

A Proposal

**To the Shasta Area Chapter,
American Red Cross**

From the

**Battle Creek Watershed Conservancy,
On behalf of the
Manton Fire Safe Council**

31 March 2008

1 Background

The Manton fire of 2005 was the largest disaster in the local area in half a century, burning 29 homes to the ground and causing significant other damage. The fire was widely covered by the media, and the American Red Cross received substantial contributions specifically earmarked for the Manton recovery effort.

Approximately \$13,000 was spent in immediate assistance by the American Red Cross; an additional \$40,000 was raised and spent by local community volunteers (under the management of the Manton Community Church). In addition to the funds raised and spent, there were very large and important contributions of time and materials by both local community members and people from near and far. All these efforts were of immense value to the community.

After the completion of their local disaster recovery efforts, the American Red Cross was left with a balance of \$39,327 in contributions earmarked for Manton, beyond the amount already expended.

Since the disaster there have been several meetings between American Red Cross representatives and the local Manton Fire Safe Council, to discuss the most appropriate and effective ways to use this fund of \$39,327 to help the community. During this process the Fire Safe Council has gradually come to understand the constraints imposed upon the use of this money by the bylaws of the American Red Cross.

In particular, it has been made clear to the Fire Safe Council that the funds are not available for the sorts of infrastructure improvements (such as fuel breaks) which the Fire Safe Council desires to implement to reduce the likelihood of future conflagrations in the area.

The latest meeting in this series was held on 13 March 2008, when the American Red Cross presented a draft proposal to the Manton Fire Safe Council. This meeting was quite productive, and this proposal is a direct response to a request made at the meeting by the American Red Cross for a revised proposal.

2 The intent of this proposal

During the meeting of 13 March 2008, the American Red Cross proposal was discussed in detail, and there was further clarification of the sorts of activities which would be compatible with the American Red Cross mission, as well as beneficial for the community. There was also a clear understanding that the activities to be undertaken with the American Red Cross fund should be planned for completion within a period of three years.

This proposal is an attempt to build upon the proposal presented by the American Red Cross. Changes have been made in three respects:

- Some ideas from the American Red Cross proposal have been modified slightly to reflect the situation in the local community;
- More emphasis has been placed upon educational workshops and other activities to help community members appreciate the fire hazards present in Manton, and to help them learn what they can do individually to reduce the hazards present on their own properties;
- Some of the quantities of supplies and training proposed by the Red Cross have been reduced to match local estimates of citizen participation.

The proposal details are presented in Section 3 below. A brief synopsis of the business and financial capabilities of the sponsoring organization, the Battle Creek Watershed Conservancy, is presented in Section 4.

This proposal is presented as just that – a proposal – and the Manton Fire Safe Council is prepared to continue our discussions with the American Red Cross so that we can find the most effective way to use the available funds.

3 The details of the proposal

The description of the proposal provided below is divided into two parts. The first part, based closely upon the Red Cross proposal presented to the Fire Safe Council, refers to supplies and training for disaster recovery. The second part consists of a series of educational programs designed to increase fire-safety awareness and to help Manton residents understand what they can do individually to reduce fire hazards on their property.

All costs in the following sections include tax and shipping. No overhead is charged against these costs by the BCWC. The cost of each element of the proposal is allocated to a particular year of the three-year program.

3.1 Training and supplies for disaster recovery

The following project elements consist of supplies and training designed to provide the following local resources for responding to local disaster conditions:

- Special skills for a small number of volunteers for managing a disaster shelter;
- Skills among the wider local population in knowing what to do in case of a local disaster;
- Skills among the wider local population in first aid and CPR;
- Equipment for setting up a local shelter based at the Manton School.

These elements are addressed in the following project tasks. The supplier or manager of each task is indicated in the title as ARC (American Red Cross) or MFSC (Manton Fire Safe Council).

3.1.1 Shelter supplies (ARC)

The shelter supplies proposed by the American Red Cross seem appropriate to the Manton situation, for a shelter housed in the Manton School. As noted below a different storage structure is proposed. The shelter supplies for 50 cots, exclusive of the trailer, amount (per the American Red Cross proposal) to \$3790, to be provided at no cost to the Manton Fire Safe Council (but listed in the cost summary as part of the American Red Cross total expenses).

This cost of \$3790 is allocated to Year 1 of the project.

3.1.2 Shelter housing (MFSC)

It is proposed to purchase a 20-foot shipping container to hold the shelter supplies. Such a container will be quite secure, and it will hold more supplies than the trailer originally contemplated.

