

Firesafe Flathead Meeting Notes for May 17, 9-11 at the DNRC conference room and Zoom:

<https://mt.gov.zoom.us/j/88277512217?pwd=ek9aK1UrSzhJYkNpc3A5Q3N5RUo1Zz09>

Facilitator: Mike West (may adjust agenda as needed)

Welcome, introductions (special guest: MWED), and any additions? **In attendance:** *Mike West, Mike Frost, Sean Johnson, Parker Olson, Karli Becher, Carrie Johnson, Lincoln Chute, Richard Hildner, Rick Trembath, Marlee Ostheimer, Ben Devall, Logan Sandman, Jeremy Pris, Brian Somers, Caleb Dietz, Scott Countryman*

FNF project updates – Mike West (in his **NEW** position!) *Working on completing projects from 2022 for Joint Chiefs, 2023 Joint Chiefs projects are already completed (Piolet Knob/Bootjack Area), working with NFF on trying to get IRA funding through a key stone agreement with the intent to add capacity to do noncommercial work, loggers are waiting for soils to dry out to start logging on the forest, did a few prescribed fires this spring but stopped because of the hot weather and dry conditions.*

NRCS updates – Sean – *In the middle of contracting for 2023, there is a lot of interest especially in the Joint Chiefs' area, introduced the new NRCS Forester Parker Olson, there is a potential that NRCS will hire a new Soil Conservationist, more filming for video to highlight Joint Chiefs' projects is happening in June.*

Flathead County updates – Lincoln Chute – *We should pull out the CWPP priorities, check off the projects that are being completed, look forward and plan for the next. If there are projects that we would like to target with future funds (especially CWDG) they must be in the CWPP. Lincoln reviewed the CWPP and still feels like the priorities are still applicable and progress has been made since the plan was made, looking for window to burn piles at Herron Park, met with Rob Davies & Kurt Steele on potential fuel reduction project extending from Columbia Mtn to Camp Misery (discussion was had on a potential Joint Chiefs or other funding in this area for private landowners), assisting the NF Fuels Committee with treatment recommendations.*

DNRC (Ali) – *Ready to send in the entry for the 2024 Home and Garden Show (\$650) and would like to confirm the commitment from a few that we will share the workload that weekend. Ali will be at the Flathead Building Association meeting May 23 to present and determine next steps.*

Products – Elmo Fire video (7:30) – *Is available for showing at the events this summer.*

DNRC Stewardship Program grants (Haz Fuels, WUI, LSR, CWDG, Montana FAP... more coming) – *We are optimistic, and Carrie Johnson can provide an update. A fuels-focused group will be meeting to identify next the project area, outreach, funding, such as... The Northwest MT Hazardous Fuels Program is officially housed under Montana West Economic Development (MWED), Carrie is just getting her feet under her as she just officially started at MWED, she is hoping to get the Foothills Rd project started soon and hoping to be able to use some money from Joint Chiefs this year as well.*

Community Wildfire Defense Grant (CWDG) RFP will be open for 90 days mid-June – *Coordinate with USFS/NRCS as they will be applying for Joint Chief's again as well. Mike is looking in to setting up a meeting with a smaller group to discuss possibly applying for this grant in addition to discussing possibly applying for Joint Chiefs in 2024.*

Burn permits system started May 1 and is in place—any thoughts on the new process? *Is there a need for better messaging or communication? Lincoln mentioned that they have seen that some people have been applying for permits every time they burn instead of activating their permit when they want to burn, so maybe clarify, hopefully the new permit system will allow a few burn windows in the winter months.*

May is Wildfire Community Preparedness Month – Does anyone have anything going on to share? *Fire Adapted MT Learning Network is putting together a field day with Mike West to highlight work that has been done on the Tally Lake District with Joint Chiefs funding, the event is on May 25th, contact Mike if you are interested in attending.*

North Fork Mitigation Committee - Allen Chrisman & Richard Hildner – *Plans for the NF Fire Training day (June 22nd) are to meet at the Sonderson Hall, then to go to the Hildner property to look at new construction and break into smaller groups that will all go over the checklist to evaluate the Home Ignition Zone, the group will then come back together to discuss what they found, the Elmo Video will be shown, possible video shoot that day Rick and Scott will connect on that. NF Firewise Day is planned for July 12th.*

Big Mountain – Ben Devall - *The Mountain has a new safety person who is also on the board, Firewise event date TBD at next board meeting.*

Insurance - Scott Countryman *Training for home inspectors date TBD*

Caleb Dietz – *doing some thinning on Flathead Ridge Ranch, there is a possible Tree Farm tour at Section 1 on June 23rd in the afternoon, with the assistance of Holly McKenzie funding was secured for doing about 350 acres of thinning on 2 properties.*

Mike Frost – *worked with Ernie on an assessment of the community and determined it would benefit from some thinning, will have a Firewise Day with Ernie & Mike, date TBD.*

Jeremy Pris – *Training new employees*

Logan Sandman – *CWDG grad was awarded, will probably move forward in July, Rabbit Tracks (MT Forest Action Plan project) is wrapped up, there were a few lightening fires in the Libby area, working on PODs in the next few weeks.*

Randy Sundberg – *40 people came to the event in Many Lakes, there are a lot of new people moving into the Many Lake area, Randy asked about getting the county parks thinned in the Many Lakes area Lincoln said he has been working on it but nothing is set to be done yet.*

Round Robin –

- ~~May 15th – 1929 Half Moon Fire Presentation – Rick Trembath – Went well, about 70 people attended.~~
- ~~Preparing for Wildfire, FVCC Thursday, March 16 from 6-8pm in AT 139 – Ernie Nace~~
- ~~CharBoss demo #2 at Tai Foley's property (see email)~~
- ~~April 8 – Glacier Hills, Ernie Nace (lead)~~
- ~~April 22 – Many Lakes, Ernie Nace and crew~~
- ~~Firesafe Flathead booth at Forest Expo May 13~~
- West Glacier – TBD
- May 25 – Fire Adapted Montana Learning Network (FAMLN) field tour of JC – Mike & Sean
- North Fork Fire training day – June 22 and North Fork Firewise Day – July 12
- What are we missing?

Thank you!