

California Fire Safe Council  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS PUBLIC MEETING  
MINUTES  
October 25, 2017 09:30 – 16:30  
Wildland Fire Training Center Room W119  
McClellan, CA

**Board Members Present:**

Dave Bischel  
Kate Dargan  
Jerry Davies  
Pat Frost  
David Horne  
Pat Kidder

**Board Members Absent:**

Neil Fischer  
J. Lopez  
Troy Whitman  
Dave Shew

**CFSC Staff Present:**

Stephen Gort  
Dan Lang  
Bethany Perez

The October 25, 2017 CFSC Public Meeting was called to order at 9:40 AM by Jerry Davies.

**Approval of Minutes**

Jerry Davies asked if there were any changes to the August 9, 2017 Public Session Meeting Minutes. There were none. Pat Frost made a motion to approve the minutes. Pat Kidder seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. **The CFSC August 9, 2017 Public Session Meeting Minutes were approved.**

**Board Chair Topics (Jerry Davies)**

**Farmers Planning Meeting—Takeaways and plans -- Discussion**

At the last Farmer's planning meeting, ideas were developed by workgroups with the goal of attracting homeowners and business owners to an event. Some of the ideas include:

1. Dinner movie group in community – pre-movie presentation by groups and between the movies- demos and raffle drawing –Make it fun!
2. Media training offered by CFSC to all interested in FSC in CA – to get media support to events. Farmers would like to sponsor. Include at the grant workshops or day before? San Diego has good media participation in these types of events.
3. LA Fair- booths, materials to reach thousands of attendees

The Forest Service, county and local fire agencies are already set up there and have booths. Maybe CFSC working with local fire safe councils could also participate. Additionally, the CA State Fair might be a good venue. Kate Dargan stated that the Smokey the Bear booth at the

CA fair is sponsored by the US Forest Service and that we might have an opportunity to set up something there if CAL Fire is no longer participating as was rumored.

Pat Frost added that it's important to offer good giveaways and to plan in conjunction with other events already being sponsored by others. This secures the venue and increases community participation because these are happenings that people already have on their schedules (for example local meetings at Fire Department). These events could also be used as way to raise donations for fire victims.

Jerry added that- Allstate, State Farm, Farmers, Home Depot all have an abundance of giveaway/promo items they may be willing to give to us for such events.

**State Farm Update** - Stephen, Jerry and Mike Williams have done a lot outreach with the goal of starting local fire safe councils as was the main intended purpose for the last funds we received from State Farm. However they have said that if there is not enough interest in this venture, they are open to CFSC using the grant as unrestricted funds for other projects such as the annual report, quarterly newsletter, etc.

**Fire Safe Councils' Successes**—USFS note- this is on HOLD due to fires but they do want to hear our success stories

**Annual Report (printed)** – JD wants to work with Dalonna, Stephen to put together Annual and Board member reports as we have done in times past

**PCI Update** –they are interested in rejoining us next year after the rebuilding from the fires is underway – ACIC(PCI's CA Voice) has over 1200 members(insurance companies/agents)

**Brief Note on USAA meeting (10/25/17 at 30 PM) for Full Board** – meeting today w/USAA – all who can stay are invited

**Tentative: Board/Fundraising Dinner for December?**

**Randy Moore Visit**—originally slated for January 2018– Trudie advised waiting until February because there is so much going on right now

**Washington, D.C. Trip—2018/CA Congressional quarterly Newsletter** – JD wants it if we can get it funded. David Bischel added it would be timely.

**Handouts** – JD handed out a CFSC press release and an article from the Seattle Times (see attached)

David Horne said there was an excellent article in LA Times about the FEMA model and why the FS is not able to fund prevention because all monies going to suppression. Maybe this year will be an impetus to change but it will be a slow process nonetheless.

Pat Kidder added that the FEMA mitigation modules allow very little funding for wildfire as the main focus is on roads and OES controls it. He suggested a meeting with CFSC, Bob Fentor and Nancy Ward might be useful. Kate Dargan agreed.

