

Mono Basin Fire Safe Council Minutes

Prepared by John Warneke

16 March 2022 (via Zoom)

Attendees: Glenda Bayless, Lisa Cutting, Robbie Di Paolo, Margaret Eissler, Santiago Escruceria, Bob Gardner, Joe Moore, Dave Swisher, Tom Strazdins, John Warneke

- Minutes of 16 February 2022 accepted without changes
- Public comment
 - Cause of recent fire at Bishop airport not mentioned in Chiefs' report; Suggests bad precedent for who may be held responsible (Glenda)
 - How to get more people involved with the FSC meetings? Numbers attending seem to be stagnant (Joe)
 - Working with partner for outreach education funding; No luck with social media; Ongoing awareness by word of mouth (Robbie)
 - Can include FSC notifications with Mono City Fire community emails (Dave)
 - Utilize upcoming Wildfire Academy workshops to advertise local councils and work being done (Margaret)
- California Fire Safe Council regional workshop
 - To be held 21 & 22 March, 9am-4pm, in Mammoth
 - Registration required for in-person or Zoom attendance
 - Bob to attend, and Robbie will send out details
- Citizens' Wildfire Academy
 - Starting 18 April, with sessions to be held on 3rd Monday of each month via Zoom
 - Topics to include home hardening; insurance; evacuation info; fire ecology; fire departments and fire safe councils in area; what agencies planning this year
- Banner
 - Will be ordered soon; Pursuing option of regular-weight material (Robbie)
 - Will look into possibility of adopting branded message in upcoming years
 - Funding again provided by the DeChambeau Creek Foundation
 - Idea to have two banners
 - Current: '9 out of 10 wildfires are caused by humans' with FSC logo and photo of fire with firefighters
 - Second: 'One less spark, one less wildfire' with logo and photo of fire with emergency vehicle
 - Slogan and photo meet criteria of a horrifying fire and need be careful (Bob)
 - Inclusion of logo shows messaging is locally driven and engagement with fire concerns (Paul; Robbie)
 - Second banner showing a local agency fire truck? (Bob; Tom)
 - Locations
 - Where to move truck?
 - Current truck location is known and ignored (Bob)

- Options for southbound and northbound traffic
 - By propane tank south of town creates more exposure to visitors going up and down Hwy 120W (Dave)
 - Option may exist for use of CalTrans right-of-way by tank (Bob)
 - Will reach out regarding tank and banner on fence
 - Will speak to owners of RV Park and empty lot next to Chevron (Paul)
 - Banner on CalTrans fence facing road
 - May garner negative attention by foot traffic (Bob)
 - Want for location perpendicular to the road with vehicular traffic seeing it in periphery vision (Bob)
 - Benefit is foot traffic, location across from Mono Cone, and in reduced speed zone (Joe)
- East road from Mono City (02N22)
 - Recap: Concern of use of road by 2WD vehicles in an emergency situation given its current state and need for repair
 - Insights from Dave Swisher (speaking as Mono City Fire Commissioner)
 - Existing evacuation road goes north, from fire hall to Hwy 167
 - County maintained road, rated for fire trucks, 3 gates with signs limit vehicular traffic
 - When fire siren goes off more than 5 times, leave via this road
 - Gate opening videos available at FSC website
 - Road running east-west behind houses not to be used as a fire escape road
 - BLM will not improve the road; Sage grouse habitat
 - Please stop contacting BLM about road [Larry Premish is unhappy]
 - Causing problems for Fire Dept. trying to renew lease
 - Spoke with Stephanie Heller regarding lower section improvement (Bob)
 - Her response suggested need for further discussion
 - Unofficial work may be best
 - Easier to attend to road concerns with hand tools now; If long term goal to create additional fire escape road, would require lengthy environmental review (Robbie)
 - Have been questions about what to do during an emergency event (Robbie)
 - Protocol in place and info shared with residents (Dave)
- Community Wildfire Protection Plan
 - Lundy Canyon, Mono City, Lee Vining excerpts distributed via email
 - Full report available at monocounty.ca.gov/community-development/page/community-wildfire-protection-plan
 - Lundy Canyon recommendations
 - Error in report as area is included in Mono City fire district; Little mention of impact of recreational use (Paul)
 - Mono City recommendations addressed (Dave)

- Fire hydrant supply primed during emergency with max output at 48psi; During fire, well pump on manual produces 150-170gpm
- Well has backup propane generator, and soon to be installed battery backups for fire hall and for well; Have grant for new 2nd well, at 150-170gpm, coming soon if BLM renews lease
- Only 1 home remaining with shake roof; Unknown if owner will address
- Hwy 167 inclusion
 - Presently not in any fire protection district; Both LV and MC fire will respond to structure and medical calls (Paul; Dave)
 - May be difficult getting all in area on board to create own district; May be easier to get MC district to expand (Joe)
 - Expansion of district possible if County planning department redraws existing boundaries; Multi-year process (Paul)
- Moving forward (Paul; Robbie)
 - Update documentation according to past recommendations; Generate as needed for additional areas; Communicate changes to other agencies
 - Engage more people, raise more awareness about what can be done on an individual level for one's property
 - Focus of recommendations more on structure resiliency and defensible space
- Update on ponds
 - Bob spoke to Jeff Hunewill regarding use of ponds; Will reach out to local fire departments and BLM interagency station to look at use of water and road (Paul)
- Next meeting to be held on 20 April 2022 at 5pm