

**West Region Wildfire Council  
Meeting Minutes  
8/14/14**

***Meeting Attendance***

	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>First</b>	<b>Agency</b>
		<b>Name</b>	
<b>1</b>	Angell	Don	Montrose EM
<b>2</b>	Austin	Tom	Log Hill Fire
<b>3</b>	Barth	Chris	BLM
<b>4</b>	Bennett	John	Telluride Fire
<b>5</b>	Brack	Ben	WRWC
<b>7</b>	Conway	Bill	Arrowhead
<b>6</b>	Davis	Michael	BLM-MIFMU
<b>8</b>	Dinsmore	Jennifer	San Miguel County
<b>9</b>	Ellis	Steve	DFPC
<b>21</b>	Fowler	Clay	USFS
<b>10</b>	Gomez	Jamie	WRWC
<b>24</b>	Gottlieb	Paul	MCSP
<b>26</b>	Hughe	Isle	AFPD
<b>11</b>	Mattivi	Junior	Ouray County
<b>12</b>	McCarthy	Jim	Log Hill Village HOA
<b>13</b>	McKee	Fred	Delta County
<b>22</b>	Median	Pat	USFS
<b>23</b>	Paul	Martin	MCSP
<b>14</b>	Rogers	John	Log Hill Fire
<b>25</b>	Shaver	JT	WRWC
<b>18</b>	Shelby	Austin	CSFS Montrose
<b>19</b>	Staehele	Alan	Ouray Fire Protection Dist.
<b>20</b>	Stilley	Kevin	Arrowhead Fire

## **Objective/Purpose**

The Council gathered to discuss the following:

### **Introductions**

Jamie Gomez facilitated this meeting and initiated a round robin of introductions.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Minutes approved without corrections.

### **Arrowhead Evacuation Exercise: Lessons Learned**

Kevin Stilley of the Arrowhead Fire Protection District provided a presentation of the community of Arrowhead Evacuation Exercise, which included a short slide show of photographs.

- A simulated exercise to evacuate the Arrowhead community occurred on July 26, 2014
- Organized by the Arrowhead Volunteer Fire Department, the exercise was done at the request of the Gunnison County Emergency Management Department
- The simulation was based on a mock wildfire approaching from the west
- The community of Arrowhead has approximately 835 lots with about 273 homes and 146 RV/ trailers
- The vast majority of the lots are circular in shape and are  $\frac{3}{4}$  or 1 acre in size
- There is a network of roads which create a complex system of narrow roads that interconnect the community.
- In certain instances, one driveway might serve 4-6 lots
- On the day prior to the event, a Code Red call was sent out from Gunnison County Emergency Operations Center (EOC). They believe that about 50% of Arrowhead residents received the Code Red phone call.
- There was some discussion amongst meeting attendees about the 'call throttle rate' and how it can be best managed to ensure a higher percentage of successful calls.
- There was also discussion of the factors that lead to a lower percentage of residents receiving a phone, including a lack of adequate cell phone coverage in the Arrowhead area as well as how well equipped the individual phone switch from the local landline service provider is to handle high call volume.
- Jennifer Dinsmore noted her attempts to include CenturyLink in planning meetings and sessions regarding phone based emergency notifications.
- The Arrowhead Community was split up into to 8 different zones. A team was assigned to each zone.
- Bill Conway was the Operations Chief
- Numerous entities participated in the exercise including (but not limited to): Montrose Fire, Black Canyon National Park Service, Gunnison National Forest, Gunnison County EMS, Colorado State Patrol, Gunnison County Sheriff's Office and others.
- Pat Medina spoke about the structure defense and mitigation efforts that were observed as the moved from home to home.

- ATV's were used to quickly access homes and move around the community
- Resident / Evacuees were asked to move to a winter parking lot where they were served lunch. 109 meals were served to evacuees and 115 were served to volunteers.
- It took about 1 hour and 45 minutes to contact all of the residents
- The After Action Review (AAR) was mostly positive though a few things were brought up:
  - They need a better way to identify volunteers as volunteers
  - They need to paint across the end of individual driveways to demarcate that a resident has already been contacted. Flagging and other methods of paint were not as effective.
  - A lot of homes have already taken on some good mitigation techniques while vacant and unresponsive homeowners are causing problems for everyone.
- Bill discussed the fact that Arrowhead residents need a permit to remove any tree 3 ft. tall or larger.
- Most residents are good about removing dead and down material but are less likely to take action to increase spacing between trees (via thinning) and 'limbing up' of low lying branches on existing trees.
- The lot shape (circular) with common space in between circles has likely lead the exasperation of reduced mitigation efforts.
- The exercise resulted in the FPD becoming more prepared with database and mapping efforts for future exercises and actual events.
- Communication was "spotty at best"
- Cell coverage is about 80% for AT&T customers
- Cell coverage could be improved for future events if a mobile 'cell on wheels' or COW. Organizing and mobilizing a COW can take anywhere between 4 hours and one week.
- Many residents did not know their own address and didn't know where the Winter Parking Lot was. Increased and more effective signage would help this situation.
- Arrowhead would like to work with the county put address signs on each driveway.
- Scott Morrill from Gunnison County EM Dept asked Arrowhead to start ordering resources through the EOC.

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### Incident Updates

- Telluride FPD had a small fire. They sent a DFPC Type 3 helicopter which dropped 23 buckets of water on high elevation, steep angle slope which had a lot of dead and down material. The rapid response put the fire and did not cost TFPD anything.

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### DFPC Update- Steve Ellis

- The "medium helicopter" has thus far flown 3 missions, while the "Light Helicopter" has flown 6 missions and another helicopter has flown some additional missions.

- Steve noted an issue that cropped up related to Dept. of Transportation regulation related to carrying chainsaws on helicopter flights
- Steve encouraged everyone to not abuse the helicopter service, and use it only when all of the conditions are being met
- The helicopters cost \$1,400 per hour to fly and cost about \$2,400 per day in operational

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### Round Robin

- As of September 1<sup>st</sup>, Arrowhead FPD will have a new Fire Chief
- Chris Barth mentioned that he wanted to share with the Council a couple publications, including “Fire Management Today” and “Playing with Fire” by the Union of Concerned Scientists.
- The next WRWC meeting will be on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 pm.