### **Executive Director's Topics (Stephen Gort)**

**Certification by all board & staff of all revised documents** – forms have been sent. Should be returned when signed to Bethany or Stephen. All present attendees provided signed certifications for both the revised HR Manual and the revised Financial Procedures Manual.

## **Strategic Plan Status Report**

Stephen distributed to each board member a copy of the Strategic Planning Workbook along with a Strategic Planning Assignment for the next board meeting. He stated that this workbook includes the CFSC Vision, Mission and work done at June meeting. He added the last three pages and foldout (PERT chart) in back are to be read in left to right fashion. These are items that we currently don't have money or staff to do. Next he emphasized the importance of developing the CFSC Value Proposition for fundraising from big corporate donors. The meeting was told to ignore the dates in the PERT chart (these are just place-holders for now), real dates will be added as the Board formalizes the strategic plan.

Kate Dargan inquired about item number 4 in regards to the metrics project provided we have the funding. Pat Frost asked how much it would cost. Stephen replied it would likely be in the neighborhood of \$100K although we haven't shopped it yet. Kate added that the insurance industry is very data-centric and it seems likely they would be interested in a data partnership with us. Perhaps they would be more willing to spend money on this type of project instead of outreach events because they know the value of data.

David Horne interjected that the insurance funding partners would need to be a consortium and not a single provider to avoid the perception that CFSC is an arm of any one insurance company. Discussion ensued about the possibility of being able to sell future access to data the likelihood of the Forest Service wanting to fund part of it or at least include as part of overhead. Stephen added that a conceptual design of a data architecture by good architect would likely take about 6 months to complete. Pat Kidder asked if it would be better to contract out or hire employee for this project. Stephen replied that it would be better to hire a contractor and utilize a single source of funding.

Jerry stated that ISO, CoreLogic and RIM are all private companies with big budgets and that we could put together a proposal for them. Kate added that we ensure that our work is never co-opted by a single for-profit agency. We need to set up business model for data so there is no favoritism. Jerry and Stephen said they would work on a draft paragraph from which to start. Kate added she would like to help with the metrics project.

Stephen asked the group if they had any questions on workbook and homework. He reminded them that the resources for many of the items have not been determined.

The next CFSC Board Meeting and Strategic Planning Sessions is slated for December 6 & 7 in Ontario, CA. (Now changed to Dec 7<sup>th</sup> and Jan 31<sup>st</sup>).

**Hiring Status** – Dan Lang and Elizabeth La Mar filled the last two positions of the Grant Specialists to be hired. Dan will be mentoring Elizabeth and Thelma Clark will be mentoring Sandra Lyons. Total CFSC staff now stand at 8 with 5 in the McClellan office and 3 in the Ontario office.

## **Roundtable/Other Board Member Topics (All)**

**David Horne** – CFSC Finance issues – will address in the closed session of today's meeting.

**Jerry Davies** – A 2nd press release to go out Monday. Received a call from San Francisco Magazine – they would like to do article on us and insurance. Lucas Scott is the journalist and JD will refer him to contact some of the board members for the story. In regards to getting

money out of Washington it would be good for a small group (maybe 3) to take our story to Sonny Perdue and Kevin McCarthy. Timing good –maybe plan for after first of year.

**Dave Bischel**- now officially retired from the CalForests Organization.

**Pat Frost** – in our area, we had 70 homes destroyed in August. Junction City didn't qualify for federal disaster aid, so as a community we are trying to find transitional housing for victims to get people back in their homes. It is believed that the fire was caused by PG&E line. Won't be attending the December meeting due to a previous commitment.

**Kate Dargan** –

1. Agenda request for next meeting –new Board Member update. We need to push to get it going again and decided on provided someone from Nomination committee is present to represent.

2. There were so many lives affected by fires and I find it deeply disturbing. What does that tell us as FSC? It seemed to me that the community not really ready or practicing prevention. Defacto recognition has occurred and all of the things we've been doing are insufficient. Our trend lines have not improved over last 5 years. What do we need to do differently? Need to think differently about our mission and values.

