

Summit County Wildfire Council

Meeting Minutes

January 21, 2016

1:30 – 3:30 p.m.

Attendees: Maggie Hillman, Chapin LaChance, Mark Johnston, Paul Kuhn, Dan Moroz, Alan Hanson, Matt Benedict, Shelby Limberis, Peter Grosshuesch, Steve Lipsher, Ross Wilmore, Justin Conrad, Ron Cousineau, Jim Cox, Marcia Newhart, Joe Newhart, Ned West, Dan Schroder, Doug Cupp, Beth Huron, Jim Curnutte, Gary Curmode, Susan Lee

- I. Approval of Agenda:** Jim Curnutte acted as Chair in Dan Gibbs' absence. Jim opened the meeting at 1:32 p.m. and introductions were made around the room. Dan Schroder suggested moving the discussion on Chipping Program Cost Comparison to the first agenda item. The agenda was approved as amended.
- II. Approval of November 19, 2015 Minutes:** Jim Cox moved to approve the November 19, 2015 minutes. Char Bloom seconded the motion; all were in favor and the minutes were approved.
- III. Chipping Program Cost Comparison, 2014-2015:** Dan Schroder distributed a spreadsheet of Chipping Program expenses for 2014 and 2015 (attachment A). In both years, there were remaining unspent funds after funding the chipping and grant programs (\$43,706.46 in 2014; \$107,300.51 in 2015). Factors to consider in comparing the cost over two years:
 - o In 2014, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) awarded Summit County a \$62,500 matching grant for the chipping program. In 2015, the DNR awarded Summit County with \$100,000.
 - o Due to improved efficiencies in the program, the chip contractor cost for 2015 was much less than in 2014 (difference of \$48,200).
 - o In 2014, the county hired one seasonal technician for the program. In 2015, two seasonal technicians were hired.
 - o In 2014, the Gypsum biomass plant took the chipping program chips for free. In 2015, the county contracted with the biomass plant to take chips, but the plant was closed due to technical issues and defaulted on the contract. The county ended up contracting with Climax Mine to take chips, but paid to have them transported at a net cost of \$2 per cubic yard.

The annual budget for education and outreach (\$20,000) in both 2014 and 2015 has been split between the chipping program and general wildfire mitigation messaging. Staff could potentially reduce dollars spent for education and outreach by concentrating on the most efficient advertising methods. A brief discussion followed:

- o Staff could survey chipping program participants from 2014-15 to determine the most efficient advertising methods.
- o The Wildfire Council should consider alternative ways to effectively allocate funds in anticipation that the chipping program will eventually wind down.

IV. Discussion on Additional Grant Funding for Town of Breckenridge: For the past two years, the Town has run a very successful slash disposal program allowing residents to deposit slash at the skier satellite lot on Airport Road. In 2015, the town received a CWPP grant from the county in the amount of \$15,000, representing a 50/50 reimbursement with an anticipated program cost of \$30,000. The town hired a contractor to chip the slash on-site; however, the cost of site cleanup exceeded the anticipated project amount. The total program cost was \$38,198.50 including chipping, hauling, landfill fees and staff time. Mark Johnston, Streets and Parks Manager for the Town of Breckenridge, requested on behalf of the town that the Wildfire Council approve additional funding for the 2015 Town of Breckenridge CWPP grant in the amount of \$4,099.25. A brief discussion followed, with several council members acknowledging that the town's program has complemented the county's chipping program in that it allows for a wider range of vegetation size and type and offers drop off times outside the parameters of the county's program schedule. Susan Lee moved to approve additional funding to the 2015 Town of Breckenridge CWPP grant in the amount of \$4,099.25. Dan Moroz seconded the motion; the majority was in favor and the motion was approved.

