

**Summit County Wildfire Council
Meeting Minutes
September 17, 2020
1:30 – 3:30 p.m.
Via Zoom Meeting**

Attendees: John Drake, Steve Lipsher, Elisabeth Lawrence, Ashley Garrison, Rick Ihnken, Catherine Schloegel, Brad Piehl, Jim Curnutte, Dan Schroder, Beth Huron, Kat Gray, Jim Cox, Ken Wiegand, Madelene McDonald, Kate Zander, Drew Hoehn, Andy Held, Gilly Plog, Adam Poe, Jordan Mead

- I. Introductions:** The Chair opened the meeting at 1:32 p.m. and each participant briefly introduced themselves.
- II. Approval of June 18, 2020 Minutes:** Jim Cox moved to approve the June 18, 2020 minutes. Elisabeth Lawrence seconded the motion and the council approved the minutes without changes.
- III. 2019 Grant Program Update and Discussion:**
 - Completed Hazardous Fuels Reduction (HFR) Projects: Woods at Breckenridge HOA, Woods at Breckenridge Open Space, Willow Brook Metro District, Summit Guest Ranch, Airport Road/Downen property, Pebble Creek Ranch
 - HFR Projects not yet completed: Shadow Creek Ranch, Grandview at Breckenridge Condos, Town of Blue River and Breckenridge HFR
 - Completed Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) Projects: Town of Blue River
 - CWPP Projects completed but not finalized: Bill's Ranch Signage, Willow Brook Metro District Fire Hydrants
 - CWPP Projects not yet completed: Forest Health Task Force Wildfire Preparedness Video Series, Buffalo Mountain Metro District D-Space, Indiana Creek Aquatic Organism Passage
- IV. 2020 Chipping Program Updates and Discussion:** Approximately 1,907 homes have participated this year, with three weeks left in the 2020 program. This year's participation is comparable to that of previous years, which reflects that the community still values the service and wants to participate. The chipping program aims to keep the wildfire issue at the top of people's minds, and gives them the opportunity to contribute to community protection by conducting wildfire mitigation on their own property. When interacting with homeowners, Kate and Dan have focused on public education about the program and wildfire mitigation in general. The county will need to work with the towns to make sure residents are receiving consistent, correct information in future years. Elisabeth suggested including information about mistletoe affected trees in our education efforts.

V. Current Project Status (Distillery, Wellington, Peak 7, et. cetera) and Strong Future Fund (SFF) Update: (See Exhibit A, p.1)

- The Peak 7 “Distillery” project started 2019 and should finish by November.
- The Wellington project, which will treat 100 acres of joint ownership land, will most likely start soon and finish in 2021.
- The Mesa Cortina pile burn contract will be awarded in the next couple of weeks, with work anticipated for this fall/winter. Staff plan to do education and outreach in advance of the pile burning.
- The USFS Peak 7 project will go out to bid on October 1, with the expectation that work will start and finish in 2021. The project will treat approximately 96 acres to create a fuel break around the backside of Peak 7. USFS will pay \$78,000 toward the project, with assistance from Denver Water Forests to Faucets.
- \$83,163 of SFF funds money were allocated to cover the cost of 2020 wildfire grants that exceeded funds available from the 2010 Fund.
- The Upper Blue Community Fuels Reduction project will treat approximately 50 acres of private lands on Peak 7. The project will include a cost share through Forests to Faucets II (\$75,000) and landowners (\$37,500), with \$37,500 coming from SFF.
- \$50,000 is encumbered for completion of the chipping program and hauling chips away, but we should see money back from the sale of chips to Climax.

A brief discussion followed: Conversations between Peak 7 neighbors and agency representatives (county, CSFS, USFS) went well. The neighbors had concerns based on misinformation, highlighting the need for education and community outreach prior to conducting complex forestry projects.

