

Contra Costa County Community Wildfire Protection Plan Update Summary Working Session #2 – July 17, 2019

I. **Introduction.** Ms. McDonough welcomed the group and attendees introduced themselves.

- Lisa Anich, Contra Costa County Resource Conservation District
- Judi Clark, Martinez CERT
- Nancy Dollard, City of Walnut Creek Open Space
- Bryan Giambone, Cal Fire Sunshine Station Clayton
- Barbara Goldenberg, DFSC Board
- Meredith Hendricks, Save Mt Diablo
- Larry Jones, Orindawoods
- Jerry Kent, Claremont Canyon Conservancy, Sierra Club, Regional Parks Association
- Kitty Lenhart, UC Master Gardner Class of 2019
- Roxana Lucero, Save Mt Diablo
- Ross Macumber, East Contra Costa Fire Protection District
- Cheryl Miller, Executive Coordinator DFSC
- Larry Nagel, Kensington Fire Protection District Board
- Dennis Rein, Moraga Orinda Fire District
- Cary Richardson, Contra Costa Water District
- Lawrence Nunes, Briones, DFSC Board
- Rebecca Pollon, Rossmoor
- Jill Ray, Office of Supervisor Candace Andersen (Board of Supervisors District 2)
- Maria Summersett, Walnut Creek Open Space
- Susanna Thompson, Office of Supervisor Diane Burgis
- Hedwig Vanden Broek, UC Master Gardner Class of 2019
- Marta Van Loan, Martinez CERT
- Ben Weise, Contra Costa County Resource Conservation District
- Kathy Woofter, Contra Costa Fire Protection District

2. What is a CWPP & Why Should Contra Costa County's plan be updated

Cheryl Miller, Executive Coordinator, DFSC provided an overview of the existing Contra Costa County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). The document is available for download at <http://www.diablofiresafe.org/publications.html> - CWPP. The document has been critical for grant funding. Since 2009 DFSC and partners in Contra Costa and Alameda Counties has been awarded over \$2.5 of grant funds for activities in the CWPPs.

What is a Community Wildfire Protection Plan?

A CWPP is a written document, mutually agreed upon by local, state and federal representatives and stakeholders, that identifies how a community will reduce its risks from wildland fire. Community Wildfire Protection Plans are authorized and defined in Title I of the Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA), passed by Congress November 21, 2003 and signed into law December 3, 2003. The HFRA established unprecedented incentives for communities to take lead roles in community wildfire protection. Eleven years after the legislation CWPPs continue to shape prevention and fuel reduction.

Ms. Miller provided an overview of the contents of the CWPP:

1. County Information – overview and identification of stakeholder
2. Fire hazard and risk in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI).
3. Prioritized fuel reduction treatments
4. Treatment of structural ignitability

5. Signature page
6. Appendix

In order to be federally recognized the CWPP must be signed by three entities:

1. The applicable local government (i.e., counties or cities)
2. The local fire department(s)
3. The state entity responsible for forest management – CAL FIRE.

There are three minimum requirements that also must be met:

1. Collaboration: A CWPP must be collaboratively developed; involving local and state government representatives, in consultation with federal agencies and other interested parties.
2. Prioritized Fuel Reduction: A CWPP must identify and prioritize areas for hazardous fuel reduction treatments and recommend the types and methods of treatment that will protect one or more at-risk communities and essential infrastructure.
3. Treatment of Structural Ignitability: A CWPP must recommend measures that homeowners and communities can take to reduce the ignitability of structures throughout the area.

Planning Process and Time Frame

Notes from Meeting #1 were available. An “Overview” was provided to the group that identified the 4 step update process, timeframe, key outcomes, results and deliverables:

- Step 1: Kickoff, Convene Decision-makers, Involve Federal Agencies, Engage Interested Parties
- Step 2: Review Existing CWPP and Projects and Priorities Update
- Step 3: Action Plan Update and Assessment Strategy
- Step 4: Plan Update

3. Common Challenges • Shared Solutions

Participants discussed common challenges and built on each other’s ideas. Common challenges (“topics”) were grouped around 10 themes identified in the existing CWPP. Participants then identified by red dots (votes) which topics held the greatest personal interest. Discussion was primed by the following questions:

- *Are we defining the right problems? Fuel loads, awareness, participation, seasonal windows available for work etc.*
- *Is your perception of the problem on the list?*
- *Do we understand all the options and are able to optimize solutions for our specific cases?*
- *What can we learn from others tackling the same problem?*

