



Kern River Valley Fire Safe Council

Thursday, August 18, 2011

Kern River Valley Fire Safe Council Stakeholders Meeting

Attendance: Lori Acton, Terry Bolt, Don Davis, Ken Delfino, Tom Gelder, Christine Hancock, Gordon Hancock, Bart Kicklighter, Jeff Mealey, Patrick Pontes, Robert Robinson, Sharon Rooney, Sabrina Rowe, Ed Royce, Penelope Shibley, Lloyd Smith, and Ernie Villa

President Smith called the meeting to order and announced that the presentation by Derrick Davis of KCFD would have to be rescheduled since Derrick had been called to a fire on the Grapevine. After introductions, President Smith discussed the work he had done on Policies and Procedures for the Council. He also mentioned how some of the insurance companies were cancelling fire insurance policies and defensible space clearance issues.

The next agenda item concerned SRA Fire Prevention Fund – AB 29x1. It is an attempt by the Legislature and the Governor to establish a fee on an annual, ongoing fee-per-structure basis to provide wildfire prevention services in CA. The funds collected from this fee must be used to pay the cost of collection and be distributed back for the direct benefit of the structure owners and may only support fire prevention costs by a select group of entities, including Cal Fire, the Board of Forestry, local Fire Safe Councils, local government, and certain non-profits. This fee doesn't add funds but is more to replace funds lost through budget cuts. President Smith pointed out that Pat Kidder's analysis on the state's FSC website was the best description of the bill he had seen. Below is the link to the summary provided on the CFSC web site and a link to a map of the SRA. You may have to magnify and scroll the map to see anything useful. It appears that all non-federal land in the KRV is included.

<http://firesafecouncil.org/articles.cfm?article=447>

<http://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?webmap=6807e4fff9024e35bf88a189560d2538>

President Smith mentioned that Ken Delfino had been endorsed by the KRVFSC as a board member for the CA Department of Forestry.

A discussion was had regarding the Lion Fire and the smoke that was affecting surrounding communities. It was thought that this might be an educational opportunity to advise the communities of what was happening and why.

Treasurer's Report – Sharon Rooney

The \$8,550.00 billed to USDA Forest Service for the Alta Sierra / Wofford Heights grant was received 7/7/2011.

A check for \$25,973.23 was paid to Kern County Fire Dept for Burma grant

A check for \$32,890.95 was paid to Kern County Fire Dept for Bodfish III grant

A check for \$7,908.75 was paid to Kern County Fire Dept for Alta Sierra / Wofford Heights grant

A check for \$598.50 was paid to Ken Delfino for the Alta Sierra / Wofford Heights grant

A check for \$50.00 was paid to Kern River Valley Chamber of Commerce for annual dues

A check for \$374.00 was paid to Patrick Pontes for Burma grant

A check for \$541.00 was paid to Patrick Pontes for Bodfish III grant

A check for \$1,103.00 was paid to Patrick Pontes for Lake Isabella grant

A check for \$1,088.00 was paid to Patrick Pontes for Shadow Mtn grant

Time spent on council business: 3 hours / mileage for council business: 0

Grant Committee Report – Ed Royce, Patrick Pontes, Ken Delfino

Ongoing 2010 Projects: Status of the 2010 Burma Interagency Extension Project is the same as last month. The last remaining work, on the Rogers Road maintenance section, is being completed. Work on the 2010 Bodfish III project is reported as complete, except for final reporting requirements.

The USFS three-year Alta Sierra-Wofford Heights Project will concentrate work around the Alta Sierra Community this year; four acres have been recently completed. Slash clean up and pile burning on 38 acres were completed last year and this spring.

2011 Projects: Status of the Lake Isabella and Mountain Shadows projects is the same as last month. All clearances have been received and we are allowed to start work at any time.

2012 Proposal: Proposal for maintenance on established fuel breaks is in the hands of the state FSC. We expect to hear if we will be awarded funding in October.