The Manton School seems for all reasons best suited to be the shelter site in the case of a disaster in or near Manton. The only potential alternative site capable of holding 50 cots is the Manton Volunteer Fire Station, which is very likely to be busy with emergency work of its own during a Manton disaster. In any event, should it prove necessary to move the contents of the shipping container to another location, it could easily be done with a few pickup loads.

The quoted cost of such a container is \$3160, including shipping to Manton, plus \$450 for tying the container down to a simple foundation. The total expense of \$3610 is allocated to Year 1 of the project.

3.1.3 Emergency shelter lighting (MFSC)

As mentioned above, the Manton School is the target shelter site in the case of a disaster in or near Manton. From our experience in the 2005 fire, it is very likely that, in the case of a fire large enough to require use of the 50-bed shelter, there will be no electrical power at the Manton School.

The Manton School has no emergency power. The most critical effect of a power outage on the use of the school gym for a shelter site is that there would be no lighting, and no potable water or functioning toilets.

For this reason it is proposed that a medium-sized portable generator be made part of the emergency shelter supplies, along with portable lights and suitable cords, as it would be quite likely that the shelter supplies could not be used effectively without light. Further, it is proposed that a modest change be made to the school water-well electrical system to allow a portable generator to operate the pump and water treatment system, thus rendering functional the bathrooms and drinking fountains of the school (but not the kitchen or lighting, which would require a much bigger generator). As Katrina victims learned, life even when protected from the weather was very difficult without water and toilets. Note that the generator will be housed in the shelter without any fuel.

The proposed expenses are as follows:

- Portable generator with wheels, 12kw, \$3430
- Eight dual 500-watt portable lights with stands, \$700

- Twelve 50-foot 16-gauge extension cords, \$440
- One 220-v extension cord to multiple-outlet 110-volt connectors, \$200
- Electrical modification at Manton School well, \$250

The total proposed cost, to be assigned to Year 1, is \$5020

3.1.4 Shelter disaster training (ARC)

The American Red Cross offered shelter disaster training as part of the shelter equipment in their proposal, at no additional cost, provided that those taking the training are interested in becoming Red Cross volunteers. It is proposed that the Fire Safe Council accept this training offer, so that we have local residents trained to make maximum effective use of the shelter materials. No cost is allocated to this task, as no cost was listed in the American Red Cross proposal.

This training would be provided in Year 1.

3.1.5 Safety training (ARC)

The proposal from the American Red Cross contained an offer of first-aid and CPR training for 360 people. The Manton Fire Safe Council agrees that this is quite important, but proposes to scale down this program to the number which could reasonably be expected to take the course, even when offered free.

Taking the cost of each individual first-aid/CPR training course from the American Red Cross proposal as \$45, and noting that the courses are given most efficiently with 12 students, it is proposed that two courses of 12 students each be given in Year 1, and one course with 12 students each in Year 2 and Year 3. The resulting costs are \$1080 in Year 1, and \$540 in each of Year 2 and Year 3.

3.1.6 Disaster kits (MFSC)

It is proposed that a number of rather extensive first-aid/disaster kits be stocked in the shelter container, for distribution as required in an emergency. Assuming 20 kits at \$150 each, the total cost is \$3000, allocated to Year 1.

3.1.7 First aid/disaster kits (MFSC)

It is proposed that a modest first-aid kit be given to each of the graduates of the safety training courses mentioned above. The kits would be designed locally to include items deemed relevant for the Manton situation. The cost of each kit would be \$50.

In providing these kits the Manton Fire Safe Council would be depending upon the volunteers who take the safety training to be an important disaster resource for the community.

Assigning 24 kits for Year 1 and 12 kits for each of the following years, the cost for Year 1 is \$1200, and for each of Year 2 and Year 3 \$600.

3.2 Education and workshops for fire prevention

The proposed projects in this subsection are designed to provide the following educational goals:

- Awareness among the local population of the fire hazards in the local area, and how those hazards might affect them in an emergency;
- Awareness among the local population of the fire hazards which may exist on their own property or in their own houses, and what steps they could take to eliminate or reduce these hazards;
- Awareness of the relative priorities of the fire hazards on their property or in their house, so that they can direct their hazard-reduction efforts effectively;
- Awareness of the many ways fires can start in the local environment, with special emphasis on actual events in Manton history;
- Awareness of the individual responsibility of Manton residents in the case that they start a fire.

These goals are addressed in the following project activities. The supplier or manager of each task is indicated in the title as ARC (American Red Cross) or MFSC (Manton Fire Safe Council).

