

November 15, 2012 Lincoln County FireSafe Council Meeting Minutes

Attendees; Ed Levert, Lincoln Co. ; Dawain Burgess, TFF RFD; Lisa Osborn, Forest Service; Katie Andreessen, Forest Service; Steve Lauer, Libby RFD; Mark Peck and Doug Turman, DNRC; Matt Bowser, Yaak Valley Forest Council; Bruce Vincent, Provider Pals, Kirby Maki, Libby Supt. of Schools.

Round Robin:

Lauer- Steve has been doing fire prevention educational activities, training, completing FireWise assessments and working on grants.

Osborn- Lisa said that the FireWise trailer is actually being built and should be ready in 6-8 weeks. The trailer rep had been hunting for 4 weeks and nothing was happening. She says we can start to do the finish work when we get it back, including gathering pictures of fuel reduction projects. She recently attended the Northern Rockies Fire Prevention Meeting and the Montana FireSafe Council is considering having one of the three Statewide conventions in Libby. The proposed theme would focus on all aspects of fire insurance.

Peck- Mark discussed many of the asbestos issues the DNRC is working on including the OU-3 report due out the end of the year and the planned logging study in Flower Creek using Stoltze Lumber Co.'s debarker. He felt there were too many asbestos issues affecting different agencies and we needed a coordinated pro-active approach from all affected agencies. Mark had suggested that some of us meet with the commissioners and voice our concern. Bruce said he would talk with Chas and see what he can do to address this problem. Mark suggested Chas visit with Shawn Thomas from the DNRC.

Maki- Kirby gave us a summary of the successful Libby Legacy Committee nine part lecture series. 75-80 in attendance for lectures and 23 teachers involved. Kirby felt that FireWise and related natural resource subjects could be incorporated into a lecture presentation. Our FireSafe Council Education Committee will address this possibility on December 9 at a 9-12 AM meeting at the Venture Inn.

He went on to explain the loss of school enrollment and resulting funding, the proposed mill levy and possible savings.

Burgess- All of TFS radios are now narrow band after Vic White passed out the new radios to all of the fire departments attending the Fire Coop meeting on October 30. TFS has a new Cascade system and container station. A fire at a home up Edna Creek resulted in a total loss partly because access was complicated by icy roads. They had their annual board meeting last Tuesday, but were unable to come up with a quorum.

Vincent- Bruce had nothing to report until our Education Committee agenda topic.

Levert- I discussed efforts to line up fuel treatments through logging in Skidale, Cedar Street private parcels and the county property at Edgewater. I am getting help from foresters working for the Flathead Economic Policy Center (FEPC) in Columbia Falls. I went on to discuss the two cost share grants Lincoln County received, which are now officially approved for distribution. We have not made any official announcement of these grants as I have hopes that we might be able to work out some larger “landscape” level fuel reduction projects first. I have a tentative meeting set with Stimson Lumber, which could affect those grants in the Troy/Lake Creek areas. I feel we will be able to work with many individual homeowners with the Libby grant, but those decisions will need to be addressed by FEPC and Lincoln County.

I handed out the draft revised Lincoln County CWPP. The draft will be reviewed by the county planning board on November 27 and if recommended will be brought to the commissioners for final approval. I attended the Fire Coop meeting in Eureka on October 30.

Bowser- Matt gave a positive review of the Kootenai Stakeholder Coalition’s Skidale fuel reduction proposal. He toured the area with myself and Brian Hobday of Stoltze Land & Lumber. He went on to say he had looked at the West Kootenai WMA with Tim Their. FWP’s is relocating a road before beginning their fuel reduction project on this property.

Turman- Doug’s IC team was out for 44 days this summer. Most of their fire crews were in Eastern Montana this summer. Doug discussed some of the new I Pad apps that had been developed for mapping.

Andreessen- This is Katie’s last week of work for the year. She went through her fire prevention work including the CARD Clinic open house. She discussed the district fire crew’s assignment to a fire on the Plumas NF this summer, where they demonstrated their personal protective gear designed for working in the OU3. The Plumas fire area also had naturally occurring asbestos.

Old Business

FireWise Trailer- See above

Assessments- 120 completed at a cost of \$9,550. Steve said that the assessments have been a real help by allowing the fire department to make some money, but mostly to become better acquainted with the fire risk and home layout. I mentioned the benefits derived in getting cost share participation from homeowners following assessments.

Advertising- We all thought the large FireWise ads were beneficial by continually raising the subject to homeowners. Bruce suggested we do a large ad once we decide to open up the cost share grant program.

Web-Site- The web-site seems to be working well. Lisa and I told the group how responsive Dennis was. I mentioned that we will be putting information on the web-site about the cost share grants. Bruce thought we could direct folks to the web-site when we ran the large advertisements.

Calendar- Katie showed us what the calendar cover would look like and described the calendar.

Raven Summer Camps- Bruce was very enthusiastic about the success of last summer's camps. He passed around thank you cards and letters from the teachers who attended. He said he had sponsorship from John Deere, Caterpillar and several other organizations.

New Business

Outdoor Burning Restrictions- Kendra Lind was sick and unable to attend, but we did have a good discussion on this subject. I mentioned Bill Swope's and my conversation with Kendra regarding burning potential logging slash piles in Libby. According to Kendra, this could be done by having good dry piles, possibly by covering. She also pointed out that fuel reduction projects come under Management Burning restrictions that allow you to burn up to October 31 as long as dispersion conditions allow.

Mark gave us details of Kurt Spencer's air curtain trench burner. The DNRC wants to try in on slash piles on the Farm to Market Rd and Crazyman. Mark also talked about possibly purchasing the air curtain bin burner that animal control in Kalispell would like to get rid of.

Evacuation/Safety Zones- I explained that I brought up this subject at the last fire coop meeting. Kirk Kraft, Vic White and myself were directed to come up with some general guidelines. I expressed my concern that we don't get into the suppression end of the subject, but stick to the need for fuel reduction projects along roads once the routes are identified. There was general agreement that the entire subject needed to be addressed by all parties.

I discussed the information that Pat McKelvey had sent over from the Tri County group. Sonny Stiger had listed some basic guidelines that would seem to fit our needs here such as one way or two way access, traffic amount, etc. Mark said he was going to talk to Roby Bowe about the need for evacuation routes. Mark suggested that we should have Kristin Smith present when we meet as he felt that she could help with mapping, etc. Dwain thought that the deputys could easily identify critical routes. I suggested that the fire departments need to be very much involved.

Next Meeting- December 20 at 9AM

Ed Levert, Chair

