

Meeting Agenda for: Thursday, October 12, 2023, 4:00pm – 5:30pm

Raley's Conference Room: 40041 CA-49 #49, Oakhurst, CA 93644

Or join us via Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86999943919?from=addon>

To receive documents provided to those in attendance at the board meeting, please email kayla.rohrbaugh@crcd.org with your request no later than 3pm the day before the meeting. Items provided to directors prior to the meeting will be emailed with the agenda to all recipients requesting to be on the distribution list.

3:45 Closed Board Meeting Session: Staffing**4:00 Call to order 4:04**

Approval of the Agenda – All approved

Introductions -

Public Comment **Please limit comments to 2 minutes****4:05 Consent Agenda**

Approval of the Minutes: All approved

Financial Report: All Approved

4:10 CRCD Reports

Firewise Report – Kelly Green: See Attached Report

Executive Director Report – Jon Cottingham: See Attached Report

4:25 Old Business

- Audit: CRCD is searching for an auditor and have reached out to a few auditors recommended to CRCD. CRCD got a quote of \$10,000 for a 5-year audit. CRCD will try to get another estimate to see if another auditor is available.
- Savings Accounts: CRCD has started the paperwork to open a savings account for FireWise and CERF funds. CRCD has requested signatures from board members.

4:40 New Business

- CARCD Conference: CRCD would like to forgo attending the conference to have funds available for the audit. The board approved of waiting to attend the conference until December 2024.
- NRCS TA Agreement: CRCD would like to postpone this agreement, but CRCD will be discussing the situation further with NRCS.

4:55 Partner Reports

- NRCS – Mira Dick: They brought 8 million dollars to the county and had 72

contracts. NRCS application period ends November 3rd. The NRCS Farm bill is currently on hold.

- Madera Dept of Water Resources – Jeannie Habben: Not present
- Madera County – Bobby Macauley
- North Fork Rancheria – Daniel Aguayo
- CALFIRE – Mike Keyser: Chief Fairbanks has been chipping piles that YSRC&DC put together. There is a prescribed burn scheduled for 10/19/23.
- Eastern Madera County Fire Safe Council – Ashley Nebeker: Defensible space programs are coming up, they received funding for an updated website, they will have applications available for their defensible space on their website.
- Yosemite Sequoia RC & DC – Erin Capuchino: YSRC&DC is looking into using funds to use smaller forest materials. Erin would like to work with CRCDD to work on planning and implementation for fuel breaks. They have their annual meeting on October 26th in Shaver, all partners are welcome to attend. They have had 53 applications and 30 properties served in the Storm Mitigation Project.
 - California Jobs First

5:10

Workshops/Events/Presentations

- County Coordinator Networking and Peer Learning Workshop – October 17th, 2023 in Tuolumne
- Financial Management for Special Districts Webinar – October 25th, 2023, 9:00am – 11:00am
- YSRC&DC Full Council Meeting in Shaver Lake Area - October 26th, 2023
- Local Work Group Meeting – October 27th, 2023 (Zoom)
- FireWise Meeting with UC Master Gardeners at Sierra Senior Center – October 27th, 2023, 1:00 – 2:00 PM

5:30

Adjourn: Next Meeting November 9th, 2023, 4:00pm @ Raley's Conference Room & Via Zoom

Sub-contractor Progress Report: Title III Firewise Coordination Program

Sub-contractor/partner: Coarsegold
Resource Conservation District
Reporting Period: September 2023
Report Preparer & Title: Kelly Green II
- Firewise Coordinator

Email address: kelly.green@crd.org
Phone Number: 559.389.8781
Date: 10-10-2023

Progress reports are an explanation of what occurred during a one-month period. If no fiscal activity occurred, that is acceptable, but explain what did occur during the reporting period (challenges encountered, plans made or changed, etc.). Please include details about upcoming projects, workshops, or purchases that you will be making to accomplish the tasks/deliverables outlined in your scope of work.

