

**WILDLAND FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

January 21, 2021

Zoom Meeting

Committee Members Present:

Allen Lebovitz – Wildland Fire & Forest Health Liaison, Chair
Tony Craven – Small Forest Landowner
Cody Desautel – Tribal Nations Representative
Russ Pfeiffer-Hoyt – State Land Trust Beneficiary
J.D. Marshall – Industry Landowner (Timber)
Bill Slosson – Assistant Fire Marshal
KC Whitehouse - Washington State Council of Fire Fighters
Reese Lolley – Statewide Environmental Representative
Erick Walker – USFS Deputy Forest Supervisor

Committee Members Absent:

Joe Gardner – Cowlitz County Commissioner
Dave LaFave – Fire Chief (Westside)
Randy Johnson – Fire Chief (Eastside)
Lee Hemmer – Industry Landowner (Range)
Jim DeTro – County Commissioner (Eastside)
Vacant – Fire District Commissioner

Guests/Other Attendees:

George Geissler – State Forester & Deputy Supervisor for Wildfire & Forest Health
Loren Torgerson – Wildfire Policy Advisor
Angie Lane – Assistant Division Manager for Wildfire, Plans and Information
Kristine Reeves – DNR Legislative Director
Peter Antolin – Acting CFO
Ceci Rozendaal – DNR Senior Project Manager and Proviso Lead
Lauren Adler – DNR Director of External Affairs
Shelly Goodwin – WFAC Coordinator
Mark Teske
Jim Cahill
Jared Kruger
Mark Doumit
Jason Callahan
Lisa Borkowski
Mark Daudon

I. Opening, Roll Call

The meeting of the Wildland Fire Advisory Committee was called to order at 10:00 a.m. on January 21, by Zoom. Roll was taken, 8 members were present by Zoom and 5 members were excused, constituting a quorum.

II. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the November 12, 2020 council meeting were presented in draft and reviewed. Motion to approve draft minutes made by Committee member Russ Pfeiffer-Hoyt, seconded by Committee member Cody Desautel. Motion carried unanimously.

III. Chairman's Report

Chairman Lebovitz, Ongoing work with Proviso. Newer effort working with the Cattlemen Association. Continue to improve with grazers. Coordinate with district reps – Connect them up with fire staff to go over contact lists. They are the best source of information for access routes, calling lists. DFW Proviso involves grazing, detailed presentation on it.

IV. Agency Updates

- a. George Geissler, State Forester & Deputy Supervisor for Wildfire & Forest Health – Things are changing for us, Angie, Russ, and Chuck. The Fed side is changing but still some familiarity. Local – Commissioner has been discussing a grander reliance on the committees. Committee membership – look where we can expand. Committee member Pfeiffer-Hoyt commented, add individuals or representative communities like American Forest Resource Council and Insurance industry.
- b. Angie Lane, Assistant Division Manager for Wildfire, Plans and Information – Working on budget and bill analysis stuff. Operations/Aviation – recruiting and training. Logistics – Cache has completed inventory and came out in the positive. Getting modules ready to roll. Smoke Management update – RFA, BFA has closed for new proposals. Plans and Information – no meteorologist at this time, no plan of filling the position at this time. End of year fire reporting: human caused fire starts seen a 62% increase from 10 year average, escaped debris burning. Training – Academy planned on virtual platform – Work capacity and field sessions will be in person, schedule has been posted on training website. Policy surrounding training is something we have also been working on. Have asked Cliff Moss to help with recruiting for the intern position. Wildfire season summary PowerPoint highlights. Impacts and costs of Wildfire season. Only have control over DNR statistics, so we report on that. Related to fires on our protection or our assistance was requested. We have spent \$200,000 on fire fighter PPE. PowerPoint attached.
- c. Melissa Gannie, Assistant Fire Marshal – Report attached
- d. Andrew Spaeth, Forest Action Plan Coordinator – Report attached
- e. Erick Walker, USFS Deputy Forest Supervisor – Transition in administration on the federal level, President Biden has brought forward Tom Vilsac to be the Secretary of Agriculture, don't see any changes in our agency. No changes around this wildfire response, Prescribed Fire or landscape treatment this season. New

administrations priorities are climate change, racial inclusivity, and COVID response. We as an agency will key to be focused on and work towards these also. State level – Forest service just completed permanent fire hire, very successful in filling most of those positions. Working on temporary hiring, federal pay scale has not kept up with the state & local pay scale. This has caused a slight problem with recruiting. No option to increase the pay on the federal level. We are operating under very strict COVID conditions. Need 76,000 vaccines for first responders, Forest Services was not provided vaccines. Working with same COVID conditions as last year. Won't be looking at spring burning. Budget is good – increase on per fire side. Won't have to do reductions

V. New Business

- a. **Legislative Update** – Kristine Reeves, DNR Legislative Director
There are 52 deliverables that are agency requested. Forest Health and Resiliency got \$20 million out of a \$25 million ask. Top priority is 1168, Focus on policy and the path then who and how it gets paid for. Un and under protected land – need to work to identify all the pieces needed to move that forward. Bucket has to be put in place.
- b. **DNR Wildfire Proviso** – Ceci Rozendaal & Peter Antolin – Phase 1 has closed out, report was submitted on time, December 1st. Phase 2 – did an assessment by Stellar Associates. Working to get recommendations to use by February 1st. Report needs to be submitted by March 1st to be on time. Performance review of Wildfire program, budget and accounting. No plans to have hearings until after final report is submitted in March. Review of internal budget transparency.

VI. Committee roundtable-Public Comment

- a. Consensus on support for 1168
- b. Russ Pfeiffer-Hoyt – Rural Broadband support – 1168 – suriculture proposal on Environmental justice (research)
- c. Mark Teske (WDFW) mentioned shrub step

VII. Adjournment and Next Meeting

Meeting adjourned at 3:43 pm. The next general meeting is scheduled for February 18, 2021 from 1 – 4 pm, by Zoom.

Draft minutes submitted by Shelly Goodwin, approved by Chairman Allen Lebovitz. Formal action to be taken to approve the minutes at the next general meeting.