**Pat Kidder**– I agree. What more could we be doing? We need a Federal cohesive strategy – the Feds didn't come to Sacramento to meet. They are not giving CA the attention it deserves as it relates to this problem.

**Jerry Davies** – IIBHS (Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety) there is a huge national push to retrofit homes around US – repairing, rebuilding and remodeling for fire safety.

**David Horne** – At the last City Council meeting in Laguna – the City has been working on installing underground utility lines for a couple years. We decided to work with power companies instead of fighting with them. The City is self- financing this project of \$200 million dollars. The goal is to remove every wire in sight as we know that power lines are very often the cause of fires. This will take 7-10 years to accomplish. The City will buy credits from those that didn't use undergrounding. Another priority is the evacuation route. These things together will protect property values and ensure insurance coverage in the area.

**Stephen Gort** – My perspective on this year's fire. I and others have been working on fire safety for 15 years in Napa. We preach defensible space but we should also push for regular roadside right-of-way maintenance by PG&E, Southern Edison, and other utility companies, Caltrans, and County Public Works departments. We know that downed trees and power lines caused deaths and we need to take care of evacuation routes and roadways that are already in place.

**Kate Dargan**– There is a difference between Advocacy and Activism – we need to push the boundaries. Part of the answer is making the public realm, NAPA Board of County Supervisors and others accountable.

**The CFSC Board of Directors Public Meeting was adjourned at 11:30 AM.**

Minutes submitted by Bethany Perez

11-28-17

## ATTACHMENTS;

- [Opinion](#)

### Seattle Times

Originally published October 23, 2017 at 1:36 pm Updated October 23, 2017 at 2:55 pm

### **The government must change how it funds wildfire suppression and prevention, including forest thinning.**

By [Dylan Kruse](#) and [Russ Vaagen](#)

*Special to The Times*

Fire seasons are starting earlier and lasting later into the fall. More than 8 million acres have burned so far in 2017. Ash and smoke have made air quality unsafe. Tragic loss of life and homes in California reminds us again what's at stake. The U.S. Forest Service has spent \$2.5 billion on fire suppression this year - a historical record. This shift to more severe and expensive fire seasons has been called the new normal, and that is a terrifying prospect.

It's time to change our approach to wildfire:

- The government must change how it funds wildfire suppression.

Unlike other natural disasters, the Forest Service and Department of Interior are required to plan and pay for wildfire response out of their annual budgets. But longer fire seasons, increased development in the wildland-urban interface, and millions of forest acres with saturated fuel loads are leading to skyrocketing costs of wildfire response.

In the last several years, more than 50 percent of the Forest Service budget has been consumed by wildfire suppression, and by 2025, it could be upward of 67 percent. To make matters worse, in bad years like 2017 when the agencies exceed their annual allocation, they are forced to borrow from other programs to cover costs. This includes some of the very programs that help restore forests and make them resilient to future wildfires. This is a counterproductive and outdated mechanism that needs to be changed immediately, and there is a broad and diverse group of stakeholders - from environmentalists to the timber industry - working to make this happen.

- Congress must provide relief to help our communities and landscapes recover.

Lives have been lost, property has been destroyed and businesses that rely on seasonal recreation or work in the woods have suffered. Congress must include wildfire-damaged communities in any natural disaster relief packages being debated. This should include rebuilding critical infrastructure like trails, roads and bridges, and actions to make forests more resilient to fires through forest thinning and hazardous

fuels reduction. It's not enough to fund only wildfire suppression, we must do everything possible to restore normalcy in affected communities.

- Congress must get ahead of the problem.

We have an opportunity and obligation in the West to reduce the impact of future events. For too long, Congress has fallen back on a reactive approach to uncharacteristic wildfires instead of proactively addressing the causes. They must ignore well-intentioned yet uninformed calls to dismantle environmental protections or not allow logging at all, and instead focus on using existing authorities and implementing shovel-ready projects.

