



SUMMIT COUNTY WILDFIRE COUNCIL

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Minutes

SUMMIT COUNTY WILDFIRE COUNCIL MODIFIED TIME and LOCATION

Thursday, February 17, 2022

1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Location: Summit County South Branch Library (Breckenridge),
Downstairs in the expanded Hopeful Discovery room

Attendees: Brad Piehl, Teague Holmes, Michelle Eddy, Christian Nelson, Don Reimer, Ashley Garrison, Aaron Byrne, Jordan Mead, Terry Startzel, Joel Dixon, Ken Wiegand, Jim Keating, Kyle Iseninger, Travis Davis, Jim Lee, Steve Lipsher, Lisa Lewis, Eric Nichols, Ben Pleimann, Kat Grey, Eric White, Ryan Hughes, Adam Bianchi, Caitlin Jacobshagen, Barbara Marcus, Ashley Smith, Dan Schroder

1:00-1:05 Welcome

Dan Schroder opened the meeting. Round robin of attendee and affiliation.

1:05-1:10 Approval of Agenda and Approval of November 18, 2021 Minutes

Dan requested approval of meeting minutes. Steve Lipsher moved to approve. Seconded by Lisa Lewis, approved by voice vote.

1:10-1:25 SCWC November 18, 2021 Charrette Outcomes

Dan briefly summarized Charrette Outcomes, Terry Startzel commented on Parcel A in The Alders, Keystone as an area work could be done. Lisa Lewis commented on work potential in Ruby Ranch. Jim Jones commented on County Right Of Way work that can be done in Frisco. Brad Piehl commented on potential funding resources approved through the federal infrastructure bill. Travis spoke about a five year all hazard response plan. Adam shared about ongoing forest projects. Ashley referred to state money allocated to RMRI. If any funds remain, CSFS could use it for project planning.

1:25-1:40 Summit Fire & EMS presentation (Chief Travis Davis)

Chief Davis presented the initiative by Summit Fire and EMS to create a dedicated wildfire team. Under a five year plan SFEMS will hire 4 FTEs and a seasonal fuels mod. New hires/positions include Wildfire Coordinator, Operations Specialist, Risk Management Specialist, and a Fuels Specialist. Admin and Ops FTE will go on deployment on out of county fires. The staff will provide more service with partners. There is currently SFEMS budget for this, would like to eventually share costs with the county. Eventually there will be 7 day staffing, and they will support mitigation and suppression work. A wildland Module is a future goal. 2023 will add equipment and 2024 will add seasonal staff. A question about local response was covered when it was said that Summit County is the first priority.

1:40-2:10 USFS proposed project discussion (Kat Grey & Adam Bianchi)

District Ranger Adam Bianchi and Fuels Planner Kat Grey presented on a planned prescribed fire. The public shooting range has had three wildfires in the last three years started by shooting tracer

rounds. The Shooting Range broadcast burn is a 43 acre burn on the hillside behind the range. The objectives of the burn is to remove fuels under controlled conditions to prevent wildfires and create a permanent dozer line behind the range. This burn will be part of a regular prescribed burn program. There will be lots of prework before the burn is implemented. The project goes through the NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) planning process to look at potential environmental impacts and benefits. A qualified burn boss will do a risk assessment, create a comprehensive burn plan that includes communication and public education and outreach, and partnerships with county and local partners. The project will add another management tool to the manager's toolbox for fuels reduction. There is a public meeting scheduled for May 10th, from 4-5pm. Those interested in attending should meet at the Dillon Ranger District. The project scope will be open for public comment until May 18th.

2:10-2:25 Sign Project discussion (Lisa Lewis)

Lisa Lewis presented on the challenge for posting signs in Summit County. She shared that the Grand County Wildfire Council has reflective signage available at no cost to residents. The Summit County building code does not match well with CWPP recommendations. Codes are often the minimum standard. There are not published evacuation plans. Ruby Ranch is considering posting evacuation routes on the egress side of signs in Ruby Ranch. Visitors may not know how to best evacuate if there is an emergency, and may not know where to go. The fire depts. have had sign programs in the past. There is no current program in place.

This prompted a discussion with Fire Dept. member about how evacuation planning is very event dependent. Emergency managers evacuate residents in as orderly manner as possible and in zones related to the incident location and severity.

2:25- 2:45 2022 Field Trip discussion

Ashley Garrison and Dan Schroder led a discussion about having wildfire council field trips to look at past project locations and future project plans. A planning subcommittee will be formed to plan some field trips for 2022. Suggested locations include: Distillery forestry project, Ruby Ranch- Lisa Lewis volunteered to host a WC meeting, Barney Ford Project, Prescribed burns in Eagle County, Grand Lake/East Troublesome Fire footprint, footprints of past county wildfires, Silver Summit Ranch, Statewide resources (tanker base, dispatch, fire staff/engines/crews etc.). There is potential to invite the public, Forest Health Task Force, Friends of Dillon Ranger District.

