



FIRE SAFE SAN MATEO COUNTY

February 12, 2020 General Meeting Minutes

location changed to 2955 Woodside Road, Woodside CA 94062

I. Attendance:

Aren Clark	City of Pacifica Public Works
Casey Dunn	Resident Butano Canyon
Cecile Juliette	CalFire/ San Mateo County PIO
Chris Barresi	Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
Christy Adonis	Central County Fire District
Clyde Preston	North County Fire Authority
Daniel Krug	San Mateo County Parks
David Gleason	Resident San Carlos
Deborah Hirst	San Mateo County - Supervisor Horsley
Debra Born	South Skyline Fire Safe Council
Denise Ena	Woodside Fire Protection District
Dob Bullard	Woodside Fire Protection District
Frank Rodgers	CAL FIRE
Gary Silva	CAL FIRE San Mateo
Joe Issel	San Mateo Resource Conservation District
Jonathan Cox	CAL FIRE
Jonathan Perrin	San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
Ken Castle	San Carlos Homeowner
Lorrie Duval	PV EPC, WPV-CERT
Marshall Hird	Woodside Fire Protection District
Melinda Martin	San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department
Sarah Collamer	CAL FIRE
Sheena Sidhu	San Mateo Resource Conservation District
Danielle Lee	SMC Office of Sustainability
Lorelay Mendoza	Stanford University
Trevor Herbert	Jasper Ridge

II. Introductions

Members and Guests introduce themselves.

III. Presentations:

- A. Chief Jonathan Cox, San Mateo Fire Department
Topic: Successes and lessons learned from the Kincade Fire

1. Overview: The area of San Mateo County is similar to the location of the Kincadee fire so there are lessons to learn, which is what Chief Cox will be sharing with FSSMC. The Big picture is that the Kincadee fire occurred during a relatively mild year after three big fire years before. However, the end of October 2019 the conditions in Sonoma changed which made it a little bit more like the three big fire years.

The fire was reported on Wednesday, October 23, 2019 at 9:57pm. The area was in a red flag warning. 300 acres were on fire when the first night air attack arrived. A second large wind event occurred between Oct 26-27, which really changed the fire conditions. This resulted in large-scale evacuations, 374 buildings destroyed, and 77000 acres destroyed.

The second wind event was in the forecast when the fire first erupted, and stakeholders considered this when evaluating if evacuations were needed, and calculating when they would need to announce evacuations, especially because this would need to be done *before* the public safety power shutoff (PSPS) by PG&E which would have made communications more difficult. Other concerns stakeholders had to consider were shelters, road usage as people evacuated, and general safety. They aimed to be conservative and proactive.

2. [Chief Cox shared a youtube video from the ALERT wildfire camera <https://youtu.be/nb2m8KKuwk>]
3. Lessons learned: Primarily related to evacuation planning and mass evacuations.
 - a. PSPS (Public Safety Power Shutoffs) – need to consider how shutoffs will affect shelters, basecamps, and areas where firefighters staying during shifts.
 - b. Supporting 5000+ firefighters – In this incident, they did not have competition of resources with other fires, but this will not always be the case in other events, there needs to be appropriate plans for if resources and firefighters need to be dispersed.
 - c. Local Spanish language needs – the Spanish press conferences were held after English press conferences, and the officials did not stay on stage for the Spanish portion of press conferences, which resulted in a negative perception for the audiences.
 - d. Heavy Emphasis on Public Messaging – twice daily press conferences, which was positively received by people feeling they were kept up-to-date
 - e. Coordinated Evacuations – plan ahead of time, in case you do not have a lot of time to plan given specific fire conditions (i.e. in this case, there was about 70 hours before the second wind event, which allowed for time to plan, but in other cases, there might be shorter windows).

- f. Unified Command & EOC Coordination – running incident and supporting the county simultaneously, keep communication open and coordinated
- g. Night Air Attack – this was good and fire cameras help. Big positive impact
- h. Political VIP Visits – Governor visited three times. This had a big impact
- i. Vegetation Management Projects – there were 2 areas of vegetation management that used on perimeter of fire. These were used a fuel breaks when planning how to fight the fire.
- j. Wildfire cameras – public can view and see for themselves, in addition to CAL FIRE using them for management.
- k. Generally speaking- people want information. So the better you can communicate, better it is for the situation

B. Mapping Fuel Reduction Projects for CAL FIRE in San Mateo County – Frank Rodgers, CAL FIRE Prefire Engineer

1. Overview: CAL FIRE relies on Fire Safe Councils to develop project that are a priority to the community, in addition to CAL FIRE priorities (such as governor projects). Once a project idea develops, next step would be grant funding, and a component of this is to connect it to existing projects and plans for our area. One way this can be done is to connect it to the Community Wildfire Prioritization Plan (CWPP): http://www.sanmateorcd.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/2018_CWPP_update_final-Opt.pdf
2. CWPP (Community Wildfire Prioritization Plan): CWPP broadly involves maps with treatment prescriptions and priority areas. Through community meetings, and discussion, we CAL FIRE has identified priority areas. This is where potential projects would happen and where they ought to occur. So, if you have an idea for a project, you can use this map to see if a fuel reduction project would link with other fuel reduction projects and priorities
 - a. Further in the document, you can find how the CZU is divided into 5 distinct zones (p. 54)
 - b. Then you can look at maps for each zone for more detail, such as where the WUI (wildland urban interface), and where there are high priority areas

