MEETING NOTES | FIRE RESILIENT MADERA WORKSHOP #2
Madera Strategic Wildfire Mitigation Project

February 7, 2020 | 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM
Oakhurst Library Oakhurst, CA

Attendees

Abajian, Shelly – US Senator Diane Feinstein
Airey, Heather - PRCI
Anderson, Kraig
Clanton, Chris
Damme, Janet
Duke, Cory
Efird, Tom
Fairbanks, Shaun - CalFire
Garrett, Mark – UCCE Mariposa
Gaylord, Robert
Green, Kelly
Green, Della
Habben, Jeannie – Madera County
Hartesveldt, Chris
Hopkins, Robert - YSRCDC
Ince, Sharon
Johnson, Pat
Konapacki, Donna
Konno, David - YSRCDC
Lagen, Douglas
Macaulay, Robert – Madera County
Nelson, Charles
Nielson, Len - CalFire
Porter, Dennis
Rajnus, Carla
Reynolds, Justine - YSRCDC
Riddiough, John
Sutton, Stan
Sweat, Yvonne
Teffeteller, Rubie - YSRCDC
Thompson, William
Thompson, SallyJo
Wells, Kim
Wheeler, Tom – Madera County
Wiest, Sandy
Wilson, Theresa

Action Items

• Publish fire history map as a resource on YSRCDC website – Robert Hopkins (RH)
• Publish information about prescribed burning on YSRCDC website – RH
• Create a Fire Resilient Madera Facebook group – RH
• Post Firewise Resources on YSRCDC website – RH
• Invite NRCS representative to the next Fire Resilient Madera Workshop – RH

Summary

Facilitator Introduction – Justine Reynolds gave an introduction and reviewed the agenda.
Project Presentation – Robert Hopkins provided some background and updates on the Madera Strategic Wildfire Mitigation project and Fire Resilient Madera Workshops.
Fire History and Fuel Reduction 101 – Justine presented a fire history map and shared the resource for the map. Justine went over the difference between a fuel break and a fire break.
Q&A –
• Can a property owner implement a fire break on private property.
  o Shaun mentioned that a property owner can create a fire break on their property
• Fuel break/thinning projects must need maintained
  o Shaun discussed a CalFire fuels crew that will be dedicated to fuel reduction only and will not be reassigned when there is a fire.
• "Has PGE been invited to these workshops?"
  o PG&E has not be invited to participate at this time
    • There was general interest to have PG&E present so they are aware of projects and issues
• Comment on historic sheep grazing, CCC pre-WWII when maintenance was regular
  o There was a discuss about the CA Conservation Corps and the possibility of being utilized again in the future for fuel reduction-type projects
• "How is the $200M CalFire money going to be used: local contractors or other contractors?"
  o Shaun mentioned that sometimes local contractors may not have the capability to take on larger contracts
  o Justine noted that YSRCDC has a contract clause for prioritizing local contractors
• There was a question about if there are local resources for private landowners to secure grant funding to do brushing, fuels reduction on their own properties
  o Justine referenced NRCS programs that could help property owners
    • There was general interest in having an NRCS representative at the next FRM workshop

Guest Speaker –
Mark Garrett, University California Agriculture and Natural Resources (UCANR)
• UCANR is hosting a March 19 workshop on Fire Ecology aimed at helping homeowners with prescribed burning

Mapping Session – Participants used maps to identify areas of concern and made notes on the maps and on handouts describing the area where fuel breaks are needed.

Vision Session – The room was divided into two groups. Justine, Robert and Rubie took notes as participants discussed what a vision of a fire resilient Madera County would look like. The groups were energetic and engaged. The responses were then shared at the end of the session with both groups having similar results.

Feedback – Participants were asked to fill out feedback forms and forms were then collected.

Mapping Session
Three groups worked together to identify priority areas on maps provided. There was a lot of discussion and some participants marked the maps with their input while others used note papers provided. Possible fuel breaks that were identified include:
• South of Sugar Pine and North of Cedar Valley running perpendicular to Highway 41
• Church Ranch fuel break which runs North to South from Thornberry Mtn in the Federal Responsibility Area (FRA) to Rd 200
• Community of Cascadel Woods/Peckinpah Acres
Along Road 600 toward the Trabuco Mtn area
• Neighborhood of Marina View on the FRA surrounding the community
• Community of Wishon, within the community and in the surrounding FRA land
• Chepo Ridge in the bass Lake area in both private lands and FRA

Vision Session

During the vision session, the room was divided into two groups. Robert, Rubie and Justine took notes for the groups as they discussed what a vision of a fire resilient Madera County would look like. Justine, Rubie and Robert engaged the groups using a handout that provided two examples of a vision and notes from the previous workshop. The session provided a wealth of input and built off previous discussion.

• Community Planning
  o A strong Firewise program is needed
  o Unified community response and fire prevention plan
• Prescribed Fire
  o Dedicated/Coordinated prescribed fire crews
  o Private land broadcast burning
  o Volunteer system to notify communities when pile burning/prescribed burning will take place. This could help sensitive groups and reduce the likelihood of a prescribed burn being called in as a wildfire.
  o Education on best burning practices
• Volunteerism
  o Mobilized volunteer group(s) to aid other homeowners with fuel reduction
• Communication
  o Clearly inform residents about planned work
  o Utilize mass communication methods across all platforms to ensure the message is reaching all citizens
  o Facebook Page dedicated to prescribed burning notices
  o Facebook Page for Fire Resilient Madera Workshops/Program
• Resources
  o For community planning
• Oversight
  o Committee to ensure the Fire Resilient Plan is being adhered to
• Funding
  o Fiscal sponsorship to enable communities to receive grant funding
• Fuel Breaks
  o Anchored to strategic areas and to other fuel breaks

Two vision statements were submitted by two individual participants:
Eastern Madera County, being a wildfire prone environment, seeks resources, funding & education to assist in implementing proactive fuel reduction measures for a fire resilient future.

Together we can become fire resilient. When all residents and community members work together to create a fire resilient neighborhood along side CalFire and the USFS, we can make our communities safe as well as attractive.

Feedback
At the end of the workshop participants filled out feedback forms. Nearly all feedback provided was positive and constructive. We received 6 feedback forms with the following comments:

- **Session #1**
  - Maps would be more user friendly with roads added to topo

- **Session #2**
  - No Comments

- **Is there any information that you would like us to provide at a future workshop that would help you with decision making?**
  - Information on smart/fire resistant structures

- **General Comments**
  - Better communication with the Forest service to understand timelines and barriers
  - Consider recording the workshop so that the session can viewed by people who are unable to attend
  - We need more of these workshops