VI. 2021 Strong Future Fund Advisory Committee Update and Discussion: The SFF advisory committee met recently to discuss potential future projects. In spite of an anticipated decline in revenues from property taxes, the Strong Future fund will have approximately \$1.2 million available for wildfire projects in 2021. Potential projects include (See Exhibit A, p.2):

- USFS “White Cloud”, 120 acres – staff is requesting \$300,000 from SFF.
- Upper Blue Basin Community Fuels Reduction (Continuation of treatment of private lands adjacent to USFS treatment areas) - project will be a cost share with landowners, SFF and potential funding from Forest to Faucets II. Staff is requesting \$75,000 from SFF for a 50/50 cost share.
- Open Space and Trails - three projects:
 - Wellington pile burning to complete the Wellington HFR project - \$75,000
 - Peabody Placer, 45 acres - \$135,000
 - Settler’s Creek, 16 acres, may have RMYC help with project - \$31,350. Open Space staff have submitted a grant request to GOCO for \$29,100, but is requesting the total amount in case the county doesn’t receive the grant.

- Town of Frisco Ten Mile Water Treatment Plant Fuels Reduction - \$50,000
- Forest Health Task Force Carbon Storage Project (will support the Summit County Sustainability Plan): FHTF is looking for a consultant to evaluate carbon fluxes and their long-term impacts on forests when we conduct fuels treatments, and is requesting \$10,000 from SFF. Brief discussion followed on similar projects and potential for alternative sources of funding.
- Jim Curnutte suggested that staff reconvene a subcommittee to develop a new “Get it Done” list to identify projects to support the Community Wildfire Protection Plan. Dan will send out an email soon to see who would be interested in being on that subcommittee.

VII. Legislative Updates: Elisabeth stated that we can expect to see further cuts in the state budget. There will be more information to come on federal legislation that could help with forestry efforts.

VIII. Wildfire Council Members and Partners Updates:

- Summit Fire & EMS – no updates at present.
- Red, White & Blue Fire - Matt Benedict is on fire assignment and couldn't attend the meeting, but wished to share a message stressing the importance of conducting fuels reduction work in Summit County: The Williams Fork fire is the second fuels based fire Matt has gone to this year. The better we do at addressing fuels, the better off we'll be in the future.
- Copper Mountain residents will vote on a ballot measure this fall that will allow them to join Summit Fire & EMS.
- The county will work to clarify technical issues that will affect backyard fire permit regulations in the future.
- The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is working with local partners to study the potential of aspen as a natural firebreak. TNC is working with Summit County Open Space & Trails and the Town of Breckenridge to establish an experimental plot of aspen seedlings in the Barney Ford area, as well as monitoring plots in the Wellington area. TNC is also looking at fires across the west to gain a better understanding of how aspen affect fires. The big question is how to manage cleared areas, and how we work to address our changing climate.
- USFS hopes to resume burning slash piles this fall and winter. There is currently a backlog of piles due to a moratorium on burning piles last spring (due to coronavirus concerns).
- Forest Health Task Force volunteers recently worked with the Dillon Ranger District and Friends of the Dillon Ranger District on a thinning project at a USFS campground, using loppers to reduce the density of young lodgepole by 50%.

IX. Adjournment: The Chair adjourned the meeting at 2:56 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Beth Huron, Summit County Community Development

2021 Strong Future Funds Budget Request- 20200914

2020 Allocations for 2010 fund and Strong Future Fund:

2010 Fund (2020 Year)

Total Budget - \$500,000

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|--|-----------|
| 1) Emergency Fire Fund | \$27,754 |
| 2) Salary Reimbursement to Extension | \$64,745 |
| 3) Chipper Program | \$127,500 |
| 4) Hazardous Fuels Reduction & CWPP Grants | \$260,001 |
| 5) Education | \$20,000 |

