

WASHINGTON PRESCRIBED FIRE COUNCIL STEERING COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

September 2, 2020

1:00 pm – 2:30 pm

Virtual Meeting

Present: Chris Martin, Chair; Ernesto Alvarado; Jon Culp; Mike Norris, Secretary; Reese Lolley, Treasurer; Sarah Hamman, Sean Hopkins, Dale Swedberg; Matt Eberlein; Vaughn Cork (alt. for Karen Zirkle)

Also Present: Kara Karboski, Coordinator; Ana Barros (WA DNR), Chuck Hersey (WA DNR)

1. Staff Update

Actions **Steering Committee members should review Policy & Procedures Handbook.**

Discussion/
Decisions Kara provided a staff update.

Put Fire to Work: Currently developing a prescribed fire outreach and communications toolkit to be hosted on putfiretowork.org. Toolkit will provide tools, resources, examples, and templates to assist with communicating about prescribed fire. To be finished end of September.

TREX: Partners are planning a modified Cascadia TREX this fall from end of September to middle of October around Roslyn, WA utilizing local resources, including volunteer fire departments. Burn units will be assessed each week and resources will be organized when unit is in prescription. Potential to burn with state and federal partners as well. More information soon.

Policy Handbook: Developed a Council Policy & Procedures Handbook to document policies and procedures not outlined within Council By-Laws. This will be a living document that will be updated as needed. Any feedback or concerns should be sent to Council Officers or Coordinator.

2. HB 1784 Implementation

Discussion/
Decisions Anna Barros and Chuck Hersey (WA DNR) provided an overview of the HB 1784 project that directs DNR to assess and prioritize forest health treatments with dual benefit of wildfire response and forest health. This project is building off of Forest Health Assessment, 20-Year Forest Health Plan, and 10-Year Wildfire Plan. Pilot areas are Cle Elum, Leavenworth, and Winthrop/Twisp.

Coming up with analytics to address this. Two-pronged approach utilizing POD boundaries, first prioritizing potential fuel breaks for wildfire response benefit, and then by prioritizing landscape treatments for forest health benefit. Final step is to combine these prioritizations and to get feedback from local stakeholders.

Ultimately, this process is providing data and maps. Will need local knowledge and ground truthing to look at these places in the field, and will need to filter and utilize additional information to prioritize projects.

3. Budget Update

Discussion/
Decisions Reese Lolley provided a budget update on Council agreements and finances. In coordination with Kara and RC&D (Council fiscal sponsor), working towards a year round budget. Financial Summary was provided that provides overview of agreements and available funding.

Recent funding includes an additional \$30k through the BLM, \$10k from USFWS, and around \$10k from TNC (through USFS Oke-Wen SPA). Currently working on finalizing an agreement with TNC for WA Dry Forest Fire Learning Network, a portion of which will support Council work, and an agreement through WA DNR for US Forest Service Region 6 funding.

4. Certified Burn Program Update

Discussion/
Decisions Mike Norris provided a quick update on the Certified Burn Program. Wanted to have the first test course as an in-person training in September, but that is likely getting pushed back to October, and may be online.

5. Letter to DNR/Ecology re Smoke Management Plan

Actions **Share most recent draft of Smoke Management Plan with Steering Committee members.**

Chris is going to draft a letter to send to DNR and Ecology about SMP.

Discussion/
Decisions Chris Martin would like to send a letter to DNR and Ecology to see if there is a better way for the Council to stay informed about the Smoke Management Plan (SMP) update and to provide clarity around this update process. Recent communications with DNR has said the plan may be completed in 2022.

Vaughn Cork provided a quick update from his end: He is currently working on technical analysis plan and the data needed to conduct the analysis. Once that's completed – which should be done, compiled, and with results by the end of the month – it will go to Ecology and then be jointly submitted to EPA. However, once at EPA, he is unsure of their timeline.

6. New Business/Member Updates

Discussion/
Decisions **Science for Nature and People Partnership (SNAPP)**
New SNAPP project that is looking at the science side of, and coordination of, smoke and health impacts from wildfires and integrating forest health and restoration to this – how to approach both smoke/health and forest health/restoration moving forward in the context of wildfire. Ernesto Alvarado is a part of this project. Project site is Lake Tahoe. He can share a summary.

Northwest Fire Science Consortium (NWFSC)

NWFSC is tentatively planning a fire symposium for the spring of 2021. Potential opportunity for WPFC to be involved. Sarah will keep in contact as that symposium develops.

7. Review and Approval of Previous Minutes

Actions **Minutes from May 27, 2020 Steering Committee meeting approved.**

Discussion/ **Motion:** Ernesto Alvarado makes motion to approve the minutes from the May 27 Steering
Decisions Committee meeting. Sarah Hamman seconds. Approved unanimously.