

Firesafe Flathead Meeting 2/21/2024 (Next meeting March 20<sup>th</sup>)

Our meeting was very well attended so much so that we will be looking for a larger conference room.

Flathead National Forest – Mike West

FNF purchased 2025 Home and Garden Show Case booth since the MT DNRC had purchased it for 2024.

850-acre Joint Chiefs thinning and piling contract awarded to Imperial Forestry. Primarily in the Stovepipe (west of Kalispell & Whitefish) and Good Creek areas. This is the last year of our current Joint Chiefs project.

Working with NRCS to apply for another round of Joint Chiefs 2025-2027. The new project area will overlap with our current project area except for excluding the Olney area and including Star Meadow, Somers, and Lakeside.

The National Forest Foundation (NFF) is in the process of hiring a forester to assist us with our Keystone agreement to reduce fuel on an additional 3500 acres within the wildland urban interface. NFF will begin to solicit contracts for this work soon.

Flathead Ridge Ranch – Caleb Dietz

Curious when MT DNRC grant awards will be announced so they know whether to submit the same or different application for consideration and plan work. Hoping to know about award decisions soon.

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) – Karli Becher

Record year with 70+ applications for fuel reduction projects. Working with Forest Service on 2<sup>nd</sup> joint chiefs expanding west and south to lakeside/Somers and star meadows.

Flathead County – Lincoln Chute

Scheduling interface training with the LGFF and developing preplans, working to provide a presentation for the media to talk wildland fire and streamline communication during the fire year.

Working with the planning department to require fuel reduction work prior to final plat/approval of subdivisions.

Montana West Economic Development Forestry Assistance – Carrie Johnson

Foothills road grant funding fuel reduction project near completion. Good creek and Many Lakes grant applications were denied but reapplying in April. Somers and Lakeside grants

tentatively approved \$100K each, Kila tentatively approved \$250K. March 15<sup>th</sup> preproposal for all stewardship grants due.

**\*ACTION ITEM request for a clearinghouse for grant opportunities \*Educational material to put onto Firesafeflathead.com (deadlines, target audience, cost share/match, etc.) Build a business card with QR code to the firesafe website.**

North Fork Mitigation Committee – Allen Chrisman and/or Richard Hildner

Discussion around North fork road dust abatement funding request – would like DNRC and or Forest Service to contribute to the dust control annually. Concerned the current funding and plan to dust abate the NF road isn't going to begin until 2025. The county would like to see it begin in 2024 and not wait to start until 2025.

Montana DNRC Northwest Land Office –Dylan Kopitzke / Emma Merdovic

Share MTFireinfo.org QR. Olney Timber Sale and Haz Fuels Grant fuel break along Good Creek Road could be presented to land board in April. Lincoln Chute mentioned an opportunity to connect fuel break adjacent to and along the martin creek road identified during the east fork fire.

DNRC Kalispell Unit –Jeremy Pris / Kellie Kulseth

Gearing up for spring debris burning and spring fire season.

Big Mountain Fire District – Ben Devall

Brush pickup day in May. Looking into a resort tax to help support the Fire department and EMS as well as provide funding for projects adjacent to the community. March 5<sup>th</sup> Firewise event at the base lodge from 3-5pm.

Goosehead Insurance – Scott Countryman

Home inspector meeting went well; they want the realtor to request a home assessment to inspectors to engage. Would like the see accreditation for home inspectors. Local businesses may be willing to support financial backing to provided educational symposium for the community around home ignition zone, fuel reduction and better preparing community members for wildland fire.

Rick Trembath – FVCC

Reminder for Fire History and Pile burning workshops at FVCC.

Mike Frost – Elkhorn HOA

Bringing new people into the firewise portion of their HOA. Continuing to engage community members to reduce wildfire risk. Thank you to Mike Frost for his donation to FVCC to outreach the Rick Trembath's fire history and pile burning presentations. The fire History presentation had a significant turnout compared to years past, estimated around 100 people in attendance.

National Forest Foundation – Marlee Ostheimer

Flathead Coordinator position closed; they are looking to hire in the next month for both the Kootenai and Nez Perce Clearwater National Forests.

**Fire Safe Flathead Mission** – Individuals, neighborhoods, businesses, organizations, and agency wildfire professionals working together to create Fire Adapted Communities and resilient landscapes in the Flathead area by providing leadership, technical assistance, education, & resources.

- Jan 19th, Real Estate Agent & Home Inspector Training
- Feb 21st, Home Inspector Training
- Feb 22nd, 2024, 6-8pm FVCC Fire History
- March 2nd & 3rd, 2024 Home and Garden Showcase
- March 5th, Big Mountain Fire Preparedness Winter Event \*Richard Hildner bringing props and Scott countryman to do a quick presentation on the insurance industry at base lodge mount Jackson room.
- March 7th, 2024, 6-8pm FVCC Pile Burning Workshop
- March 13th 7:20am KGEZ Morning Talk Show (Rick Connell, Flathead National Forest)
- April 13th for the Wildland Firefighter Foundation, Flathead chapter at the Fairgrounds
- April 20th, 2024, Many Lakes HOA at Creston Elementary School Gym \*Looking for advertising help for the event.
- April 27th, 2024, 10-11:30am Glacier Hills at Lietz Hall in Martin City \*Mark Newbold would like Scott Countryman to present on insurance coverage and issues around wildfire, fire ratings, risk management and what homeowners should be mindful of.
- May 4th, 2024, Prescribed Fire Field Tour Tally Lake Pavilion \*
- June 5<sup>th</sup> OR/19<sup>th</sup> OR/26<sup>th</sup>, Flathead Families for Responsible Growth at Whitefish. (Richard Hildner plans to confirm the date at our next meeting.)
- June 20<sup>th</sup> 930-3pm North Fork Firewise basic fire training (chainsaw, HIZ Assessments)
- July 10<sup>th</sup> North Fork interlocal to talk about the NRCS TIP grant funding fuel reduction project and Insurance conversation. CWPP NF addendum is in progress.
- Date TBD West Glacier Community
- Date TBD Big Mountain Firewise Summer