Summary of activities that occurred during the reporting period (e.g., communities established, communities outreached, workshop coordination, products created/developed):

- Continued to distribute educational materials to existing and prospective communities.
- Maintained technical assistance and communication with all established Firewise® communities.
- Community Application Status
 - Indian Springs Road – Community Risk Assessment and 3-Year Action Plan ready to be submitted, but resident leaders still need to create a community in the Firewise portal.
 - Crooks Mountain – No progress since last month resident leaders still working on Community Risk Assessment and 3-Year Action Plan.
 - Ridgeline – Application submitted awaiting results from Cal Fire.
- Continue outreach to Resident Leaders in certified communities to
 -
- Firewise community meetings, events, and presentations
 -
- Social Media outreach on defensible space and home hardening to engage new communities.

Relation of activities to overall goals, deliverables, and timeline. Please quantify progress where possible (e.g., XX community members engaged on MM/DD/YYYY for kick off meeting, XX new communities established, XX action plans developed):

- Continuing Resident leader discussion to help committees plan projects for the 2023 year.
- Timely assistance to prospective communities has allowed for consistent progress in certifying new communities. one new community reapplied this month.
- Outreach to all Resident Leaders re: Scheduling contracted workdays, community meetings, Recertification deadline, Tool Cache reminder; continued assistance to individual communities as needed, including portal uploads for recertification efforts and new applications.
- Social Media outreach has increased the visibility in the community, leading to additional inquiries on the program.

Sub-contractor Progress Report: Title III Firewise Coordination Program

- Review and updating maps in Arc GIS Pro allow us to quickly identify and quantify communities and surrounding forest service lands.

Challenges encountered during the reporting period and possible challenges in the future (e.g., meeting cancelled, unresponsive homeowner's, personnel change):

- CRCD continues to face the challenge of waiting for the in-progress communities to essentially make progress. Coarsegold RCD must wait for the committees to complete the application process in their own time.
- Lack of response for scheduling community meetings from approved Firewise® communities. Community members are not reaching out to schedule meetings.

How challenges impact overall accomplishments and plans to remedy the situation (e.g., personnel change required additional time to onboard for program but they began outreaching communities this month; unexpected weather required cancelling a risk assessment but it has been rescheduled for next month, etc):

- CRCD continued outreach to individual resident leaders through email, site visits, and community meetings has kept energy high in recertification, as well as progress on community action plans. Some communities remain silent so continued correspondence will be necessary.
- CRCD continued outreach to prospective and in-progress communities.
- We have created a new project application that can be shared with the whole community to create a list of shovel ready projects in the community.

Next steps (please provide a brief summary or list of activities planned for the next month):

- Expand use of new Firewise surveys to streamline the process in larger communities.
- Continue scheduling the existing Firewise® Communities for contracted work.
- Schedule Community meetings for every certified community to plan for future funds/projects.
- Continue to attend meetings and webinars for additional grant funding opportunities.
- Review Action Plans for each community to see where implementation funding can be used to the best advantage.
- Continue to be flexible and available to any community in need of assistance towards becoming Firewise®.
- Continue community outreach to find new prospective Firewise® communities.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT
October 12, 2023

CALFIRE GRANT: We have shared the Defensible Space Program at the FireWise presentation this month, a senior center presentation, flyers on bulletin boards, direct outreach and on social media. We currently have 15 approved applicants, 15 or so that have not returned their applications, and another 8 -10 that have signed up at the Oakhurst Fall Festival.

We signed a contract with American Tree Medics. With this round of available funds, they plan to assist 39 homes with removing the hazards in their defensible space. In our grant deliverables, we proposed to assist 40-50 homes over the course of the 3 year grant. With 39 homes slated for the first round, we are well within proposed budget for the project. Currently, ATM has completed 10 assessments and completed projects around 4 homes.

We hosted our Work Event with Provost and Pritchard for on Friday, Sept 22. 11 volunteers joined Kelly and I to remove all the downed and dead brush for our first home in the program. The crew worked for 4 hours and had every branch lined up, ready for a chipper. This was a great event and they may partner with us on next as well, depending on availability. Some of these hours will also provide match to the grant.

Working with ATM has been a seamless and easy partnership. ATM expects to complete 3-4 properties per week on average. Work is on track to continue through the month, barring any unforeseen issues.

