

WILDLAND FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

May 22, 2019

Tom Craven Room

803 W 2nd Street

Cle Elum, WA

10:00 – 1:00

Agenda

Committee Members Present:

Gary Berndt – Wildland Fire Liaison, Chair
Reese Lolley – Statewide Environmental Representative
J.D Marshall – Industry Landowner (Timber)
Lee Hemmer – Industry Landowner (Range)
Tony Craven – Small Forest Landowner
Cody Desautel – Tribal Nations Representative (*Conference*)
Erick Walker – USFS Deputy Forest Supervisor
Russ Pfeiffer-Hoyt – State Land Trust Beneficiary (*Conference*)

Committee Members Absent:

Joe Gardner – County Commissioner (Westside)
Dave LaFave – Fire Chief (Westside)
Randy Johnson – Fire Chief (Eastside)
Dave Johnson – Fire District Commissioner (Eastside)
Bill Slosson – Chief Deputy State Fire Marshal
Jim DeTro – County Commissioner (Eastside)

Guests/Other Attendees:

Loren Torgerson - Wildfire Policy Advisor
Chuck Turley - Wildfire Division Manager
Josh Clark - Wildfire Meteorologist
Shelly Goodwin - WFAC Coordinator
Jim Passage – Guest
Annie Schmidt - Guest

I. Opening, Roll Call

The meeting of the Wildland Fire Advisory Committee was called to order at 10:08 a.m. on May 22, 2019 in Cle Elum WA. Roll was taken, 6 members were present and 6 members were excused. Due to travel constraints, 2 member participated in the meeting by phone, constituting a quorum.

II. Long Range Weather Update

Meteorologist Josh Clark, presented a Power Point indicating a busy fire season is to be expected.

- a. There is a normal fire season expected for most of eastern WA State in 2019 based on past 10 year data.

- b. Historically July 4th Weekend is peak for human caused ignitions.
- c. August is peak season for fires
- d. 306,000 acres average burn per year, for past 10 years
- e. 2015 was peak acres burn year
- f. 1928 to 2018 decreased in trend in ignitions but burns are more intense, trending up over past 10 years, more acres burned per year during past 10 years
- g. A lot of data was presented
- h. Six drives of ignitions
 - i. Fuel conditions
 - ii. May rainfall
 - iii. Snow pack
 - iv. Summer weather
 - v. Missed
 - vi. Missed
- i. Human ignitions almost 70% of fire starts
- j. 2017 normal dry season
- k. October 2018-Feb 2019 normal weather patterns
- l. March 2019 record low precipitation in WA
- m. Precipitation levels way below normal at end of April 2019
- n. Area is not as bad as other parts of WA, particularly western WA, as of today. But this point in 2019 there is less soil moisture than 2018, much snow was burned off in March and April

III. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the April 24, 2019 council meeting were presented in draft and reviewed. Motion to approve draft minutes as amended made by Committee member Russ Pfeiffer-Hoyt, seconded by Committee member Tony Craven. Motion carried with Aye's.

IV. Introductions and Chairman's Report

- a. Introductions of Erick Walker and Annie Schmidt.
- b. Annie gives 2561 report and worked on strategic plan.
- c. George Geissler and Julie Sackett also attended the Cattleman's Association meeting on 4/30.
- d. Chairman started with 22 issues being presented, all being almost resolved.
- e. Did not attend any academies or TREX but heard many good reviews on the TREX.
- f. Dates for future meetings will be set at a later date in a doodle pool, decisions will be made even if there is not a quorum. Looking forward to what tasks will moving on, as well as working with the budget at the moment. The immediate task is 2561, which is time driven

V. DNR/WSP Update

- a. Discussion on the 10 and 20 year plans and implantation and committee's role. Nothing accomplished as budget needs to be worked through.

- b. Resources will be scarce, will need to contact Randy Johnson regarding ramping up his program.
- c. Gov. Inslee signed budget deal, will have to translate were gain and losses are.
- d. WF operating asked 55 and received 50 total, which is pretty successful.
- e. Transition 30 seasonal engine leaders to permanent employees.
- f. Two helo's (7 plus 1 contract to 8 plus one)
- g. 7 new positions to be outreach for the fire program
- h. 13 Forest Health and Resiliency related positions currently grant funded to be converted to operating funds
- i. Corrections Camps program has 3 mobile kitchens, 2 have been replaced, one is now being replaced with biennium funding.
- j. 2 new correctional camp crews to be added. One in Airway Heights and one in Pacific Cascade Region, should know how to implement by next meeting.
- k. 1784 Wildfire Prevention - Passed
- l. SSB5010- Protected land not assessed by local FD- Passed
- m. SSB5305- Electric Utility Wildland Fire- Taskforce- Passed
 - i. Loren leads taskforce, report to leg.
- n. SSB5996- Funding for implementing FH WFAC plans- No Pass
- o. 2106 Natural Disaster mitigation-
 - i. Data capture- Karen's group- Timmons group contractor

VI. Old Business

- a. 2561 Recommendations final report is due November 2019.
- b. Value of community based programs to be included
- c. Develop a plan on Limited English Proficiency to protect during WF emergency
- d. Unprotected lands
 - i. Clarify definition of forest lands and then where to assets unprotected lands
 - ii. Draft criteria on which parcels needs updated procedures for review process
 - iii. 3 mile buffer – look at reviewing for DNR assessment in areas that have no protection and proximity to next fire agency jurisdiction.
 - iv. Roughly 180,000 acres left of unprotected land
- e. Process- Sub com- Russ, Tony, Reese- Request break down unprotected land by ownership also by county
- f. Come back to WFAC with recommendations
- g. Four choices in Strategic plan
 - i. Encourage WFAC to look at the Strategic Plan
 - ii. SB5036 EMB tasked with reporting to leg on dealing with Limited English Proficiency during wildfire evacuations
 - iii. The community piece is going to be the most difficult to address in 2016 report
 - iv. Complete protection for all lands recommendations
 - 1. Get rid of pink colored lands in map provided

VII. New Business

- a. Discussion suggest on wat subcommittee should discussion solutions or options
- b. Who do you think needs to be on this committee?
- c. Fire chiefs adjacent to unprotected lands
- d. Why- why not on RFPA rangeland
- e. ChuckTurley provided a report on 4 Assistant Division Manager Positions that have been appointed: Forest Health Prescribed Fire Program MGR-Michael Norris, Wildfire Ops and Aviation- Russ Lane, Wild Fire Planning- Angie Lane, FIT Planning – Jennifer Watkins. There are also two trainings coming up in June and the first of three academies are done. An ask in budget was a 5 person training cadre.

VIII. Final Q&A – Committee roundtable

- a. J Passage- thinks the public should know that resources will be spread out in both East and West where it used to be just East.

IX. Adjournment and Next Meeting

The meeting was adjourned by acclamation at 1:30 p.m.
At the time of adjournment the decision was to vote on new meeting date via doodle pool results and next meeting will be shared at a later date.

Draft minutes submitted by Shelly Goodwin, approved by Chairman Gary Berndt.
Formal action to be taken to approve the minutes at the June 20 meeting.