

**Summit County Wildfire Council  
Meeting Minutes  
November 21, 2019  
1:30 – 3:30 p.m.  
Buffalo Mountain Room  
County Commons  
Frisco, CO**

**Attendees:** Maggie Hillman, Joel Dixon, Eric White, Paul Kuhn, Elisabeth Lawrence, Jim Curnutte, John Taylor, Chapin LaChance, Ken Cremer, Steve Lipsher, Ryan McNertney, Brad Piehl, Dan Schroder, Beth Huron, Michael Wurzel, Kate Chapman

- I. **Approval of Agenda:** The Chair opened the meeting at 1:35 p.m. The council approved the meeting agenda without changes.
- II. **Approval of September 18, 2019 Minutes:** Paul Kuhn moved to approve the September 18, 2019 minutes. Maggie Hillman seconded the motion; all were in favor and the council approved the minutes without changes.
- III. **Rocky Mountain Restoration Initiative Review:** This new initiative, formed by the USDA Forest Service's (USFS) Rocky Mountain Region and the National Wild Turkey Federation, focuses on creating collaborative efforts between diverse private and public organizations in Colorado to address large-scale conservation and forest management across public and private lands. A group of over 40 federal, state, local, private and nonprofit partners from across Colorado worked together to select three initial priority areas: the southwest, the central Front Range, and the I-70 corridor. The initiative then invited organizations from these priority areas to propose projects that could significantly help a community withstand the impact of an unplanned fire, as well as address other goals such as enhanced recreation opportunities, forest restoration, watershed protection and improved wildlife habitat.

The I-70 corridor task force submitted a proposal for \$6.8 million per year for 10 years for protection along the I-70 corridor. Brad Piehl, Ryan McNertney, Bill Jackson and Dan Schroder presented the proposal at a meeting in early November. Evaluators will consider several factors, including social license. The local proposal had several advantages over some of the other proposals, such as a tax-funded source and many NEPA ready projects. Proposals included the Upper South Platte Partnership, Southwest Colorado Restoration Initiative, I-70 Fireshed (focuses on prescribed burns), Conejos Peak and Pike's Peak. Every proposal included some amount of treatment that is ready to go (usually on USFS land), and the proposals included ownership of USFS, state, county and private lands. The evaluators will make their decisions on December 9.

- IV. **2019 Measure 1B Discussion:** Voters recently approved Measure 1B, which extends an existing mill levy that was due to sunset in 2022. This extension will continue to fund open space and wildfire mitigation, including the chipping and grant programs, as well as other public programs and services, in perpetuity.

**V. Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) Updates:**

- Under the Good Neighbor agreement with USFS, CSFS has contracted the fuels reduction project on the “triangle” at Barton and Airport Road. An adjoining open space property is also being treated. The contractor has started work, but will not finish until next year. The project is being funded by USFS and Strong Future Fund monies. Community response to the project has been largely positive.
- The Miner’s Creek project, funded by USFS, Denver Water and partners, has been delayed by snow until next year.
- CSFS is partnering with USFS and Summit County Open Space and Trails (OS&T) on the Wellington Neighborhood project, and hopes to have a contract in place later this year for completion next year. CSFS has received a Forest to Faucets 2 grant to cover half the cost on the open space parcel of the project.
- Ashley Garrison (CSFS) has met with homeowners from both the Peak 7 and Slalom Drive neighborhoods, and homeowners are receptive and willing to facilitate the projects.
- Ashley is inspecting 2019 wildfire grant projects as applicants submit for reimbursement.
- CSFS may conduct an audit of Firewise communities next year due to having received weak activity reports from several communities this year. Changes to the guidelines in the Firewise program require communities to be more accountable than in the early days of the program. CSFS now has one person dedicated to Firewise at the state level. CSFS will develop a communications plan to get Firewise neighborhoods on board, with assistance from USFS and OS&T.

**VI. Hazardous Fuels Reduction Permit Program:** Michael Wurzel (Summit County OS&T) presented the premise for a new permit program that will allow private property owners to conduct fuels treatment on county property adjacent to their property. With over 1,500 private properties adjacent to county open space, the county receives one or two requests per year from homeowners wanting to do work on open space property. Previously, county staff would review and allow requests on a case-by-case basis. The new program will be a permit process requiring homeowners to apply within a set timeframe and meet specific criteria in order to receive a permit.

The program could dovetail with the county grant program, allowing applicants to apply for a 50:50 match for the project. The county plans to roll the program out in spring of 2020. Michael will present the program to the Breckenridge Open Space Advisory Committee next week, as the Town of Breckenridge has expressed interest in partnering on the program. USFS gets about 20 applications per year for their partnership program. The county may collaborate with USFS to conduct a robust messaging campaign for both programs.