Total 2010 Funds Spent in 2020	\$500,000
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<u>2020 Strong Future Fund (2020 Year)</u>		Total Budget \$1,050,879*
1) USFS – Fuels Reduction and Administration (multi-year) Collection Agreement 20190111		\$216,000
<i>USFS Fuels Planner- 2020</i>	\$50,000.00	
<i>USFS Fuels Mitigation Crew- 2020</i>	\$100,000.00	
<i>Fuels Reduction Implementation and Administration- CSFS/USFS GNA to admin projects including USFS funded and SC funded</i>	\$66,000.00	
2) USFS - Fire Watch Crews (multi-year) *Recreation Crew		\$135,000
3) Sheriff's Office – Fire Watch Crews (multi-year)		\$25,000
4) CSFS – Forestry Assistance (multi-year)- <i>County, Town, & private lands focused</i>		\$80,000
5) Wildfire Campaign Education & Marketing (multi-year)		\$25,000
6) Open Space Projects		\$95,326
<i>Wellington 45 acres, Total cost \$72,989. DW F2FI cost share 50% *Contract Awarded 2020</i>	\$36,494	
<i>Mesa Cortina Pile Burning 450 piles, \$33,622 low cost, not to exceed \$58,832 *Contract Awarded 2020</i>	\$58,832	
<i>Total Allocated SFF2020</i>	\$95,326	
7) USFS Peak 7, 96 acres @2500/acre, \$240,000 <i>Denver Water Forests to Faucets (USFS) cost share \$78,000 *expected contract date October 2020</i>		\$162,000
8) Wildfire & CWPP Grants (in excess of 2010 fund allocation)		\$83,163
9) Upper Blue Basin Community Fuels Reduction <i>Peak 7 Private lands, 50 acres, Cost share with Forests to Faucets II (\$75,000) and landowners (\$37,500)</i>		\$37,500
10) Additional Funding for Chipping Program <i>Encumbered by NTE contract with Chipper, Expect by October 2020</i>		\$50,000
Total Strong Future Funds Committed in 2020		\$908,989
Total Remaining to Carry Over to 2021		\$141,890.00

* Approximately \$50,000 is allocated to the Treasurer's office per statutory requirements, includes 2019 rollover.

2010 Fund (2021 Year)

Total Budget - \$394,087

- 1) Emergency Fire Fund \$27,754
- 2) Salary Reimbursement to Extension \$64,745
- 3) Chipper Program \$150,000
- 4) Hazardous Fuels Reduction & CWPP Grants \$131,588
- 5) Education \$20,000

Total 2010 Funds in 2021 \$394,087

Strong Future Fund: We have \$1,081,103.00 in the budget for 2020 after treasurer's fees, and expect to have approximately \$141,890.00 remaining from 2020 for a total of approximately \$1,222,993.00. We have allocated \$475,200.00 for multi-year projects. The total remaining is \$747,793.00.

Summary: Strong Future Funds – Potential Projects for 2021

<u>2021 SFF</u>	<u>Total Project Cost</u>	<u>SFF Funding Request</u>
Multi- Year Allocations		
1) USFS – Fuels Reduction and Administration (multi-year) Collection Agreement 20190111	\$210,200	\$210,200
USFS Fuels Planner- 2021	\$50,000.00	
USFS Fuels Mitigation Crew- 2021	\$95,000.00	
Fuels Reduction Implementation and Administration- CSFS/USFS GNA to admin projects including USFS funded and SC funded	\$32,000.00 \$33,200.00	
2) USFS - Fire Watch Crews (multi-year) *Recreation Crew	\$135,000	\$135,000
3) Sheriff's Office – Fire Watch Crews (multi-year)	\$25,000	\$25,000
4) CSFS – Forestry Assistance (multi-year)- County, Town, & private lands focused	\$80,000	\$80,000
5) Wildfire Campaign Education & Marketing (multi-year)	\$25,000	\$25,000
Total		\$475,200.00
Calendar Year Allocation		
1) USFS Unit 122, a. 120 Acres @\$2,500/acre, 'White Cloud'	\$300,000	\$300,000
2) Upper Blue Basin Community Fuels Reduction (3 year allocation-200k total) a. Peak 7 and White Cloud Neighborhoods, 50 acres @ \$3,000/acre, Year 2. Cost share 50% with Landowners, potential for F2FII cost share (Split LO allocation to 25% LO, 25% F2FII)	\$150,000	\$75,000
3) Summit County Open Space & Trails a. Wellington Piles- \$75,000 based on 2020 bids b. Peabody Placer- \$135,000 for 45 acres @ \$3,000/acre c. Rocky Mountain Youth Corps, Settlers Creek Keystone, 16 acres- \$31,350 for 3 wks (applying for Cost Share through RMYC)	\$241,350	\$241,350
Sub-Total of Calendar Year Project Requests		\$616,350
Other potential Projects:		
• HFR Grant Overage- Based on difference of 2019 and 2020 requests.	\$125,000	\$125,000
• Town of Frisco 10 Mile Water Treatment Plant Fuels Reduction	\$100,000	\$50,000
• FHTF Carbon Storage Study for Sustainability Plan	\$20,000	\$10,000
Total Potential Project Requests		\$793,860
Total Projected Available for 2021 Projects		\$747,793
Total		\$1,311,560.00