Dan Schroder presented a second budget request for the council's consideration: Due to the Gypsum biomass plant's inability to accept chips from the 2015 chipping program, the county contracted with Climax mine to receive 5,500 cubic yards. When it became apparent that the original contract was insufficient to meet the county's needs, the county contracted for an additional 1000 more cubic yards. Approximately 1,100 cubic yards of chips remain at the Silverthorne and Dillon chip storage sites. Dan requested that the council approve the allocation of \$13,200 of 2016 funds to remove the residual chips and transport them to the landfill. Chips could be stored at the landfill until the county can move them either to Climax or to the Gypsum biomass plant this summer.

Discussion followed:

- By leaving chips on town property, the towns' snow storage space is limited for the remainder of the winter.
- The county is looking for a "net-zero" option for moving chips in 2016.
- Several council members offered to make phone calls and follow up with county staff regarding chip transport and storage options.

Jim Cox motioned to approve the expenditure of 2016 wildfire funds for transport and storage of remaining chips at the Silverthorne and Dillon chip storage sites. Peter Grosshuesch seconded the motion, all were in favor and the motion was approved.

V. Update on Wildfire Hazard Reduction Code Amendments: Summit County has been working with a consulting team to revise the Summit County Land Use & Development Code to better address wildfire hazard reduction. The county is also working on major Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) revisions. Doug Cupp will be seeking input from HOA's, fire districts and towns, but invited the council to approach him any time with suggestions.

VI. Chipping Program Awards and Recognition: In January, the National Association of State Foresters announced that Summit County was to receive the Wildfire Mitigation Innovation Award for the chipping program. Dan Schroder will attend the 2016 Wildland Urban Interface conference in Reno on March 8-10 to accept the award.

- VII. 2016 Chipping Program:** The DNR has awarded Summit County a \$50,000 matching grant for the 2016 Chipping Program. Extension staff worked with a graphic designer to develop a final outcomes brochure highlighting the successes of the 2015 Chipping Program. The group briefly discussed how to most effectively distribute the brochure for marketing purposes. Ideas included electronic distribution to HOA's and other groups and placement in the Summit Daily. The brochure exemplifies the importance of data collection in tracking the successes, outcomes and participation of the chipping program.
- VIII. 2016 Wildfire Grant Program:** The pre-application for the 2016 Wildfire Mitigation Grant program is on the county website. Pre-applications for both the CWPP and the Hazardous Fuels Reduction grants will be accepted until April 29. Doug Cupp encouraged meeting attendees to look at the "get it done" list for project ideas, as well as Appendix B of the CWPP, which lists hazardous fuel reduction objectives that have been identified in the county.
- IX. Education Updates:** Over the past two years, the educational message has combined promotion of the chipping program with the overarching wildfire mitigation message. Dan Schroder recently shared wildfire program information with Middle Park Conservation District and extended the invitation to speak with town councils or other groups. He will most likely continue to use advertising methods that have proven successful in previous years. Dan stated that the county is completely out of hand-out materials such as shopping bags and stickers, but will use 2016 education funds to replenish supplies.
- X. Legislative Updates:** Doug Cupp reported on recent legislature being recommended for approval by the Wildfire Matters Committee:
- o Change the current tax deduction to tax credit for fuel mitigation projects;
 - o The promotion of broadcast burning as an acceptable practice for fuel mitigation, restoring healthy forest and watershed restoration;
 - o Support the funding for broadcast burning by transferring funds to the wildfire risk reduction fund.
- XI. Group Roundtable:**
- Town of Silverthorne: The council appreciated having Dan come speak to them last spring and would like to have him come again this year.
 - Forest Service: In 2015, the Forest Service awarded 3 long-term stewardship contracts, all with West Range Reclamation – South Ophir (300 acres), Spring Creek (200 acres) and Brush Creek (500 acres). The Forest Service is looking at cutting over 500 acres in the Harrigon Creek Area (near Sierra Bosque/Boulder Creek). The name of the Keystone Forest Health and Fuels project has been changed to Lower Snake WUI and the Forest Service is seeking feedback from the Wildfire Council on the project. Xcel Energy plans to do vegetation reduction along power lines and the project is going through the NEPA process.
 - Upper Colorado River Fire Management: Progress is being made on burning piles from Forest Service work. Over 3,300 piles (181 acres) have been burned to date. UCR is working well with the Colorado Pollution Control Division and just got all 2016 smoke permits renewed or obtained new permits. UCR has been concentrating on burning piles from fuels treatments in the south end of the county, but will soon be working in the north

end of the county.