Topic	Votes
Collaborative Partners	19
• Agency collaboration on regional plan that balances fire and environment and develops best management practices for land management (e.g. current legislation SB38 (Woods) for Regional Planning)	9
• Hospitals and health facilities (for preparedness and response for both earthquake and wildfire ignitions)	1
• Refineries	0
• Sharing of data from lidar imaging (e.g. PG&E and others)	1
• Citizen science (to collect information about hazards)	0
• Changing citizen attitude toward wildfire prevention	0
• Use many solutions to wildfire solutions (versus focus on only 1)	2
• Permitting agency collaboration (esp. related to CEQA requirements)	3
• Changing public expectations and perceptions (esp. related to use of prescribed fire).	1
• School superintendents (both evacuation+ hazards around facilities)	

Risk of Ignitions	6
• Focus on the identifying the causes of ignitions in our area + link to solutions	3
• Railroad tracks	0
• Homeless/ unsheltered (also potential for collaborations with those involved with this issue)	1
Fire Weather	4
• Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS) a new fire weather indicator/ communicator to the public	0
• Wind driven events and hazardous areas	0
• Public understanding of how climate change changes local fire risks	0
Community at Risk Hazards	12
• Evacuation is limited and dangerous in many areas. Need for evacuation plans that evaluate many options e.g. shelter in place, temporary refuge, safe to stay	8
• Early detection/ warning / evacuation. Including: alternative transportation modes (ferries) alternate routes over public lands (e.g. Save Mt. Diablo)	4
• County OES (County Sheriffs office) guide for evacuation planning	0
Defensible Space Program (weed abatement, exterior hazard abatement)	15
• Properties with remote owners or management companies (including mobile homes, rental properties and homeowner associations)	2
• Funding for education, cost share for defensible space projects, outreach, information, home hardening etc.	6
• Education about what defensible space is (Ladder fuels, dry vegetation etc.) and “what should my property look like?”	3
Structure Survivability	2
• Harden home and leave wildland alone versus treat wildlands only debate	0
• Practical retrofit (similar to information provided for earth quake retrofit) – opportunity with recent and new legislation	0
• Fences and outdoor structures (materials, design, encourage breaking connection to home, etc.)	1
• Access, turnaround requirements (PRC 4291 and Title 14 requirements)	1
New and Infill Development	0
• Keeping up with current codes on communities & structures (e.g. 7A codes)	0
Fuel Management (public and private large scale)	19
• Standards for treatments of fuel breaks, open space management etc.	9
• Land use and land management practices	2
• Citizen science for detailed information	0
• Large scale vegetation management (esp. use of prescribed fire)	3
• NPS Mt. Wanda management plan being developed Fall 2019	0
• Permitting agencies as partners	3
• Cattle grazing	2
Protect Facilities and Infrastructure	2
• Limited capacity of access and egress/ transportation	0
Local Preparedness and Firefighting Capabilities	10
• Pre-event evacuation	6
• Reluctance to evacuate	0

Action Plan Framework

The 2014 Update identified six plan priorities set forth in an action framework including:

- Recommendation (refine the idea, elaborate goal)
- Implementation Actions (what and why steps)
- Lead & Partners
- Implementation timeframe (short or long & one-time or on-going)
- Estimated funding or ease of implementation (\$ or \$\$\$\$\$)

The group reviewed the items voted on as priority for the 2019 CWPP Update. Three of the existing plan priorities continue to have high support:

1. Evacuation planning and communication of community at risk hazards focused on local preparedness, early detection, warning and evacuation.
2. Balance fuel load management with biological resource protection (including best management standards for treatments, land use practices, partnering with permitting agencies. This includes projects on public and large private lands.
3. Education and training on structure retrofit (home hardening).

Two additional items received high support for a total of 5 Plan Priorities:

4. Expansion of collaborative partners and sharing of information.
5. Defensible space programs (awareness, education, cost share programs).

Expanding Participation in the Planning Process

The draft community survey and a flyer were distributed. The survey will be released in August and run through September. An email with the link and further information will be sent to everyone on the Contra Costa County CWPP Update mailing list for further distribution. DFSC is also interested in partnering with neighborhoods to explore the formation of Firewise Communities as a part of several of the plan priorities.

Anticipated additional outreach methods for the project will include:

- Email "Updates"
- Information on web-sites
- Presentations
- Media releases
- Community Surveys

Ms. Miler requested stakeholders spread the word to others in their agency or groups, as well as provide contact information for ones that should be added to the group.

Next Meeting

Thursday September 17th 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Topic: Administrative Draft Plan. Preliminary Results from the On-line Survey.

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