MADERA FIREWISE© COMMUNITIES: CRCD has continued work on the Firewise program. We had 1 Chipping Day completed in September for the Oakhurst Area community. Projects are in the planning and prep phase for multiple communities in the upcoming month. And Kelly wrapped up the Ridgeline application and we are awaiting a response. Because all communities must recertify by November, this application may take a little longer than usual.

We shared Firewise at the Oakhurst Fall Festival and had 6 signups and another dozen interested people that took literature home. Kelly has already began working with one homeowner to find addresses for outreach.

CA FIRESAFE COUNCIL FIRE PREVENTION COODINATOR:

- **Oversaw CRCD's Firewise program, which had 1 chipping events, and 2 projects planned.**
- **Presented Fire Prevention information at the Sierra Senior Center and Ridgeline Communities**
- **Attended monthly CFSC County Coordinator meetings.**
- **Provided 5 WFAP assessments**
- **Provided Outreach for CRCD's Low Income Defensible Space funding and YSRCDC's Storm Damage funding.**
- **Attended meetings with county, YSRCDC, and EMCFSC about partnering on CWDG proposal to continue County Coordinator funding**
- **Planning for Wildfire Prevention Corner at Oakhurst Fall Festival with EMCFSC, YSRCDC, YGPBC.**

-
- **Attended planning meetings with EMCFSC for upcoming RFFCP funding opportunity.**
 - **Submitted County Coordinator Survey to CFSC.**
 - **Attended meetings with Madera County OES, YSRCDC, and EMCFSC for CWPP update.**
 - **Attended planning meetings with Madera County, CAL FIRE, CFSC, EMCFSC, YSRCDC, and YGPBC.**
 - **Social Media outreach on defensible space and home hardening to engage new communities.**

The WildFire Prevention corner with Yosemite Sequoia, Eastern Madera Fire Safe Council, and the Yosemite Gateway Prescribed Burn Cooperative went extremely well. We all had folks sign up for available programs. We provided education and outreach to hundreds of festival attendees, and kids had a blast with Ashley's Prize wheel and Go Bag Raffle. Kids enjoyed playing the "Know Your Zone" Firewise ball game that I created. And our Storytime with Sparky the Fire Dog went great. At noon on Saturday, in the 90 degree heat, I threw on the Sparky costume and Ashley led me around the festival, handing out Sparky stickers to kids and inviting them to story time. At 12:30, Melissa read them a short story about Wildfire Safety, while Sparky and 12-15 kids listened in. It was a hot success.

NACD/RCPP: CRCD has not had any correspondence with NRCS to discuss future collaborations. However, we are actively discussing the next round of RCPP funding with CARCD. The next step will be to figure out how we can best make our partnership work more efficiently in the future. We will continue to present the NRCS programs to property owners as we meet with potential Firewise Communities. We also have links for the programs on our web page.

WCB Pollinator Block Grant: CRCD will be submitting the first report for this grant on April 20th.

Land Owner Agreements have continued to move forward. Yosemite Unified had their monthly board meeting this Monday and the project at the high school was approved. I attended the Bass Lake Unified School board meeting Wednesday evening to discuss the site at Wasuma elementary and the project was approved. Mountain Oaks High School is looking to have a senior project start a habitat at their site. I have a meeting next week with their staff and then they are sending the LOA to the Chawanakee school board. I met with the principal and 4-H garden director at Spring Valley Elementary and they too would like to partner with CRCD for an upcoming project. I will provide some education in November. They are remodeling their garden and I will reevaluate the site once the initial dirt work is complete.

On September 1st, Kelly and I, along with the property owner, cleared, cleaned and solarized 5,000 feet of space for our upcoming pollinator habitat at Karine Wines. This plastic solarization will kill the remaining seed bed and lower competition from non native grasses in the pollinator habitat. On 9/22, Provost and Pritchard will provide 10-20 volunteers to assist in one of our pollinator habitats that we will be creating within the Fork Fire scar. These folks will assist us with cleaning the site, any necessary weeding, installing drip line, solarization plastic, etc. This will provide match to the grant and get the prep work done on this site ahead of schedule and under budget.

