

## **July 21, 2016 Lincoln County FireSafe Council Meeting Minutes**

**Attendees; Ed Levert, Lincoln Co Forester; Dawain Burgess, Trego, Fortine, Stryker RFD; Bill Swope, Flathead Economic Policy Center; Kirk Kraft, Lincoln County EMA/Fisher River FSA; Steve Lauer, Libby RFD; Mike Sanders, Upper Yaak FSA, Lisa Osborn, USFS; Jake Mertes, Lincoln County Environmental Health Dept.**

### **Round Robin:**

**Sanders-** UYFSA picked up an engine and assorted “junk” from the defunct Cabinet View FSA. They are experiencing radio problems, which Kirk acknowledged. Their area may be able to get down to an 8 ISO rating based on recent tests. They are picking up a 3,000 gal tender from Missoula.

**Kraft-** A community meeting was held at the Yaak Community Hall to explain county emergency procedures and help available. Presentations by Sheriff Robie Bowe, Kirk, Lisa Odewaltdt, Red Cross, Larry Miller(UYFSA) and Ed Levert. 40-45 residents attended. This meeting was conducted based on a request by Sharon and Mike Tucker who had attended the Wildfire Awareness Workshop in Libby. Code Red signups were conducted during the meeting.

Kirk has continued to work on radio sites. There have been problems with Calx Mtn site. Motorola wants the county to upgrade the new Northern Tier Network, which isn't going to happen anytime soon. Marston will remain as a local government site. The planned upgrade for Meadow Peak will help. The radio grants this year were unsuccessful.

Fisher River FSA- Kirk said they are waiting for results from ISO review. Their 30 year anniversary is scheduled for August 20. Kirk's team was on the Observation Point Fire on the Bitterroot. Interesting that Ravalli Counties notification system is still door to door. Kirk saw many fuels issues on private lands.

**Osborn-** Only one fire on the Three Rivers District this summer! Fire Management Officer, Linda Hubble has retired. The fire crews have been doing project work. The OU-3 fire crew for the Vermiculite Mine area has not been filled because of few applicants. The planned 10 person crew and helicopter would be on standby for fires in that area only. Special training is required along with the use of specialized breathing apparatus and clothing which would be a real deterrent unless the pay is increased.

The Oly Project is close to the signing of the Record of Decision. District starting work on Starry-Goat which is in the Callahan Drainage. The Forest is undergoing reorganization.

**Burgess-** TFS has purchased 2 engines from West Valley. Eureka has had a couple of fires. West Kootenai FSA may be in line for becoming a recognized fire district and in line for a mill levy.

**Swope-** Past fuel reduction accomplishments have been sent to Lisa Odewaldt for her to map. This along with other agency accomplishments could help us establish a priority for future treatments. We should be able to start spending funds from the 2016 Lincoln-Sanders grant by October. Hoping to have a meeting with Ed and Carol Daly along with Brian Ressel from the NRCS to discuss possibility of putting in for a grant under the Regional Conservation Partnership Program. Suggested that we invite Eric Warrington from the DNRC office in Missoula to one of our FireSafe Council meetings.(Ed responsible)

**Mertes-** Montana DEQ looking to change standards for measuring air pollution to a weighted average. Libby may be able to reach obtainment standards. Jake explained that he has been in communication with the Libby District hoping to avoid requests from landowners who might have yard wastes that should have been burned in April and are not management burns.

**Lauer-** Steve said he had 2 assessments lined up to do. Worked with Cabinet Peaks Hospital on an evacuation exercise. The fire department worked with Jason Sunnell of Libby RD on an exercise with Libby RFD's de-contamination trailer. Steve is waiting to hear about ISO tests recently run. He is looking at new guidelines for fireman safety during post fire exposure to possible air pollutants.

**Levert-** The Neils project is complete and Bill Swope, logger Ron Cooper, Bonnie Hudlet, reporter from the Kootenai Record and myself will be meeting with Mrs Neils after this meeting. The intent is to have a FireWise story about this 30 acre project.

I have also been engaged with the Kootenai Stakeholder Coalition as a team leader for the Flower Cr. Project and the Starry Goat Project in Callahan Creek.

The Alvord Lake dedication ceremony was held July 8.

### **Old Business:**

**2017 Title III funding-** This month we went into more detail on the items listed last month. Although the list had been discussed with the commissioners no decision was made in the absence of Commissioner Mark Peck. It is my intent to take this updated list back to the commissioners for final approval within the next few weeks.

Funds Available- \$250,296

### **Planned costs for period of July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017:**

FireWise Assessments- \$5,000

FireWise Advertising- \$5,000

Kootenai Wildland Firefighter Challenge- \$2,000 (Although this event did not take place as planned this summer there is a tentative event planned this Fall. - \$2,000

FireSafe Council Web Site- \$2,000

County Forester- \$35,000

FireSafe Council North end Rep- \$3,000

FireWise Trailer Maintenance and materials- \$3,000

Libby and or Yaak FireWise Bus Tour( this event would focus on informing our civic leaders and interested citizens on the FireWise program and would include a BBQ)- \$5,000

Fuels Projects(chipping and treatment of county properties)- \$5,000

FireSafe Council Expenses- \$2,000

Marking and Posting County Parcels(FireWise treatment areas)- \$10,000

Alvord Lake Community Forest FireWise Demonstration Areas(signing and tours)- \$5,000

Forest Stewardship Workshop in Eureka or Libby(for larger acreages)- \$5,000

Fuel Reduction Grant for North end of County(Much interest, but no current grant funding for this area)- \$30,000

Reimbursement to Flathead Economic Policy Center for assistance- \$3,000

Total expenditures- \$124,000

Expected balance as of June 30, 2017 with no additional contributions- \$ 126,296

**Education Committee-** Most of the education committee subject material was discussed under the Title III subject. However, the subject of the FireWise articles that we were going to run in the Kootenai Record came up. Wyatt had agreed to do an article but nothing has been sent so far. Mike Sanders said he would resend his article to Ed.

Another subject was who is to do the FireWise advertising. Bruce Vincent has done an outstanding job at this and I was going to check and see if he and PJ were interested in continuing. Otherwise Lisa Osborn has material that can be run.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00

**Next Meeting- August 18, 2016**

**Ed Levert, Chair**