38 WUI communities in the CWPP have been updated to 23 “Planning Units.” These will be used to mobilize community members to complete assessments on a regular basis for each geographic planning unit and to develop recommended plans of action. This change resulted in updates to the CWPP data sheets for each of the individual planning units. Table 9 has also been updated to be a living document located online that can be updated periodically.

John will update also update Table 9 to include language that changes to specific components which don't affect the content and the planning direction of the CWPP will not require board approval.

Motion by Barbara Cone to take updated CWPP to the board for discussion and direction, and next steps deemed appropriate, Seconded by Russ Marks, Approved Unanimously

b. Letters of Support Recommendation for Fire Safe Council Grant – Barbara

The Mariposa Fire Safe Council is seeking support from MCFAC for a letter of support from the Mariposa County Board of Supervisors for two Cal Fire Wildfire Prevention Grants funding the Fremont Fuels Reduction and Lushmeadows Ladder Fuels Phase Two projects.

Motion by Russ Marks, Seconded by Alison Deak, Approved Unanimously

c. Letters of Support Recommendation for Resource Conservation District Grant – Melinda

Mariposa RCD has already received a letter of support from the Board and is seeking support from MCFAC for Phase 4 of Southern Sierra Restoration All Lands Restoration and Recovery project for a CAL FIRE CCI grant.

Motion by Russ Marks, Seconded by Tara Fouch-Moore, Approved Unanimously

d. Annual nomination for Committee Officer Positions – Ward

Discussion tabled until regular January MCFAC meeting.

5. Updates, Activity Reports, and Future Agenda Items

Russ Marks: Castle Crew has done a great job on Greeley Hill Road and have heard mostly positive comments in Lushmeadows, with the exception of negative comments about removing manzanita. Next Tuesday, expecting board to sign and authorize the notice to proceed in the contract for construction of the FEMA tanks. A contractor has been selected.

Barbara Cone: Fire Safe Council received two contracts from CAL FIRE for Bumguardner and Lushmeadows, but not for storm damage. Also received two checks for brush and chip program and for Mt. Bullion fuel break. Applying for two Cal Fire grants and closing out two grants. Completed final site visit with SNC on Wagoner Ridge. The Fire Safe Council board has approved giving chipper to SSMN hand crew.

Lacey Sharp: Happy goat completed projects on 22 properties for a total of 162 acres treated in 2023. Working to start Firewise community on Triangle Road.

Wes Smith: Raquel writing grant to update local hazard mitigation plan and will take one year to get approved and 16 months to complete. Grant will not require match. All MCFAC members can contribute to identifying hazards and mitigation. CAL OES has announced they will cross walk emergency plan updates and will help small counties with a contractor for updates. Still waiting to hear back about grant to do hillside mitigation project through FEMA funding. Now has control of county-portion of Mariposa County OES website and they will begin implementing a county preparedness meeting schedule covering local hazards starting March 1st.

Mike Keyser: Castle crew has completed work in Lushmeadows and did about 680 acres of fuel reduction along Guadalupe Fire Road from old highway to BJs ranch.

Tara Fouch-Moore: SSMN has hired six experienced tribal members for hand crew to complete Sierra Priest project but ran into bureaucratic issues on their first day that the tribe needs to work with BIA to resolve. The project is on hold indefinitely. In the meantime, SSMN has taken an emergency project in Sonora and the crew is available for hire until the Sierra Priest Project resumes. The tribe is also applying for a landback opportunity on

Hennes Ridge adjacent to Yosemite West and to complete restoration projects on the property. They require support from Yosemite, neighboring tribes, and the county. They would also like support from MCFAC for board approval.

Melinda Barrett: Mariposa RCD will have completed the large landscape grant in two months and will be doing final site visit with Cal Fire. The office of the State Fire Marshal is offering a new training program for home hardening. Course is open to everyone and Melinda and contractors will be completing the course. Melinda will send information out to the group.

John Patton: RFFCP update – went through the process for SNC and they were encouraging to send pipeline component for Hwy 49 fuel reduction as well as for capacity building. There has been some back and forth and they want funding for both projects to be awarded to a single entity. John has proposed that the two projects be separate and may not pursue if they require the county to be the funded entity but will still plan to apply for the capacity piece through the RFFCP.

Alison Deak: PBA completed a learn and burn workshop at the beginning of December and are hoping to complete two additional burns in January based on burn windows in Madera County. Other projects have been planned and permitted for Mariposa County. County has been awarded an Americorps crew and UCCE is working with Mariposa County and Fire Safe Council for the Americorps crew to complete an additional 100 feet of defensible space clearance for residents that have participated in the brush and chip program. UCCE still waiting for Cal Fire funding. Will begin hiring a 0.5 FTE Southern Sierra Prescribed Fire Council Coordinator hopefully in the next month.

Christina Decko: Cal Trans has hired a new contractor that will be going out to do fuels reduction. Planning to work in Mariposa County during last quarter of 2024.

Danette Toso: Requested that if she can help anybody with anything, to please reach out.

6. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn Tara, Seconded by Lacey, Approved Unanimously.