



Utility Wildland Fire Prevention Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

September 21, 2022

1:00 pm – 4:30 pm

Meeting Venue: Teams

- I. Attendance**
 - a. Quorum met see attached for meeting attendance.
- II. Call to Order**
 - a. Committee Chair Loren Torgerson called meeting to order at 1:05 pm on September 21, 2022.
- III. Member Introductions & New Business**
 - a. Members introduced themselves.
 - b. Chair motions to vote to meet virtually to be in compliance with HB 1329 given current emergency order and it not being reasonably safe for public attendance, Jim Smith seconds motion. All members vote yes, there are no abstains.
- IV. Advisory Committee Draft Charter**
 - a. Discussed current charter with members. Further review on the quorum requirements to be revisited. No revisions from members suggested at this time. Chair recommended that members email suggested edits or changes to the Chair prior to next meeting.
 - b. Draft Charter attached.
- V. Committee Membership Needs**
 - a. Chair discussed the need to fill remaining vacant positions of one municipal utilities member, two at large positions, and two historically marginalized or underrepresented communities (HMUC).
 - b. Committee discussed vacancies, several municipal utilities identified to possibly fill municipal utility (MU) position. Question was asked if HMUC position needs to represent a utility, or can it just be a member of the public, can. Chair indicated that HMUC member does not need to represent a utility, and could simply be a member of the public that has some standing in the community. Cities in eastern Washington identified as possible opportunities for the MU position as well. For the at large position DNR recommends someone from emergency management to fill the positions.
- VI. Previous Utility Task Force Business**
 - a. **State Uplands Vegetation Management Model Agreement** – Michael Kearney with DNR state uplands presented the history and objectives of the model agreement. The model agreement will be referred to as a license as it is not meant to supplant easements



or other rights of way agreements. In the past communications between utilities and DNR related to vegetation management were not ideal to achieve mutual objectives. This license was developed to improve communication. Another key component of the license is establishing a process to address danger trees outside of rights of way. The license describes when and how DNR is to be compensated for merchantable timber. Natural Area Preserves and Natural Resource Conservation Areas are not covered under the license, along with state owned aquatic lands. It also establishes reporting and dispute resolution processes.

- b. The Chair motions that model agreement meets intent of legislature and meets task force requirements, Einar Offerdahl seconds. All members vote yes, there are no abstains.
- c. Document attached
- d. **Wildland Fire Investigation Protocol** – Gary Margheim presented information on his work on the investigation protocols. They will be sent out to members for final review. Another element related to the protocols was to get a roster of wildland fire investigators and electrical engineers to be part of the process. Any contacts from committee members regarding contractor qualifications that would meet the necessary requirements can be forwarded. Goal to have draft out by October. Protocol would be activated at a Type 3 fire or higher.
- e. Committee agrees to review the protocol and expert roster and discuss approval at next committee meeting.

VII. New Business

- a. Committee Work Plan & Future Topics– Discussion: Potential subjects and issues for the advisory committee to work on; public safety power shutoffs (PSPS), public communications protocols, past task force projects. Keep focus on advising DNR on wildland fire risk mitigation. Commissioner of Public Lands will have an interest in providing topics to the Committee
- b. Future Topics – Committee members will provide the Chair with any additional topics by October 14.

VIII. Next Meeting Agenda

- a. Topics for next meeting Nov 16; Wildland Fire Investigation Protocol, Communication Protocols, OPMA review.

IX. Closing Comments

- a. Committee Members support the work done to complete the State Uplands Vegetation Management Model Agreement.
- b. Committee Chair – Appreciate the time members are volunteering to move progress along on these important issues. Our next meeting will have to be in person in Olympia. Information will be sent out ahead of time.



X. Public Comment

- a. Elizabeth King – Nov 7 is scheduled for post fire workshop, addressing public safety power shutoffs (PSPS). Hoping to reconvene pre-season wildland fire emergency management meeting in the spring.
- b. Robert Mitchell – smart grid strategies, vegetation management and recouping costs by utilities.

XI. Adjourned

- a. Meeting is adjourned at 4:02pm

XII. Appendices

- a. Attendance
- b. Draft Charter
- c. State Uplands Vegetation Management Model Agreement

Draft minutes submitted by Bryan Perrenod, approved by Chairman Loren Torgerson. Formal action to be taken to approve the minutes at the next general meeting.