Ed reviewed requirements for grants under the CDF California Forest Improvement Program, CFIP. While most of the funds in this program come from Proposition 40 and are not available in Kern County, there are also some federal funds in the program that we could qualify for. This program is oriented toward the improvement of commercial forests. A forest management plan prepared by a licensed forester is normally required as a first step before improvement funds can be applied for. Discussions with staff indicated that there might be some ways around this requirement, but that would be a high risk approach. Since total funds available statewide are only \$280,000, and since the deadline for applications this year is 19 August, this looked like a dry hole, at least for this year.

Ed also reviewed new draft guidelines for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, SNC, grant programs. The new guidelines place their emphasis on fuel reduction work in the 2011-2012 grant cycle, and \$5 million will be available. There is no match requirement for these grants. (!) The guidelines have been substantially revised to make application to support fuel reduction work easier. The process include a pre-proposal and a later full proposal. Proposals that have been made to the state FSC for 2012 funding can be converted to SNC pre-proposals -- apparently with a minimum effort. I propose that we do this with our 2012 "maintenance" proposal, unless we get a positive response from the FSC before the SNC deadline. SNC deadlines have not yet been posted. This will be the last year the SNC has funds for fuel reduction work.

Patrick completed an analysis showing that we are nowhere near the threshold of \$500,000 annual expenditures that would require a serious and expensive audit. Ed and Patrick are working on an analysis to show the financial advantages of having our project work done by KCFD, vs. a commercial contractor. Patrick has assembled most of the numbers needed.

Patrick Pontes' and Ken Delfino's reports are attached.

Fundraising Committee Report – Tom Gelder

Total Contributions received so far total \$4396, including the recent SCE grants totaling \$2750. See attached summary of contributions to date.

Chipper Days – Don Davis

This month has been slow because all but one of the requested chipper days work was completed last month.

The only remaining project that is ready to be chipped is the Valley View Community on Saddle Springs Road.

Bart Kicklighter was consulted about having the Breckenridge Hot Shot Crew take a chipper up with them when they were working on the Forest Service portion of the fuel break, and he said he would talk to Ernie Villa about it. Pat Pontes came up with a new form to track the hours worked and costs incurred by each property owner preparing for their chipper day. When filled out, it is a way that accounts for the matching work/\$ contributions.

Education Committee – Terry Bolt

On August 12th Abby Bryski (Forest Service) and I presented at the South Fork "Back to School" program. The Owens Valley Career Development Center asked for several presentations, and we were just a small part of their activities. There were parents and children there. I spoke about what the council does and Abby and I both talked of making their homes and yards fire safe. We talked of emergency plans and working with neighbors to become fire safe communities. The local Kern County Fire Dept. spoke after us about how fires start inside the homes and what to look for that might start a fire.

Travel and presentation time 2 hours 50 miles round trip.

Website – Ed Royce

No activity in the last month.

President's Activities:

- Developed draft policies and procedures (**match 8 hours**) for the KRVFSC and distributed to the Board for comments by the August stakeholder's meeting.
- Made a special trip to Lake Isabella (**match 90 miles**) to retrieve the remaining (about 3,000) *Living With Fire* from the Kern Valley Sun office. These "extras" are now stored at Lloyd's home.
- Attended a Lion fire information meeting at the request of District Ranger Rick Larson (**match 90 miles and 2 hours**). This meeting was enlightening regarding the sensitivities of burning (smoke) to do hazardous fuel reduction.
- Requested that the message boards on the roadside signs be changed. USFS Crew 40 under the direction of Chris Scott completed the rotation last week.
- Took photos (attached) of USFS and KCFD water dropping helicopters dipping in his neighbor's pond below his house in support of the fire on Walker Pass on 1 August.
- Developed and distributed agenda for August Stakeholder's meeting.

