



## **Kern River Valley Fire Safe Council**

**Thursday, May 17, 2012**

### **Kern River Valley Fire Safe Council Stakeholders Meeting**

Attendance: Tom Anderson, Terry Bolt, Don Brady, Gordon Ehmann, Tom Gelder, Harry Halterman, Christine Hancock, Gordon Hancock, Sharon Rooney, Lloyd Smith, Penny Lampkins, Hayward Mendenhall, Patrick Pontes, Robert Robinson, Gaary Geivet, Robert Rusby, Bruce Vegter, Derrick Davis and Brian Marshall

President Lloyd Smith called the meeting to order. All attendees introduced themselves and the agenda for the meeting was reviewed. The attendance roster was circulated.

#### **President's Comments –**

President Smith discussed the Wildfire Awareness Week Proclamation (held the first week in May) and discussed the USFS Region V Audit of the Kernville Ranger District. This covers 18-19 forests, all in California. He said the audit was favorable but he wanted to review the comments in more depth, particularly those related to defensible space.

#### **Treasurer's Report –**

Attached are May 2012 reports. Sharon Rooney presented the reports which had been approved by the Board in its previous meeting.

#### **Presentation –**

Derrick Davis discussed the Kern River Valley Fuel Break and Hazard Reduction Renewal 2012 Grant Project. He emphasized how important it was to co-ordinate the activities of the KCFD, the USFS and the BLM. He then listed the various areas that would be reworked and which fire crews would be assigned. The cost of the project is \$241,000. KCFD will match \$120,000 and CFSC will provide another \$120,000. The project must be completed by June 2013. All the projects are under the Kern River Valley Protection Plan and Fuel Reduction Project.

#### **Committee Activity Reports -**

Grant Committee – Lloyd Smith

Ed Royce's resignation for health reasons was announced. Ed had worked on the Council for 10 years. Lloyd Smith has agreed to fill in until the position can be refilled.

Patrick Pontes discussed the 2011 projects, remarking that there were still some fuel piles to be burned. KCFD has agreed to complete the burning and the projects are completed in all other

respects. Other than the piles, KCFD has exceeded its match requirement and has completed all its work.

Regarding the Mountain Shadows Project, it is complete. Another \$6,000 is to be billed. Fifty-four acres have been completed. The files are being given to the Council's secretary for safe-keeping. It was noted that in the last five years, ten projects, totaling nearly \$900,000, have been completed.

Lloyd Smith (reporting for Ken Delfino) discussed the Alta Sierra and Wofford Heights projects. These are projects totaling \$300,000, covering approximately 200 acres. They are a three-year project and we are 18 months into it. So far, all has gone well and the USFS is pleased with the results.

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy Proposal was rejected. Derrick Davis and Ken Delfino had worked on it. We were told our CEQA report was inadequate. The Board has decided not to resubmit and no proposals will be submitted in 2013. Lloyd mentioned that there would be a grant workshop later in May.

### **Fundraising** – Tom Gelder

Based on the Board's decision to wrap up the Council's activities, no current fundraising is being pursued.

### **Chipper Days** – Don Davis

Following is the schedule so far:

Isabella Highlands, Sawmill road – March 20<sup>th</sup> or 24<sup>th</sup>

Saddle Springs – April

Walker Pass - May 5

Squirrel Valley, Mt. Mesa – May 19<sup>th</sup>

Alta Sierra - June 2

Hungry Gulch / Wofford Heights - June 9

Valley View – June 16<sup>th</sup>

### **Education** – Terry Bolt

Terry Bolt is planning a poster contest for May 18<sup>th</sup>. This will cover the 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grades and the contestants will have the opportunity to win Target gift cards. The Ready, Set, Go brochures are at the fire stations and the KCFD will deliver more to the schools. Cathy Perfect of the Kern Valley Sun had agreed to do a series of articles but so far, this hasn't happened. Terry will revisit it. Lloyd Smith agreed to write an editorial. Terry mentioned that in her previous contest, she had eight winners from the Middle School.

### **Outreach** – Christine and Gordon Hancock

Discussion was again had about how difficult it is to access need for hardship cases. Lloyd will meet with Derrick Davis and Bart Kicklighter to try to figure out ways to utilize the grant money we have available to use for these matters.

## **Agency Reports –**

### **Kern County Fire – Don Brady**

Seasonal crews will be up and running by May 25<sup>th</sup>. A second helicopter crew will be staffed as needed. Town Hall meetings are being held. The last one will be in Alta Sierra. KCFD is trying to get a seasonal engine crew stationed there for the summer. The County Road department has completed an escape bridge in the **Alta Sierra** area to make it possible for people to exit their area by more than one route. The Ready, Set, Go brochure is ready for distribution. KCFD spent approximately \$20,000 in its production. KCFD is trying to maintain the fuel breaks that have been done by working with the local HOAs and the Community Service Districts.

The Board of the Council then proceeded to award KCFD \$1500 for publication of Ready, Set, Go from its Education Fund. Terry Bolt moved, Tom Gelder seconded and the motion was passed unanimously.

Chief Marshall (the new KCFD chief) stated his committed to hazard reduction, citing that for every \$1 spent, an additional \$107 was realized in community help.

### **USFS – Bart Kicklighter and Penelope Shibley**

All crews and engines will be up to speed within the week. Helicopter 523 will be operational this week. Ernie Villa is up in Mendocino County for the next 60 days. The USFS will begin working on the Valley View Project as soon as crews are available.

Penelope, as District Planner, said there were about 12 fuel management projects currently underway. Alta Sierra and Rancheria Road were being worked under a \$200,000 grant. She mentioned the Breckenridge plantation project that had been approved for completion, plus another 150 acres. She estimated approximately 2000 acres would be treated around the community. The Alta Sierra area was their greatest concern. She also mentioned that the ICE project had finally been granted court approval so that it could proceed. This project had been in litigation.

**BLM** – Because of mechanical difficulties, no one from BLM was present.

### **Other Reports -**

Lloyd Smith discussed how the Council is struggling in finding additional leadership. Lloyd has agreed to stay on as president until our current projects are completed but unless more people become involved, the Council will cease operating. Tom Anderson, from the Kern River Valley Revitalization Committee, said he would try to help stimulate more interest. Lloyd made the comment that getting grant money wasn't the problem. It was spending it wisely.

**Next KRVFSC Stakeholders' Meeting:** Thursday, August 16, 2012, 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. in Supervisor McQuiston's conference room, 7050 Lake Isabella Blvd, Lake Isabella, CA 93240. Minutes of meeting will be posted to: [www.krvfiresafecouncil.org](http://www.krvfiresafecouncil.org)