

FireSafe Flathead Meeting Notes – Thursday, February 28th. 0900-1100

Present: Mike West (facilitator/notes), Dick Haberkern, Gary Ellingson, Rich Blaney, Deb Starling, Bill Swope, Randy Sundberg, Eric Hoberg, Rick Trembath.

Next Meeting: March 28th, 0900-1100 in the DNRC Conference Room. Please send updates, events, articles, agenda items!

Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) – Bill Swope gave a brief update... things are progressing with another meeting tomorrow. Carol has a few more edits otherwise still on track to plan community engagement events for the last two weeks of April. Bill mentioned the Forest Service Supervisors Office may be a good venue for one of the events and I (Mike West) offered to host that if needed.

NW MT Hazardous Fuels – Deb Starling update... all of their current funding is obligated and they spent the last of it focused on Many Lakes since it is a priority area for treatment. They still have quite a bit of work to administer out on the ground once spring rolls around. Should find out this coming fall if they are awarded another large Western States Grant which they are currently taking applications for. Otherwise they are planning to apply for smaller more focused grants through MT DNRC Hazardous Fuels for a few places that fit the criterion. The MT DNRC grants have a few more/new strings attached which require home/property assessments to be uploaded into a state portal which they are still figuring out the details. Bill Swope is still transitioning with Deb so you probably won't see Bill as much unless it's at the cabin or on the lake... which is bitter sweet... where going to miss you Bill!!! And a big thanks to Deb for stepping up to fill those big shoes.

Era of Megafires Preview Nights – Several local fire districts and the Salish Kootenai Tribe have or plan to have showings. MT DNRC brought on Jess Fugua as an Outreach Coordinator to assist with these community efforts.

Good Neighbor Authority updates – Mike West... the forest is actively working with the DNRC on a couple of different projects. It's a high priority for us and the DNRC going forward.

Haney-Holbrook Wyden Amendment Agreement – Mike West... ready to execute the agreement which will treat the understory, surface fuel and decadent shrubs on adjacent private lands. End result will be improved big game winter range and fuel break in a high priority area.

Northwest Management Inc. www.consulting-foresters.com 406-442-7555 – Gary Ellingson & Eric Hoberg... consulting forester company that originated in Moscow Idaho in 1984. They now have 35 foresters throughout the western U.S. with 5 foresters stationed in Montana since 2001, the closest to the Flathead being Eric Hoberg in Missoula. Their company offers a wide range of services from project design, timber sale administration to community wildfire protection plans, working for private industry, individual landowners, tribes, counties etc. They have worked extensively (hundreds of jobs) in the Helena area (Tri-county) from single tree

removal to timber sale sized projects. Another bonus they provide is insurance for pile burning. To sum it up they are really good at problem solving/finding solutions on behalf of their clients. Great resource available in our area otherwise consulting foresters are few and far between.

Community Wildfire Preparedness Day/Month – Group discussion... consensus was to not do any large events this year like we have in the past. Otherwise...

- Mike West has been invited to help the Stillwater State Forest in Olney May 12th for a community living with wildfire type of event
- Bill Swope mentioned the Lincoln County Firewise Trailer is available for the Forestry Expo for May 11th
- Randy Sundberg is coordinating the Creston School Living with Wildfire Community Event on April 20th

Here is the link to the cross boundary fuels reduction story map which is a similar version to what Ali is working to produce specific to the greater Flathead area.

<https://usfs.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=957c121cf2b84ccf9a0c52f19124a598>

Open burning season starting March 1st – There is an Society of American Foresters MSU Extension presentation on how to burn at the Montana Loggers Association building March 21st... may be an opportunity to bring some media.

The Smoke Column – NW Management may submit an article to raise awareness about what forestry consultants do, Rich Trembath sent in his 100th anniversary of the 1919 fires in the Swan Valley, Forestry Expo may be a good topic.

Fire Adapted Montana – Confirmed Deb Starling and Ali Ulwelling will be attending to represent our area for the kick off in Bozeman, MT March 13-14th.

Family Forestry Expo – May 11th Bill Swope let us know the Lincoln County Firewise trailer is available for May 11th... I offered to go get the trailer if needed assuming we want to use it.

Swan Valley Fire History - Rick Trembath provided handouts on the 100th anniversary of the 1919 wildfires in the area... really neat stuff if you're interested I'm sure Rick will share... he's also teaching another wildfire class at FVCC.

Bill Swope would like to see FireSafe Montana come out with one comprehensive/updated brochure similar to their living with wildfire brochure. We should be able to pass the word along and ask Bill for more specifics if needed.

Other Events:

- March 22nd Ali will talk at 1st American Title Co.
- April 20th Creston School Living w/Wildfire Community Event "Bring a friend"
- April 20th Stump Jumper Days at FVCC (Logger Sports Event)
- May 12th Olney Community Wildfire Event (MT DNRC Stillwater State Forest)
- June 6th West Glacier Wildfire Event

- July 10th North Fork Firewise Day