Agency Reports:

Kern County Fire Department

- Nothing to report

BLM – Jeff Mealey

- Nothing to report

USFS – Penelope Shibley

- Regarding grants, Ernie Villa is the appropriate contact
- The amount of grant money available should be the same for 2012. Lloyd Smith will talk to Ernie Villa regarding a \$6,000 grant that is available to us.
- Penelope is trying to coordinate a 5 year vegetation plan.
- The Breckenridge Project covering 800 acres has been approved.
- The ICE Timber Sale is up for judicial review.
- The Piute and Vista Salvage projects are completed.
- Several projects are underway in the Piute area and 6000 acres are involved in the Rancheria area.
- Priorities are shifting to "ecological restoration", including mechanical thinning and introduction of fire.
- A local company has shown interest in bio-mass

Next KRVFSC Stakeholders' Meeting: Thursday, November 17, 2011, 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. in Supervisor McQuiston's conference room, 7050 Lake Isabella Blvd, Lake Isabella, CA 93240

KERN RIVER VALLEY FIRE SAFE COUNCIL

PONTES GRANT STATUS UPDATE

August 10, 2011

2010 Bodfish III Fuel Reduction Project-

The remaining project tasks are the final Invoices and payments, Photo Monitor and Accomplishment Reports and Close-out Report. The Grant Period ends September 2011.

The Quarterly Accomplishment Report was completed and submitted to CFSC. Final Invoices will be submitted soon. Please continue to keep track of your "Match" hours and mileage for the 2011 project Accomplishment Reports.

2010 Burma Interagency Extension Project-

Same status as last month, the Rogers Road maintenance section is the only remaining work to complete. The tasks to complete are the same as Bodfish III; final Invoices and payments, photo Monitor and Accomplishment Reports and Close-out Report. The Grant Period ends 9/30/11.

The Quarterly Accomplishment Report was completed and submitted to CFSC. Again, continue to keep track of your "Match" meeting hours and mileage for the 2011 Quarterly Reports.

2011 Lake Isabella Project- Same as last month; project is ready to go, but work has not started. The crew has been chipping in the communities. The Grant Period ends May 31, 2012.

2011 Mountain Shadows Project- Project is the same status as Lake Isabella's; we have the approval, and are ready to begin project work when crew(s) are available.

The 3rd Quarter Accomplishment Report Period for these projects ended July 31st and are due to CFSC by August 31st. KCFD should submit Worksheets soon.

CFSC News/Update— Mileage rates have increased to \$0.555 per mile- up 5 cents/mile.

Cathy Brooke requested that we prepare an analysis to determine whether or not we have hit the \$500K Audit Threshold. We looked at the 2009 & 2010 Fiscal years and overlapping 2008 and 2011 project expenditures. In 2009 we spent \$281,594 and in 2010 we expended \$120,271 dollars, well below the Audit Threshold limit. Cathy has accepted the Analysis.

Patrick G. Pontes
Kern River Valley FSC, Grant Administrator

KERN RIVER VALLEY FIRE SAFE COUNCIL

DELFINO GRANTS STATUS UPDATE

August 13, 2011

Alta Sierra - Grant ID #10-DG-11051345-060

This is the second season on a three year project. Kern County Fire Department submitted an invoice for work accomplished from October 1, 2010 through June 1, 2011. The previous billing, through September 30, 2010, was for fuels reduction on 32.3 acres around the Alta Sierra community. The total area treated during that period was 38 acres, but piles had not been burned so billing was not made on 5.7 acres. The current billing was for the burning of piles within the same area (5.7 acres), bring the total accomplishment to 38 acres. Piles created last fall have been burned. Logging is almost complete on county park property (not part of the KRVFSC project). Sharron Rooney has invoiced the Forest Service for \$8,550 (5.3 acres at \$1,500/acre). *The bill has been paid.*

Plans for this year are to continue fuels work around the Alta Sierra community. *About 4 acres have been treated since the June 13 inspection.* The final year will focus on Old State Road. Two hundred treated acres will be accomplished during the three year grant period.

2012 grant

The 2012 grant was submitted on July 5, 2011. The grant includes the renewal (maintenance) of 11 projects that have been completed around the Kern River Valley over the past 12 years. Three hundred and thirty eight acres will be treated.

The total cost of the project is \$241,000 with \$120,500 coming from the grant and \$120,500 as a match. A 50% match was required for the 2012 grant.

Grants are under review by the FSC and recommendations will be made in late September.

Grant applicants will be notified on October 14.

New information is in Italics.

Ken Delfino, Grants Administrator.

kendelfino@aol.com

661-399-7066