In Oregon and Washington alone, there are more than 2 million acres of forestland that have already received environmental review and approval for restoration, but it has yet to be carried out. These projects will reduce fuel loads, improve forest and watershed health, and allow fire to return in a way that it can be controlled and be a benefit to the land.

Call your representatives and senators and tell them to pass a wildfire funding fix and a surge-funding disaster response bill - a large, one-time funding package from Congress to respond to disasters, including wildfire - that helps communities recover and helps reduce wildfire risk in the future.



Contact: Jerry Davies  
CA Fire Safe Council

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## **California Fire Safe Council (CFSC) Offers Condolences to California Fire Victims; Praises Work of CA Fire Safe Councils**

**To All Media: This is the first of a series of releases concerning the fires. Further releases will offer helpful information to homeowners/business owners returning to their homes.**

**SACRAMENTO, CA October 23, 2017.** California wildfires in September/October 2017, will be recorded as the most devastating ever to hit the state. "The Board and staff of the California Fire Safe Council send heartfelt prayers and condolences to all of those who have suffered losses of family, friends, homes, businesses and pets throughout the fire areas," said Jerry Davies, Chair of CFSC.

CFSC has been in touch with many local Fire Safe Councils throughout the fire ravaged areas in counties ranging from Riverside and Orange in the south, to Napa, Sonoma, Nevada, Mendocino, Butte, and Yuba in the north, including the city of Santa Rosa.

"One major message from all fire prevention seminars and events conducted by CFSC, local Fire safe Councils and the Napa Communities Firewise Foundation, has been the Ready, Set, Go program. Homeowners heeded the call to evacuate when it was given and that has saved many lives," said Stephen Gort, Executive Director of CFSC and a Napa resident who was evacuated from his home in Circle Oaks.

According to Evan Kilkus, a member of the Lake Berryessa Fire Safe Council, Atlas Peak, Soda Canyon, and M. Veeder suffered great losses due to embers carried by heavy winds and fire storms. The City of Santa Rosa was devastated. Homes in Circle Oaks in Napa County received very little damage due to vigorous fire prevention programs conducted by Circle Oaks residents.

More than 7,000 homes and businesses have been destroyed, and 42 individuals have lost their lives from these fires, and tragically the count could rise as firefighters and first responders continue their work.

"The weather patterns have been cooperating somewhat now and firefighters are now gaining the upper hand on the remaining fires," explained David Shew, Staff Chief with CAL FIRE and board member of CFSC.

In Anaheim Hills, families are vowing to rebuild their homes damaged or destroyed by the wildfires. As the northern fires are finally contained, families will return to their damaged or destroyed homes to begin the process of insurance claims and plans for rebuilding. Discussions at town hall meetings being held in Anaheim Hills and other cities around the state centers around how to better prepare for the next fires.

An important reminder from CFSC and local Fire Safe Councils is for homeowners to work with their local Fire Safe Councils, CAL FIRE, and their local fire departments to practice defensible space rules, search for ways to protect their homes from embers getting in, plant fire retardant vegetation and use fire retardant building materials in homes prone to wildfires.

There are state and federal voices calling for changes in federal law to help the USFS, Department of the Interior, and state agencies cope with major fires by not having to use their budgets for suppressing these wildfires. It is predicted that 67% of the USFS budget will be spent on wildfires by the year 2025. These dollars could be used for local fire prevention programs if federal fire suppression was paid for with Congressional appropriations similar to the national flood program provided by FEMA.

Congressional appropriations to suppress fires would allow greater funding to CFSC by federal agencies to plan and implement stronger fire prevention programs in California working with the Fire Safe Councils, home and business owners, USFS, BLM, Interior Department, CAL FIRE, local fire departments and state and local government agencies.

For further information on the California Fire Safe Council and a list of all local Fire Safe Councils in California, please visit [www.cafiresafecouncil.org](http://www.cafiresafecouncil.org)