**VII. Chipping Program Participation Over Time:** The county initiated the Hazardous Fuels Reduction (HFR) grant program in 2006, and the passage of ballot measure 1A in 2008 provided a steady funding stream, which has been extended by measure 1B in 2019. The county started the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) grant program in 2012 to address projects other than fuels reduction that impact wildfire resistance, and in 2014 started the chipping program. Towns have provided storage for chips during the program, and the chips have been

hauled to Climax Molybdenum mine for reclamation.

Dan Schroder projected a storyboard depiction of the chipping program over 6 years (click [here](#) to see interactive storyboard) and passed out a sheet showing numbers of homes and piles per year, as well as number of years that specific parcels participated (Exhibit A). The numbers indicate that about 50% of Summit County property owners have participated in the program. The maps indicate that the community has received the message and is actively engaged in the effort. The Hazardous Fuels Reduction grant program has supported 87 projects to date, and the CWPP Implementation program has supported 26 projects. The chipping program shows a steady level of participation over the years. There has not been diminished interest in the program, suggesting it could remain viable into the future. Ruby Ranch was still under snow in their allocated chipping week, so they ran a self-funded chipping program in mid-September. A brief discussion followed on various ideas for restructuring the chipping schedule and attracting contractors to bid on the program in future years.

- VIII. Education Updates:** The county will include a letter in the property tax fliers again this year. Steve Lipsher (Summit Fire & EMS) held a training for 25 real estate agents recently, and talked about getting the word out to the transient residents. The Summit Association of Realtors continues to be a great partner in its efforts to educate the public about wildfire mitigation. Fire District representatives are happy to come to any HOA meetings when requested.
- IX. Legislative Updates:** None.
- X. Other Matters:** We were in Stage I fire restriction for one month this fall. Elisabeth thanked partners for their support, and stated that for the most part, people adhered to the restrictions. Per the recently adopted fire code, homeowners must obtain a backyard fireplace permit from the fire districts.
- XI. Meeting Dates and Locations for 2020:**
  - a. March 19: Buffalo Mountain Room**
  - b. June 18: Mount Royal Room**
  - c. September 17: Buffalo Mountain Room**
  - d. November 19: Buffalo Mountain Room**
- XII. Adjournment:** The chair adjourned the meeting at 3:10 p.m.

**Exhibit A**

<b>2014 Totals</b>	<b>Homes</b>	<b>Piles</b>
Summit County	873	3,356
Blue River	192	507
Breckenridge	255	901
Dillon	24	74
Frisco	116	258
Silverthorne	57	121
Montezuma	7	29
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,524</b>	<b>5,246</b>

Cu. Yds. of Biomass: 4,400

<b>2015 Totals</b>	<b>Homes</b>	<b>Piles</b>
Summit County	1,154	3,451
Blue River	158	442
Breckenridge	244	528
Dillon	43	108
Frisco	114	211
Silverthorne	251	460
Montezuma	9	41
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,973</b>	<b>5,241</b>

Cu. Yds. of Biomass: 6,300

<b>2016 Totals</b>	<b>Homes</b>	<b>Piles</b>
Summit County	983	3,334
Blue River	119	385
Breckenridge	205	488
Dillon	34	74
Frisco	144	257
Silverthorne	281	590
Montezuma	2	13
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,768</b>	<b>5,141</b>

Cu. Yds. of Biomass: 5,480

<b>2017 Totals</b>	<b>Homes</b>	<b>Piles</b>
Summit County	1,313	5,760
Blue River	177	616
Breckenridge	332	1,180
Dillon	47	141
Frisco	167	383
Silverthorne	278	662
Montezuma	9	44
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2,323</b>	<b>8,786</b>

Cu. Yds. of Biomass: 5,120

<b>2018 Totals</b>	<b>Homes</b>	<b>Piles</b>
Summit County	1,027	5,233
Blue River	83	571
Breckenridge	166	1,053
Dillon	68	161
Frisco	164	252
Silverthorne	275	746
Montezuma	5	36
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,788</b>	<b>8,052</b>

Cu. Yds. of Biomass: 4,420

<b>2019 Totals</b>	<b>Homes</b>	<b>Piles</b>
Summit County	1,063	2,408
Blue River	115	182
Breckenridge	277	427
Dillon	24	40
Frisco	240	332
Silverthorne	210	341
Montezuma	2	8
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,931</b>	<b>3,738</b>

Cu. Yds. of Biomass: 5,400

<b>All Years</b>	<b>Homes</b>	<b>Piles</b>
Summit County	6,413	23,542
Blue River	844	2,703
Breckenridge	1,479	4,577
Dillon	240	598
Frisco	945	1,693
Silverthorne	1,352	2,920
Montezuma	34	171
<b>Totals</b>	<b>11,307</b>	<b>36,204</b>

Total Cu. Yds. of Biomass: **31,120**

<b># of Years</b>	<b>Properties that Participated in # of Years</b>
6	35
5	153
4	390
3	767
2	1,508
1	3,137
<b>Total Properties that Participated in &gt; or = 1 year</b>	
5,990	