

**West Region Wildfire Council
Meeting Minutes
7/9/15**

Meeting Attendance

	Last Name	First	Affiliation
1	Austin	Tom	Log Hill Fire
2	Block	Sheridan	Ouray County Plaindealer
3	Chavez	Tad	USFS
4	Cinnamon	Sophia	WRWC
5	Conway	Bill	Arrowhead Fire
6	Falk	Lilia	WRWC
7	Gomez	Jamie	WRWC
8	Gottlieb	Paul	MCSP
9	Hibl	David	Montrose County Posse
10	Shelby	Austin	CSFS
11	Staehle	Alan	Ouray Fire Protection District
12	Tisdell	Ben	Ouray County
13	Wright	Jeff	Delta County
14	Yeager	Brian	BLM
15	Castrodale	Mark	Ouray County
16	Jacobs	Karen	WGI Insurance
17	Jackson	David	Travelers Insurance
18	Shaver	J.T.	CSFS

Objective/Purpose

The Council gathered to discuss the following:

Introductions

Lilia Falk facilitated the meeting and initiated a round of introductions.

Approval of Minutes

The Minutes from April's meeting were approved as written.

Presentation from Jim Webster, with Wildfire Partners in Boulder County, on Wildfire Partners' insurance certification pilot program.

To view the presentation go to :

https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/0B73_1AQQokPxakNBdmlLbDVyX3M

A recurring theme within Jim's initial slides were the fact that both insurance companies and homeowners are changing their approach to risk and mitigation. This transitional phase is in part from more people buying and building homes in the WUI, and the increase of homeowner interest in pursuing mitigation projects on their property. In addition to growing interest among homeowners, Jim notes that more political leaders and county officials are recognizing the importance of mitigation.

To provide context to the Boulder County based program, Jim discussed recent Boulder wildfire mitigation history. Boulder County has been actively involved with wildfire mitigation for the last 25 years, including extensive mapping and modeling throughout the county. Jim spoke of the 2010 4-mile canyon fire as a turning point for wildfire mitigation and insurability. He broke down the costs of the fire including insured losses, suppression costs, and recovery costs. Those graphics can be viewed in more detail in his PowerPoint presentation. Jim noted that the most pertinent take-away from the fire was that the opportunities for homeowners to significantly reduce risk via simple mitigation efforts are available, and it is up to the homeowner to take responsibility and assume the risk for their structure.

Wildfire Partners is a voluntary, pilot program that was started with funding from the state's Wildfire Reduction risk grant. The program launched in 2014 with great success and a strong interest from homeowners. The program is competitive and requires homeowners to go through an application and screening process before being accepted into the program. A mitigation specialist with Wildfire Partners conducts a home assessment that analyzes wildfire risk on the property. The specialist then generates a customized report and a "to-do" list for the homeowner. Every homeowner is given \$500 in assistance funds to start and that amount can be adjusted depending upon project specifications and financial needs of the homeowners. Once the project is complete, the mitigation specialist performs a follow-up inspection and the homeowner receives a certificate and a yard sign. Homeowners outside of the City of Boulder are targeted because there are fewer restrictions and more open space.

Wildfire Partners is a complement to the CWPP because the CWPP provides the framework for mitigation projects, while Partners provides action items and a platform for homeowners' responsibility. The success of the program is spread from "neighbor-to-neighbor" and 91% of WP participants would recommend the program to others.

If interested in replicating program elsewhere there is 1 million dollars available to other interested groups.

Jim then went into detail about their contractor base. Wildfire Partners has a certification program for private contractors and they must attend an annual training, receive positive reviews and hold an understanding of insurance. The homeowner select bids and chooses the contractor from the WP contractor base.

The presentation then shifted to a conversation about how to create relationships with insurance representatives. Jim took insurance representatives and walked them through the entirety of the mitigation projects process and the application used to conduct the home assessment. Due to the high standard of the basements and quality mitigation projects, agencies and homeowners were able to work together to increase insurability. Agents use the program because it helps their bottom line and homeowners receive insurability but no price reduction. Jim explained that their data from home assessments is more important in his process than core logic risk data.

The floor opened up to a group discussion about insurability issues specific to the Western Slope specifically with oversaturation of a singular insurance agency in a singular community and the renewing process for homeowners.

Fire Outlook:

Colorado is still very green. The chance for wildfire from now until September 1, 2015 is low.

Steve Ellis, DFPC: Federal partners have sent resources to California and the Northwest. DFPC Resources will stay in Colorado per minimum commitment. BLM is sending resources in Nevada and Idaho. There is one light helicopter in California. The USFS has sent resources to Oregon and Alaska. The DFPC is balancing local needs with those of other states to best facilitate response reciprocity.

Training Resources

State ICS workshop to discuss need for 2016, date TBD

SW Incident Management team is planning for a weather event exercise August 27-28
Location: TBD

Round Robin

Ben Tisdale provided an update on the SBEADMAR meeting in Ouray County. Ouray County is about to finalize a treatment plan around Ice Park and Amphitheater.

Steve Ellis discussed the limited liability certified burner program through the state. Landowners can continue to burn piles and can contract with CSFS and DFPC.

Thad is continuing to send resources out; his hand crew is coming back from Boise.

Jeff thanks the regional federal agencies for sending resources for fires in Delta County

Austin is holding WRWC project showcase next week and is looking for mitigation seasonal.

J.T. Shaver provided an update on the mitigation projects in Quartz Creek Properties in Gunnison