



Kern River Valley Fire Safe Council

Thursday, November 17, 2011

Kern River Valley Fire Safe Council Stakeholders Meeting

Attendance: Lori Acton, Don Brady, Joe Clow, Derrick Davis, Don Davis, Ken Delfino, Dave Freeland, Tom Gelder, Christine Hancock, Claire Hartley, Bart Kicklighter, Robert Knight, Mike Lanza, Hayward Mendenhall, Patrick Pontes, Richard Rowe, Ed Royce, Penelope Shibley, and Ernie Villa

Vice President Ed Royce called the meeting to order. He introduced Ken Delfino, Grant Writer for the KRVFSC who was to be the main presenter at the meeting. Royce also commented on Lloyd Smith's absence and the fact that Lloyd and his wife would be returning from Idaho shortly.

Ken Delfino discussed 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. It is estimated that the fees initially will generate between \$50 million and \$80 million with an ultimate goal of \$200 million. Delfino pointed out that much of information came from the Regional Council of Rural Counties (RCRC). Delfino recapped the various votes that had taken place regarding the bill and the legislative efforts to get the bill enacted. It is not clear when or if the bill will ultimately pass but would require landowners within State Responsibility Areas to pay an annual \$150 fee with additional \$25 fees for additional structures. At present commercial units would also be included. The Board of Equalization would be the collector of the fees. Delfino expects that there will be legal challenges regarding the bill but the bill has to pass before those can happen. Various attendees asked Delfino questions about the bill. It's progress should be tracked as it may impact KRVFSC's ability to access additional grant funds. Ed Royce stated that the KRVFSC had no opinion on the bill at this time.

Following Ken Delfino's presentation, Ed Royce asked for Committee reports. Sharon Rooney's Treasurer Report was given in the Board meeting earlier. The Education and Fundraising Committees had nothing new to report. Ken Delfino and Patrick Pontes gave reports on the status of our various grants. (See attached reports.) Don Davis stated that Chipper activity was completed for the year and had prepared a report that was shared with Patrick Pontes who will return it to Secretary Gelder for incorporation into the Council files. Ed Royce gave high praise to both Don Davis and Terry Bolt for their efforts this past year.

Grants Chairman Ed Royce discussed the recently held Collaboration Group Meeting that was held on October 20, 2011. He especially thanked Penelope Shibley of the USFS for compiling the Project Descriptions. Ed also discussed the prioritization analysis that was done on the various projects to determine our focus for 2013. Page 17 of the Report (attached) shows the results of the analysis. Ed Royce moved for Board approval of the report which was seconded by Christine Hancock. Approval of the report and its findings was unanimous.

Ed Royce and Ken Delfino discussed the fact that we had received a CAFSC grant totaling \$241,000 to do maintenance on our previous projects for 2012. They also discussed that we would be submitting a grant application to the Sierra Nevada Conservancy for additional work in the Alta Sierra area. The Board gave unanimous approval for the Council to proceed with these grants/applications.

Agency Reports:

USFS – Penelope Shibley

- Numerous projects are in the planning phase. Others are nearing completion. The ICE project in the Alta Sierra area is the largest one that is moving forward with work being done north of Rancheria Road and east of State Route 155.
- Penelope and Ed Villa discussed various other projects that might be in the works but their completion would depend on the weather and the availability of crews. These included Red Mountain, Valley View, the Piutes, and Breckenridge areas.

Kern County Fire Department

- Don Brady mentioned the FSC meeting that was held at KCFD Headquarters on November 16th. He and Derrick Davis also commented on the status of their chippers, stating that one of the three would be non-compliant by 2012. A new chipper costs in excess of \$50,000. Brady also mentioned that seasonal crews were being laid off now and would not be rehired until April, 2012

BLM

- Nothing to report

Ed Royce discussed that electing new board members would take place at the February 2012 meeting. Current board members, Terry Bolt, Don Davis, Tom Gelder, Christine and Gordon Hancock, Ed Royce and Lloyd Smith had all agreed to run again. Christine Hancock moved to have their names placed on the ballot. Tom Gelder seconded the motion which then passed unanimously.

