

December 8, 2016 Lincoln County FireSafe Council Meeting Minutes

Attendees; Ed Levert, Lincoln Co Forester; Lisa Odewaldt and Kirk Kraft, Lincoln County EMA/Fisher River FSA; Wyatt Frampton, DNRC; Mike Sanders, Upper Yaak FSA, Steve Lauer, Libby RFD; Dan Rose, Kootenai Fire Staff; Tim Bumgarner, Libby RD; Lisa Osborn, Three Rivers RD, Brian Ressel, NRCS; Warren Applehans, Rexford/Murphy Lake RD.

Round Robin:

Sanders- Upper Yaak FSA has acquired a six pack and a water tender through the DNRC. They are now up to 10 fire fighters.

Osborn- The calendar is complete and arrangements have been made for distribution. Around 2400 printed. Some discussion between this format and larger calendar without pages. This edition has lots of useful FireWise information.

Rose- Dan said the forest had 62 fires this year making this a slow fire season. Fall burning was slow too although the helitorch was being used on the Troy District for prescribed burns in Keeler Creek. Young Growth EIS due out in February or March. Attended the Regional Office fire meeting in November. Two crews sent to southeast. One engine sent from Eureka and a dozer was actually sent by Kurt Spencer to North Carolina. Fire hires set for February.

Applehans- Warren said the district was doing lots of pile burning. There is an open house for the Gateway project tonight in Eureka. This project seeks to convert smooth brome encroachment to other vegetation. Working with the fire lab on updating Rothemer's Fire Index and redefining a safe fire zone with Brett Butler.

Odewaldt- Working with Greg Larson and Jerry Okanski on Customs and Traditions and the role of Lincoln County in Forest Service decision process. Working on a grant for lap tops for emergency management. Working on an update of Eureka addresses. Folks that don't post proper addresses could be subject to a fine. Deb Blystone, GIS maps person for the county is retiring.

Kraft- Converting the radio plan update to a power point. Fire departments should make requests to Kirk for fire fighting vehicles since he has had great success getting surplus vehicles. The Meadow Peak radio update is now complete. County is reassessing the radio location at the water treatment plant because of interference. There is a problem with the Yaak radio site. They were able to get a vehicle for Lisa.

Fisher River FSA- There is a problem with fire department funding because more trailers are being placed on property and they are not assessed. Kirk has hopes of becoming a fire district. Kirk passed around pictures of the 2 tenders that were converted from army surplus tractors.

Bumgarner- The district is hiring two professional fire positions. The Flower Creek project NEPA document is close to being completed. The Cowell-Mitchell landscape analysis(79,000 acres) is the next big project. The Clay Banks CE has been resurrected and should be ready this spring. Tim would like to pursue shaped files for completed fuels treatment areas including all lands. Brian Ressel is willing to cooperate from the NRCS, but it would be difficult to obtain the information from past projects. Tim said that machine and hand piling contracts will be coming out mid spring. The district is looking for a contract tender.

Lauer- Steve has been doing more FireWise assessments. The fire department did a practice burn on an old house on Paul Brown's property. They have been reprogramming radios for a third FS frequency. Steve said that he was sending a request to the Forest Supervisor to do a fuel reduction project on the Skidale property.

Ressel- Brian has been involved with several fuel reduction projects in the Yaak and a 24 acre one in Five Mile. There is some burning to be done. He hopes they fill the district conservation administrative position soon.

Levert- I reported that the masticating thinning for the Alvord Lake project was starting again since the ground had firmed up. No burning took place on the Neils piles so will have to wait until April. The approved South Lincoln County Western States Grant is close to being authorized to begin starting projects.

Old Business

Resource Conservation Partnership Program- Brian said that after more investigation into this program he found that forestry work was not a priority. The Joint Chief's program did seem more obtainable and the FS wanted to pursue the Cowell- Mitchell project on the Libby District and the West Kootenai on the Rexford District. The area east of Hwy 93 in both Lincoln County and Flathead County that I had hoped could proceed has been dropped.

Next Meeting- January 19 at 9:30 AM

Ed Levert, Chair