2. Using the CWPP: So, as you develop ideas, bring them forth to the Fire Safe Council, and Frank Rodgers can update these maps (happens about every 4 years), and can incorporate these projects into the map
 - a. Grant applications generally ask for a map (usually through ESRI ArcGIS mapping tool)
 - b. These are also useful for fire management when there is an actual fire, so CAL FIRE can plan accordingly if a fuel reduction project is nearby when a fire is occurring CAL FIRE mapping goals
 - c. CAL FIRE has an internal mapping program, CAL Mapper. This is used to map projects that are completed and in progress (but not potential or planned projects that are not in progress yet). Project scale >1acre.
 - d. Please Share projects information with Fire Safe and then will send to Frank (Frank.Rodgers@fire.CA.gov)
 - e. Map will be primarily projects that help protect homes/communities
 - f. Send info with Garmin .GPX format. .KML or .KMX from Google would work too. SHP files are best

IV. Wildfire Alert Camera subcommittee

1. Following up on a previous FSSMC meeting and discussions about installing wildfire cameras in San Mateo County, there has been interest in forming a subcommittee to further this effort
2. At this time, 3 cameras are being installed by University of Nevada Reno Wildfire ALERT program at local community colleges in San Mateo County
3. There is a call for volunteers to form this subcommittee. Ken Castle has volunteered to manage this subcommittee.
4. The volunteers are:

Ken Castle	San Carlos Homewoner
Marshall Hird	Woodside Fire Protection District
David Gleason	Brittan Heighs (HOA), San Carlos
Trevor Herbert	Jasper Ridge
Rich Sampson	CAL FIRE / Fire Safe SMC Board
Debra Born	South Skyline Fire Safe Council
Dan Belville	Public Safety Communications
Christy Adonis	Central County Fire District
Chris Barresi	Midpeninsula Regional Open Sapce District
Deborah Hirst	Sup. Horsley office, San Mateo County
Casey Dunn	PMAC / Butano Canyon
Jonathan Cox	CAL FIRE

V. Setting up site visits

Short discussion about setting up site visits for interested parties to learn about fuel reduction and fire resiliency projects that are occurring in the county. There is discussion about inviting elected officials and candidates to the field visits. This is an election year with some open seats in our area, so this might be a good time to have both elected officials and candidates invited to learn about the projects.

VI. GREEN CLIMBER; Remote masticator group rental opportunity

Discussion about potentially doing a group rental of a Green Climber [VIDEO: <https://www.greenclimberna.com/slope-mower-videos>]. This particular machine can do 60% slopes, and the one the group is interested in renting has a “forest head” that be used on larger woody debris. Midpen has had some experience using this machine and used it for coyote brush and manzanita. The rental would be for 2 months for \$8500/month for some time in the spring. If you are interested participating or have any questions, please contact Denise Enea, DEnea@WoodsideFire.org.

VII. Announcements

1. Community Planning Assistance for Wildfire (CPAW)
 - a. This is a resource and potential funding source for projects.
 - b. Denise wanted to share this resource and directed people to the website
2. Upcoming events that may be of interest to FSSMC members:
 - a. Protecting your City from Wildfire, Crowne Plaza San Diego March 11-March 12. <https://infocastinc.com/event/protect-city-from-wildfire/>
 - b. Workshop on Wildfire Management: The Case for San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties. Stanford University, March 16 <https://west.stanford.edu/events/workshop-wildfire-management>

VIII. New Business

1. South Skyline Fire Safe Council (Debra Born) is announcing a job opening for a temporary position to aid in a fuel reduction project. This person would be helping in overseeing California Conservation Corps that would be working on the project. The job description will be linked on the FSSMC website: https://www.firesafesanmarateo.org/images/documents/Help_Wanted_ad_20200110.pdf

IX. Round Table

- A. CAL FIRE Sarah Collamer will be in Sacramento helping with grading prevention grants
- B. CAL FIRE Rich Sampson shares there are no upcoming grants on the horizon, but the next Forest Health grants will be in July, but it has not been announced yet, and the Fire Prevention grants may also be posted in July, but they also have not been announced yet.
- C. General discussion: If you have a project in mind, it would be a good idea to start talking to the Fire Safe Council, Resource Conservation District, and CAL FIRE to get started on a grant.
- D. San Mateo Resource Conservation District (RCD) Joe Issel shares news of the \$5.3 million Forest Health grant that was awarded to both San Mateo RCD and RCD of Santa Cruz County. Work will be done at Wunderlich and Huddart County Parks, Girl Scout Camp at Butano, and Butano State Park within San Mateo County.
- E. South Skyline Fire Safe Council Debra Born shares there will be 2 upcoming workshops.
 - a. Feb 26, 7-9 pm in Santa Cruz County
 - b. March 5, 7-9 pm at Midpen
- F. South Skyline Don Bullard shares that there is progress at Teague Hill. Burn piles have been created and are planned for burning in early spring. Ormondale School in Portola Valley has their chipper program going, and there is also a chipper crew on Marsh Hill.
- G. County Parks, Dan Krug shares that there are a few small projects currently being implemented and they are also planning a project near San Bruno
- H. Jasper Ridge, Stanford Trevor Herbert shares that there is ongoing fuel reduction happening at Jasper Ridge

X. Adjournment: 4:14 PM

The next Fire Safe San Mateo County Meeting will be held on March 11, 2020