CERF (Community Economic Resiliency Fund)

We attended another meeting in Tesoro Viejo in September to discuss takeaways from the Regional meeting and start brainstorming potential projects for the county. Kelly also attended a virtual town hall to discuss



PO BOX 1306
North Fork, CA 93643
559-760-6019
Jon.cottington@crccd.org

project proposals for the upcoming funding. Kelly will also be attending a second meeting to discuss proposals next Tuesday, when I am out of town for the County Coordinator Central Region workshop in Tuolumne.

The CERF was created to promote a sustainable and equitable recovery from the economic distress of COVID-19 by supporting new plans and strategies to diversify local economies and develop sustainable industries that create high-quality, broadly accessible jobs for all Californians.

Jon Cottington, Executive Director

Old Business:

Audit: The search for an auditor is ongoing. We are reaching out to CPA's that have worked with Sierra Bookkeeping, Sierra RCD, Madera RCD, and Mariposa RCD. 2 were not able to pick us up as clients at this time. 2 have not responded yet, and one Jaribu Nelson, has provided a bid of \$10,000.00 for the 5 year audit. I spoke with one of the agencies that couldn't fit us in at the moment and they knew Jaribu to be a capable CPA and felt the price was fair. (lower than what they were considering to estimate) Once we have at least one more estimate to share with the board, we can decide who we would like to hire.

Additional Savings Account : Kayla has met with the bank and started the process of opening the new savings accounts. The signatories will have to get with Kayla to sign the new cards and they will be ready.

New Business

CARCD Conference: The 2023 CARCD Conference is taking place December 13-15 at the DoubleTree Sacramento. Full conference registration is \$440, plus a \$160/ per night room rate. I was going to discuss sending a CRCD representative with the board. However, after the price tag of the upcoming audit came to light, I feel that CRCD will have to forego the conference this year to keep unrestricted funds available for the audit.

NRCS TA Agreement: CRCD has been trying to find a pathway to an improved relationship with NRCS in Eastern Madera county. We have been trying to establish a way for us to better assist NRCS in outreach and TA on EQIP and RCPP. But we have yet to find a productive path forward. Recently, CARD and NRCS came together to create the NRCS TA agreement. Currently, we have an unsigned 3 year contract for \$131,746.42 to hire a RFP or Forestry Tech for a half time position to work on NRCS related activities (outreach, Forest Management Plans, and EQIP contract preparation.) But I have been warned by other RCD Director's that if our relationship with NRCS does not include a pathway for this hypothetical new employee then CRCD could be left on the hook for deliverables as well as providing a salary for the unused employee. I have let CARCD that I have to postpone signing a sub agreement until after we meet (at earliest). I was coming here for approval to turn down the agreement, however Mira and I are going to discuss the situation further and I will reevaluate and share with the board.

Workshops/Events/Presentations

CRCD will be attending the 2023 County Coordinator Networking and Peer Learning Regional Workshop. The workshop will provide an opportunity to interact with and learn from fellow County Coordinators, share



PO BOX 1306
North Fork, CA 93643
559-760-6019
Jon.cottington@crccd.org

project updates, and engage with the CFSC team. Attendance is mandatory and open to County Coordinators only.

There is a Financial Management for Special Districts webinar being hosted by the CSDA on October 25 from 9-11. Kayla and I will be in attendance but it is open to the board as well.

YSR CDC Full Council Meeting is on Oct 26 from 10-1 in Shaver Lake. This meeting is open to board members and partners. CRCD is on the council and I will attend.

The Local Work Group meeting is on Zoom this year and will be on October 27 from 9-10:30. We will be meeting with NRCS, Madera/Chowchilla RCD, and partners. Board members are welcome to attend.

Lastly, we have a FireWise Meeting at the Senior Center in Oakhurst on October 27 from 1-2pm. UC Master Gardener Randy Thomson will join me to discuss landscaping that is appropriate for a Firewise home. This meeting is open to the public.

If there is no more items to discuss, we can adjourn. Thanks to everyone for attending. Our next meeting will be November 9th at 4pm. Hope to see everyone there. Have a great evening.