- Colorado State Forest Service: CSFS continues to work with the statewide Firewise Communities program.
- Red, White and Blue Fire District: The training center will be staging mock wildfire events again this year. Two Silverthorne neighborhoods are already likely candidates for hosting the exercise, but RW&B is looking for a third in the Upper Blue River Valley.
- Planning Department: The Planning Department is working to build a stronger relationship between the CWPP and planning code to improve the integration of information between the two documents.
- The Ptarmigan neighborhood will be applying for a 2016 CWPP grant to install a cistern.
- Town of Breckenridge: The town is very supportive of chipping program, but may need to look at other chip storage areas in future years since the Airport Road location is going to be developed soon.
- Lower Blue River Basin: Xcel Energy wants to cut vegetation under their power lines and leave it on the ground, which is a major concern to homeowners. Ross Wilmore (UCR) stated that he just learned about this a few days ago and is looking into the matter.
- Friends of Dillon Ranger District would be happy to work with the Wildfire Council on education benefits.

XII. Next Meeting Date – March 17, 2016, 1:30 – 3:30

XIII. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Beth Huron, Summit County Community Development

APPENDIX "A"

Base Total approx. ASSUMPTION \$300,000.00

2014 Chipping Program Cost		2015 Chipping Program Cost	
DNR Grant	\$62,500.00	DNR Grant	\$100,000.00
		Climax Chip Purchase	\$63,300.00
Total Revenue:	<u>\$62,500.00</u>	Total Revenue:	<u>\$163,300.00</u>
Expenditures:		Expenditures:	
Chip Contractor	\$198,200.00	Chip Contractor	\$150,000.00
Seasonal Technicians	\$10,710.00	Seasonal Technicians	\$18,000.00
Strategic Fence	\$2,745.60	Haul Contractor	\$75,960.00
street media - bus ad	\$4,700.00	street media - bus ad	\$1,100.00
outside TV 8	\$650.00	outside TV 8	\$650.00
movies	\$375.00	movies	\$375.00
taffic signs	\$1,414.53	taffic signs	\$1,121.55
Krystal - radio	\$2,470.00	Krystal - radio	\$3,100.00
AMT - radio	\$3,072.00	AMT - radio	\$2,900.00
SDN ads	\$3,816.47	SDN ads	\$6,041.74
staff supplies	\$16.11	staff supplies	\$2,704.91
brochure printing	\$1,241.00	graphic designers	\$2,744.91
realtor boxes	\$69.67	realtor boxes	\$133.57
shirts for wildfire crew & embroidery	\$52.26	shirts for wildfire crew & embroidery	\$380.62
Shopping Bags	\$2,459.69	I-Pad (x2)	\$870.44
Total Expenditure	\$231,992.33	Total Expenditure	\$266,082.74
Total Revenue	\$62,500.00	Total Revenue	\$163,300.00
Total Program Cost	\$169,492.33	Total Program Cost	\$102,782.74
		2014 - 2015 difference	\$66,709.59

Hazardous Fuel Reduction Awards	\$59,938.38
CWPP Awards	<u>\$26,862.83</u>
Total Grant Awards	\$86,801.21

Hazardous Fuel Reduction Awards	\$46,656.75
CWPP Awards	<u>\$43,260.00</u>
Total Grant Awards	\$89,916.75

Chipping and Grant Expenses	\$256,293.54
remaining unspent funds	\$43,706.46

Chipping and Grant Expenses	\$192,699.49
remaining unspent funds	\$107,300.51