2:45-2:50 2021 Forest Service Chief's Honor Awards

Summit County Forest Health and Fuels Cooperative Receives Chief's Award

Ceremony Recognizes Employees for Outstanding Contributions

Contact: [Nicole Valentine](#), Director of Communications, Summit County Government

SUMMIT COUNTY – The Summit County Forest Health and Fuels Cooperative Agreement team was honored along with the Colorado Fourteeners Program, as recipients of the 2021 Chief's Awards, the USDA Forest Service's highest award. The virtual ceremony, held on Jan. 13, recognized employees who made outstanding contributions in 2021 to the agency's mission and the communities served.

The Chief's Awards celebrate the accomplishments of individuals as well as partnerships throughout the United States who excel at meeting one of the agency's four strategic goals: sustaining the nation's forests and grasslands, delivering benefits to the public, applying knowledge globally, and excelling as a high-performing agency.

“We are thrilled to accept the Chief’s Honor Award on behalf of the Dillon Ranger District and Summit County Fuels Reduction Cooperative,” said Summit County Commissioner Elisabeth Lawrence. “We embraced the shared stewardship approach to reduce hazardous fuels conditions in the community, forming an extremely successful partnership between Summit County Government, U.S. Forest Service, Colorado State Forest Service, Denver Water, and the Nature Conservancy with our shared goal of addressing forest health concerns. We are proud to receive this recognition of our substantial efforts.”

The Dillon Ranger District was severely impacted by the Mountain Pine Beetle epidemic, resulting in high levels of tree mortality and hazardous fuels. The Summit County Forest Health and Fuels Cooperative Agreement was formed to address the needed fuels reduction work. The partnership included the Colorado State Forest Service, Denver Water, Summit County Government, The Nature Conservancy, and many other friends of the Dillon Ranger District. Together, they began work with Denver Water’s “From Forests to Faucets” program. Since then, the district has received nearly \$6 million dollars from Denver Water to improve forest conditions. Additionally, a mill levy that was approved in 2019 will provide \$1 million annually, through 2028, for multi-jurisdictional wildfire mitigation efforts. Numerous fuels treatments have been accomplished to better protect communities and cultural and natural resources from catastrophic wildfires. This collaborative effort is a model for community-based forest health and watershed management in Colorado and throughout the West.

Team members of the Summit County Forest Health and Fuels Cooperative Agreement include Zach Wehr, Elisabeth Lawrence, Christina Burri, Catherine Schloegel, Adam Bianchi, Bill Jackson, Cary Green, Kathleen Gray, Clark Woolley, Scott Fitzwilliams, Lathan Johnson, Dan Schroder, Jim Curnutte, Ashley Garrison, Bill Wolf, and Ryan McNertney. Program partners include the Colorado State Forest Service, Summit County Board of County Commissioners, Denver Water, The Nature Conservancy, Upper Colorado River Interagency Fire and Aviation Management Unit, Colorado State University Extension, and Summit County Government.

“Embracing shared stewardship and an all-lands approach, the Colorado State Forest Service, U.S. Forest Service, Summit County Government, Denver Water and The Nature Conservancy are addressing critical management work across all lands to keep our communities and forests healthy and resilient,” said Zach Wehr, supervisory forester with the Colorado State Forest Service.

"This collaborative effort is a model and blueprint for community-based forest health and watershed management in Colorado and the West," said Adam Bianchi, District Ranger, White River National Forest, Dillon Ranger District. “We are thrilled that this work is being recognized through the Chief's Honor Award, and we look forward to continuing to improve the health and resiliency of our forests in the future."

<https://www.summitcountyco.gov/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=883>

2:50-3:00 Legislative Updates ~ Wildfire Council Members and Partners Updates

- The HFR and CWPP Grant Program pre-applications are available through March on the county website. Full applications are due at the end of April. The Council will review and make recommendations at the May meeting.

- The Town of Frisco is pursuing the NEPA analysis on the Backyard Project. They received 4 proposals and expect the NEPA to take about 4 months to complete.
- USFS Projects- White Cloud is completed. Pile burning has been limited due to too much snow, fire staff hope to ramp up as the snow melts. The Ruby Ranch/Eagles Nest Wilderness project planning is ongoing.
- Summit Fire and EMS is hosting an Wildfire Preparedness and Education Open House on Saturday May 21st. All WC is invited to attend and spread the word in your community.
- Summit County welcomed Steve Greer as the new Community Development Director.

3:00 Adjournment

Dan Schroder adjourned the meeting at 3:00 pm.