

**West Region Wildfire Council
Meeting Minutes
10/8/15**

Meeting Attendance

	Last Name	First	Affiliation
1	Angell	Don	Montrose County
2	Barth	Chris	BLM
3	Beckhardt	Dave	Log Hill Fire
4	Block	Sheridan	Ouray County Plaindealer
5	Cinnamon	Sophia	WRWC
6	Falk	Lilia	WRWC
7	Gomez	Jamie	WRWC
8	Hernandez	Rick	Hinsdale County
9	Mattivi	Junior	Ouray County
10	McCarthy	Jim	Log Hill Village HOA
11	Morrill	Scott	Gunnison County
12	Peterson	Drew	Colorado OEM
13	Shelby	Austin	CSFS
14	Staehle	Alan	Ouray County FPD
15	Tisdell	Ben	Ouray County
16	Wright	Jeff	Delta County
17	Dana	Reynolds	DHSEM
18	Shaver	JT	CSFS
19	Brenkert-Smith	Hannah	CU Boulder

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 September's meeting were approved as written.

Presentation from Hannah Brenkert-Smith, Institute of Behavioral Science, University of Colorado Boulder, on WRWC Risk Perceptions and Community Comparison

To view the presentation please goes to:

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

Hannah Brenkert-Smith is part of an interdisciplinary research team, Wildfire Research Practitioner Research Collaboration, which uses a systematic data collection approach to ask questions of how people are living with risk and what mitigation measures people are taking. This particular research study began in Colorado Springs in 2007 and has since moved to the Western Slope, with plans to start similar research in Firewise of Southwest Colorado communities. In this particular presentation, Hannah focused on surveys conducted in 3 counties where the West Region Wildfire Council is actively working with landowners to reduce their wildfire risk. These surveys include questions about include risk awareness, risk perceptions, how the characterize conditions on their prop and neighbor's property, cost share questions, other barriers or incentives related to wildfire mitigation, risk behaviors, and demographics.

Hannah spoke to the important collaborative effort between WRWC and the WIRE team. WIRE pairs the survey results with the data from the WRWC parcel level risk assessments and associated data, which motivates researches to ask the questions what "incentivizes action" and how this relates to the perception of risks.

Hannah divided her presentation into several parts. She began a discussion of the data informing what drives people to mitigate and where they receive their information. Examining residential occupancy and income range were two key data sets that helped to inform level of homeowner investment in mitigation. Across all study sites people are concerned about their wildfire risk but actual mitigation activities are varied. Another factor that WIRE examined were homeowner information sources. A high percentage of people reported talking with their neighbor, which was a consistent to people performing mitigation on their property. Hannah underlined the importance in this social network and the importance of supporting communities to form social capital, because fire mitigation will follow. The top three wildfire risk information sources where local fire department, WRWC, and neighbors.

Hannah went on to discuss common barriers to mitigation, number one being the cost. She detailed cost beyond the financial understanding, people noted physical work, and the actual in-kind time as being associated with overall project cost. Following costs was the lack of property specific and slash pile disposal information. In comparing the answers from the resident survey and parcel level risk assessment, people consistently underestimate their risk, which proves insufficient for action to take place. She also identified a risk gap between self-reported scores and the professional assessment, with varied results between risk estimations.

The research team conducted an additional survey to determine the influences on neighbor behavior on homeowner's mitigation activity. The key questions being, "Do those that actively participate in mitigation live next to others participating in mitigation?" Through additional surveys, the research team found that homeowners who

have dense background fuels and are close to dangerous topography are also likely to have dense vegetation around their homes. In addition to this information, findings showed that residents who have a neighbors with dense background fuels and more likely to participate in mitigation.

The role of insurance in promoting action was discussed, including the general assumptions. Hannah discussed the assumptions about the role of insurance, including the belief that insurances agencies provide a clear signal about risk via high premiums. From survey data in San Miguel and Delta Counties, the research team surmised that few homeowners receive wildfire information from insurance companies. Many people have homeowners insurance but are unsure how wildfire risk affects it.

Hannah ended her presentation with a brief discussion on lessons learned throughout her research process. She discussed how risk gaps provide opportunities for targeted outreach and the underlined the power of building social networks to expand community-wide mitigation activities. WIRE will continue to make broader comparisons with similar surveys in SW Colorado.

Colorado Wildland Fire Conference Share _All

FACO Update_Lilia Falk

FACO is currently seeking 3 additional board members and non-voting liaisons. FACO with move forward with coordinating future Wildland Fire Conferences. The Watershed Center is assisting with outreach and branding development, along with a strategic communication plan.

Round Robin

Rick Hernandez, provided an update of the current commercial logging operation on Slumgullion Pass in Hinsdale County.

J.T. Shaver discussed his involvement in the Blue Mesa Community and Parcel-level risk assessment..

Jim McCarthy thanked the WRWC for organizing a successful chipping day in Log Hill Village.

Scott Morrill, briefly discussed his involvement in evacuation planning in the towns of Whitepine and Marble.

Sophia Cinnamon recently completed the Blue Mesa Risk Assessment and presented the completed WRWC brochure.

Jamie just finished the Norwood FPD parcel-level risk assessments. With the completion of the Slickrock-Egnar FPD risk assessments, all of the San Miguel County WUI will have completed parcel-level risk assessments (5,000 total).

Ben Tisdale provided an up update about the current logging operation in the Ouray Icepark. There will be a joint planning meeting to address land use code priorities specific to wildfire concerns date October 20th at 5pm 4H center in Ridgway.

Chris Barth just returned from another fire in Dubois, WY. He is interested in creating a learning exchange model with Firewise Communities in Dubois.