Patrick Pontes reported on the 2011 Wildfire Prevention Regional Conference for Fire Safe councils which he attended earlier in Ontario. Patrick was quite impressed with the efforts that Farmers Insurance had made to be helpful in these emergencies. He also mentioned that the State Fire Safe Council's website had information on everything covered in the conference. He also recounted what some of the other councils were doing regarding fundraising, marketing their programs and attracting new members.

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned. January 20th is the next meeting of the KRVFSC Board. January 24th is the next meeting of the KCFD and the area fire safe councils.

Next KRVFSC Stakeholders' Meeting: Thursday, February 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

KERN RIVER VALLEY FIRE SAFE COUNCIL

PONTES GRANT STATUS UPDATE

November 10, 2011

2010 Bodfish III Fuel Reduction Project-

Final Invoices were received, payments were made and Sharon returned the unspent funds to CFSC. The 8th Quarter Accomplishment Report, Photo Monitor Report and Close-out Report were hand delivered to CFSC. According to Sharon, all Operations Funds are spent. The project is closed out.

2010 Burma Interagency Extension Project-

Final Invoices were received, payments were made and the 8th Quarter Accomplishment Report, Photo Monitor Report and Close-out Report were hand delivered to CFSC. According to Sharon, all Operations Funds are spent. The project is closed out.

2011 Lake Isabella Project- According to Derrick, the fuelbreak is about 50% complete & he will confirm at the meeting. Most of the before photos have been taken. Quarterly report is due 11/30/11.

2011 Mountain Shadows Project- According to Derrick, the Project has started, and they have completed about an acre or two. Fourth Quarter Accomplishment Report is due to CFSC 11/30/11.

The Grant Period for these projects ends May 31, 2012.

CFSC News/Update— I attended the 2011 Farmer's Wildfire Prevention Regional Conference in Ontario last week. It was an excellent overview of what FSC's in California are doing to solicit new members and ways to fund FSCs. Tom Harbour (W, O. Director of A&FM) spoke on the Cohesive Strategy and shared with the group that FS Grant funding over the next few years will be very slim. (Slimmer than in 2012). Reducing Gov't spending and balanced budgets are the priority in Washington. The Cohesive Funding Strategy will be identifying relative-risks, which are greater, where to take \$ from and what to support. He said there are 20 million acres in the West infested with bark beetles and many homes are in the intermix—not a good combination. His emphasis for FSC's is to "get locals involved", because it's the grass-roots effort that will make the difference in collectively protecting communities. I'll share more info from the Conference at our meeting.

Property owners not performing defensible space (even non-structured) came up numerous times.

On January 1, 2012, CFSC will take over the Firewise Communities Program (Katie- Coordinator).

Patrick

Patrick G. Pontes

Kern River Valley FSC, Grant Administrator

KERN RIVER VALLEY FIRE SAFE COUNCIL

DELFINO GRANT STATUS UPDATE

November 10, 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 July 1, 2011 through September 30 2011. The previous two billings, through June 30, 2011, were for fuels reduction on 38 acres around the Alta Sierra community. The current billing was for treatment of an additional 37.5 acres. The area will be inspected by the grant administrator and the Forest Service soon and a bill will be submitted to the Forest Service.

Plans for this year are to continue fuels work around the Alta Sierra community. *About 12 acres have been treated since the September 2011.* 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 to the California Fire Safe Council was submitted on July 5, 2011 and approved in October 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. A pre-grant award information package was submitted to the Fire Safe Council on November 4, 2011. A full contract will be submitted to the KRVFSC soon.

Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant

A pre-application grant has been submitted to the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) for an additional 100 acres of fuels reduction work at Alta Sierra. The grant would be for \$171,000 with no match from KRVFSC or Kern County Fire Department. This grant could only apply to a mixed conifer forest type which includes the Alta Sierra community. The pre-application is under review by SNC. A decision on submitting a grant will be made by the end of November

Ken Delfino, Grants Administrator.
kendelfino@aol.com
661-399-7066