

## **Alameda County Community Wildfire Protection Plan Summary Working Session #7 – Final Plan**

1. **Introduction.** Attendees introduced themselves, where they live or work and their perspective, interest or experience with wildfire

- Yeda Altes, Oakland Wildfire Prevention Assessment District
- Gilbert Bendix, Diablo Fire Safe Council
- Barbara Goldenberg, Shepherd Canyon, Friends of Sausal Creek
- Diane Hill, Oakland Wildfire Prevention Assessment District
- Jerry Kent, Claremont Canyon Conservancy
- Cheryl Miller, Diablo Fire Safe Council
- Jean Robertson, California Native Plant Society
- Judy Thomas, Oakland
- Ciara Wood, Diablo Fire Safe Council
- Doug Wong, Oakland Wildfire Prevention Assessment District Advisory Committee

2. **Planning Process Recap - What is a CWPP & Why Should Alameda County Have One**

All participants were familiar with the process. No recap was provided on What is a CWPP.

3. **Comments received on Draft Alameda County CWPP**

The Draft Alameda County CWPP was circulated for public comment from April 4 – May 5, 2012. Eight comment letters/ emails were received and are posted on the DFSC web site [www.diablofiresafe.org/pdf/CommentsonDraftAlcoCWPP0512.pdf](http://www.diablofiresafe.org/pdf/CommentsonDraftAlcoCWPP0512.pdf). A file with redline changes (track changes) was distributed to stakeholders on May 11<sup>th</sup> with changes reflecting those comments. Cheryl Miller provided an overview of revisions incorporated into the Final Draft Plan (dated 5/11/2012). These include:

- Additional information on ecological communities present in Alameda County
- Balancing fuel reduction with resource management; vegetation management and weed management for more sustainable projects.
- Identifying the urbanized area's homes, other buildings and vegetation as part of the fuel hazards.
- Recognizing the East Bay Regional Park analysis of the cause of 1,900 fires over twelve years in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties.
- Recommendations for homeowner risk reduction behaviors
- Recommendations for a variety of outreach tools and tiered level of complexity of educational materials from simple to more detailed and issue specific (for homeowners to professionals such as designers, builders, plan checkers and code officials).
- Including botanical and biological experts in planning and oversight of projects to maximize effectiveness while minimizing negative impacts.
- Additional recommendations priorities related to environmental review, improvement of firefighting response, control and evacuation as well as removal of invasive plants of know high flammability.
- Desire to seek funding for Alameda County supplement for the *Best Management Practices for Fuel Treatments*. Continue to refine BMPs based on environmental documents, adaptive management practices and lessons learned by various stakeholders.
- Further refinements of areas appropriate for fuel management.
- New sections discussing fuel reduction treatments balanced with resource management and environmental review and permitting.
- Additional geographically based fuel reduction projects.
- Additional implementation actions for balancing fuel load management with biological resource protection.

- Recognition that embers can also accumulate at foundation if lower edges of siding is unsealed and need for attention to construction details such as use of flashing.
- Need to establish low fuel “home ignition zone” immediately adjacent to structure.
- Addition that enclosing area below deck as a beneficial retrofit action.
- Addition of East Bay Regional Park District’s role as a project partner in sustaining the plan.
- Recognition of management of Hiller Highlands Phase V for the past 15 years as an example.
- Information on monitoring as a way to better understand extent of resources needed to accomplish and maintain goals

Comments received after final plan submitted for signatures: Additional comment letters/ emails were received after May 11<sup>th</sup> when the final plan had begun the signature process. These comments will be summarized and posted on the web site. The information will be identified as an addendum and formally incorporated in the 2013 update. These comments included:

- Building ignitability factors technical language corrections and further explanations.
- Add non-combustible zone 0-5 feet.
- Additional sources on fire ratings for construction materials.
- Additional sources for vulnerabilities of buildings to wildfire exposures.
- Watershed, creeks and riparian areas- replanting or revegetation may be required in some areas where vegetation is removed to reduce wildfire hazards (+ monitoring period)
- In some cases it may not be legal to remove riparian vegetation - contact SFRWQCB and CDFS to determine if restrictions. May be illegal to remove during some portions of year (e.g. nesting periods) or along banks of fish bearing streams (if habitat for endangered salmoids) or if conservation easements as mitigations for impacts of housing or commercial development.
- Porter Cologne does not apply.
- List of factors that restrict vegetation removal should include conservation easements and permits that mandate conservation easements.
- Weed abatement.

#### 4. Final Steps

Cheryl Miller reported on the final steps for the completion of the plan. On May 16 Fire Chief Ken Blonski, EBRPD and Amber Gardner, DFSC presented the Final Draft at the joint meeting of the Alameda and Contra Costa Fire Chiefs. The Alameda County Fire Department has submitted information for the June 5, 2012 Alameda County Board of Supervisors agenda to recommend sign off on the Alameda County CWPP. Signatures of other Fire Departments and stakeholder groups are on-going. The Final Plan will be posted on the DFSC website and sent electronically to stakeholders.

#### 5. “Grey Box” priorities roundtable update & how stakeholders can continue to participate to implement the plan.

The CWPP includes eight “Priority Action” grey boxes in Sections 3, 4 and 5 with recommendations and implementation actions. A round table discussion of stakeholders provided the following updates and comments:

- Jean Robertson and Cheryl Miller are working with the authors of *East Bay Hills Vegetation Almanac* to post portions of this book on-line and promote its use in the field. This supports two priorities actions: “Regionally specific education materials for homeowners (pg 3.3) and Balancing fuel load management with biological resource protection (pg 4.8).

The grouped brainstormed how stakeholders can continue to participate:

- Contact property managers and homeowners about the plan.

- Develop a simple two-page summary that can be widely distributed. (Miller – see sample from Wood re: realtor newsletter).
- Distribute to emergency preparedness staff (NSD, CERT etc.) can distribute to block captains who will distribute to block captains (Altes -Oakland).
- Notify CERT and neighborhood groups –what they can do about neighborhood projects.
- Link the final plan and summary to other websites.
- Invite someone from fire department to talk with their neighborhood or group (topics could include simple things a homeowner could do to protect their homes – maintenance, under decks).
- Develop newsletter style “blurbs” and send to Mayors’ newsletter, elected officials newsletters, Facebook links, electronic newsletters, PTA, etc.
- Be active in Diablo Fire Safe Council, Oakland Wildfire Prevention Assessment District, or other local group interested in wildfire safety.
- Ask stakeholders how they imagine continuing to participate (Miller to send email blast).
- Consider self publishing plan on Amazon or i-books.
- Develop postcards or “point of purchase” information for libraries, business associations etc.
- Post the 1995 Plan online (Kent to send Miller pdf/ DFSC to post as resource).
- Develop action oriented education material that translates the risk to individual level:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> step: What you can do at home. Dry season/ wet season. What questions to ask.
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> step: Talk to your neighbor on either sided about what you can do together.
- Highlight what you should not do – no trespassing (see neighbor law – Thomas).

## 6. Next Step

May 2013 – Update projects and progress.

For More Information Contact

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