

MINUTES OF THE WILDLAND FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
June 1, 2016
Suncadia Resort, Cle Elum Washington

In Attendance:

Gary Berndt, Wildland Fire Liaison, Chair

Committee Members Present:

Tony Craven- Small Forest Landowner
Russ Pfeiffer-Hoyt - State Land Trust Beneficiary
Dave Leitch- Fire Chief (Eastside)
Rodney Smoldon - Federal Fire Agency
Lee Hemmer - Industry Landowner (Range)
Tom Bugert - Statewide Environmental Representative
Chuck Duffy - State Fire Marshal
Dave Johnson - Fire Commissioner
Jim DeTro - County Commissioner (Eastside)
Dave LaFave (by phone) - Fire Chief (Westside)
Cody Desautel (by phone) - Tribal Nations Representative

Committee Members Absent:

J.D Marshall - Industry Landowner (Timber)
Joe Gardner – County Commissioner (Westside)

Guests/Other Attendees:

Bob Johnson, DNR, Division Manager, Wildfire Division (by phone)
Lacey Vaughn, DNR Support Supervisor

I. Opening, Roll Call

The sixth meeting of the Wildland Fire Advisory Committee was called to order at 9:04 a.m. on June 1, 2016 in Cle Elum, WA. Roll was taken and two members were absent and excused. Due to travel constraints, two members participated in the meeting by phone.

II. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the April 27, 2016 council meeting were presented and reviewed. Motion to approve minutes made by Committee member Pfeiffer-Hoyt, seconded by Committee member Hemmer. Motion carried with unanimous Aye's.

III. Old Business

a. Mission Statement

Chairman Berndt revisited the mission statement given to the committee at the last meeting. Committee members were given an updated draft, which included changes

discussed at the last committee meeting. Motion to approve the mission statement as corrected and written was given by Committee member Johnson, seconded by Committee member Duffy. Motion carried with unanimous Aye's.

b. DNR Wildfire Updates

Bob Johnson, Washington DNR Division Manager updated the committee on the status of the three Wildfire Training refresher academies, one that has completed and two others that are coming the middle of June. Bob discussed the ongoing work between DNR and local contractors to maintain wildfire safety training "blue-card" standards. He also recapped the multiple additions to staffing within the regions, new fire engines that were deployed, new air support and additional staffing in the aviation units and the continuing the working relationships between DNR and our inter-agency partners.

c. Chairman Report 2016

Discussion revolved around the 2016 report that Chairman Berndt will give to the Commissioner of Public Lands in October. Committee members round-tabled ideas within their respective work-groups of what they might like to see in the October report to the CPL. Discussion around training rural fire departments, working with various programs in developing larger scale fire resilience, and finalizing committee recommendations. Committee member Duffy asked for a round-table of work group ideas that can be worked on at the next meeting.

d. Workgroup Report- Forest Health

Committee member Bugert gave a recap of the work that his work group has been working on and the ideas they have attempted to put into terms acceptable for the magnitude of the Forest Health issues. The workgroup members spent time reviewing DNR and Nature Conservancy reports printed in both 2014 and 2004. The next few meetings the work group will determine the recommendations that they would like to see brought forward to the Chairman for the October report.

e. Workgroup Report- Contracting

Chairman Berndt spoke about the complexity of obtaining local resources, how to effectively utilize the closest resources and the need to develop a proposed timeline for the first responders to expect during initial attack. Chairman Berndt spoke about the contractors meeting that he attended where questions were posed about the possibility to be both a VIPR (federal) contractor and a local list (nonfederal) contractor. Committee member Smoldon talked about the self-inspections done by the VIPR contractors, and a round table committee discussion continued about the possibility for DNR to add another inspection to the process.

f. Workgroup Report- Employee Sharing

Committee member Pfeiffer-Hoyt talked about the need for a discussion between DNR and the workgroup to continue to follow-up on the need for retaining mid-level management. Roundtable discussions revolved around the training and pay for the seasonal fire staff.

g. Workgroup- Training/Certifications

The discussion revolved around establishing a standard that all agencies recognize. Roundtable discussion around WAC-296-305 and what type of training is done within the local fire districts. Discussion about the type of training (pack-test) was or is needed to maintain consistency within the state (310-1). Committee member LaFave talked about the “fair labor standards act”, that he has documentation about, and the need to work through with our partners to help locate a solution.

IV. New Business

a. Chairman Report

Chairman Berndt shared with the committee that the Commissioner of Public Lands approved and appointed a replacement to the vacant West Side County Commissioner position. Commissioner Gardner from Cowlitz County will, if schedule allows, attend the next meeting of the Wildland Fire Advisory Committee.

Chairman Berndt shared with the committee his chair report on the meetings he has attended since the last meeting of the committee. Meetings included an invitation to speak to a graduate group at Central Washington University. He also attended a meeting in Colville with the DNR Northeast region and several industrial forest landowners, they discussed the possibility of owners providing “fire plans” to DNR and also ownership maps to improve communications.

Chairman Berndt met with the Cattlemen’s Association on the 11th of May to follow up with concerns previously addressed to committee. Chairman Berndt has will provide a contact list of Eastern Washington cattlemen for distribution to IMT’s, agencies, and dispatch centers. Chairman Berndt also attended a large fire exercise in Monroe, discussions revolved around values at risk, safety, and agency missions.

On May 17th, Chairman Berndt attended the Northeast Region “Type 3” Incident management seminar. The training was attended by many of the interagency partners, and cooperators. There were more than 120 attendees that volunteer to participate. Chairman Berndt also attended the Okanogan County session for “large fire” management, similar to the Mount Baker session. There was a strong presence from the USFS, DNR, and Colville tribe, but only a small number of local Fire District personnel.

V. Adjournment and Next Meeting

By consensus, the committee decided to schedule the next general meeting at 9:00am, on June 22, 2016 at Suncadia Resort. The meeting was adjourned by acclamation at 12:13 p.m.

Draft minutes submitted by Lacey Vaughn, approved by Gary Berndt.
Formal action to be taken to approve the minutes at the June 22nd, 2016 meeting.