3.2.1 Example-houses workshop (MFSC)

This task is an on-site workshop where a small number of houses are visited to show examples of fire hazards and/or good defensible-space practices. A group of residents would be shuttled around the area, with Cal Fire and other experts on hand to describe the hazards and good practices, and to answer questions.

This workshop would be implemented twice in each of Years 1-3. Since the workshop would be conducted by volunteers and agency staff, the costs would be limited to refreshments, at \$100 per workshop, and publicity, at \$600 (for color posters and a color mailing), for a total of \$700 per workshop, twice each year, for a total of \$1400 each year.

Examples of interesting hazards and/or good practices would be videotaped for later use in classroom or meeting settings. Manton School classroom activities (MFSC)

3.2.2 Manton School class activities (MFSC)

Cal Fire has offered the Manton Fire Safe Council a program for the Manton School, consisting of course materials and presentation materials designed to educate students about fire, fire prevention, and fire safe practices. The presentation materials include displays, flyers, and other information which can also be used for other Manton Fire Safe Council public activities.

These materials are available for a one-time fee of \$2000, assigned to Year 1. The materials will be used in school programs for all three of the years of this project. There will be no labor charged for this activity, as all labor will be by school employees and volunteers.

3.2.3 Chipping and pickup by PG&E

PG&E has offered to provide free chipping of material cleared from around homes, for up to one day per month. It is proposed to take advantage of this offer during the months when brush clearing around homes is safe, six times per year.

The Manton Fire Safe Council will provide publicity, manage appointments, and also provide an education program so that those interested can learn the details – the size of the brush piles allowed, what sort of access is needed, etc.

The cost of the initial education program includes \$600 for publicity, allocated to Year 1. The chipping program itself will cost \$250 for publicity on each occasion. Six events are planned for each of the three years - \$2100 for Year 1 (including the education program), and \$1500 for Year 2 and Year 3.

3.2.4 Volunteer chipping bee (MFSC)

There has been a continuing discussion at the Manton Fire Save Council about how to help some community members who are neither physically able to meet the Cal Fire rules for defensible space by working on their own properties, nor able to pay for the work needed. This has given rise to the idea of selecting a few properties and cleaning them up with volunteer labor, scheduling the activities to coincide with the availability of the PG&E chipping service (activity 3.2.3 above) to reduce the brush to chips.

This activity will provide examples of good defensible-space cleanup, while simultaneously helping members of the community. It is proposed to hold two days of volunteer clean-up activity each year, cleaning up two small properties on each occasion. The expenses of each day include lunch for the volunteers (\$75), caps and safety goggles for the volunteers (\$150), and publicity (\$250). The total for each of the three years is \$950 (two days).

The volunteer activities would be videotaped for use in other Manton Fire Safe Council activities.

3.2.5 Fire-safe drama activity (MFSC)

While disaster preparedness is quite valuable for the community, even more valuable is helping prevent disasters in the first place. The Manton Fire Safe Council has debated extensively on the issue of how to increase local awareness of fire hazards, and awareness of how easy it is to start a fire through carelessness. Such awareness is high right after a local fire, but quickly fades.

One of the best ways to get lasting attention to these issues is to remind the residents of local fire incidents – how they started, the damage done, and the effects on both the responsible party and those who suffered property damage.

It is proposed to accomplish this by researching fire history in Manton, both with the aid of Cal Fire and through interviews, and producing a drama based upon the history of fire incidents in the area. It happens that we have local talent able to do this, people who are able to bring information to the viewers with humor.

The cost of this activity includes \$3000 for a portion of the writing and production (with most of the labor contributed voluntarily), \$600 for publicity, and \$600 for a portion of the dinner expense. The total expense, allocated to Year 2, is \$4200.

The production would be videotaped for use in other Manton Fire Safe Council activities.

3.2.6 Video taping expenses

Many of the tasks above will be video taped, including interviews, example houses, brush removal activities, disaster training, first-aid training, details of the emergency shelter and supplies, and a full tape of the drama activity. These videos will be used in the drama, in the classroom, and at public meetings, to reinforce the messages of disaster prevention, disaster preparation, and what to do in a disaster. A copy of the video will also be donated to the Manton Museum.

The cost of this activity, for materials and supplies, is \$400 for each of Years 1 and 2, and \$200 for Year 3 of the program. The labor will be donated.

3.3 Proposed cost summary

The following table summarizes proposed costs, according to the paragraph number for each activity. Note that the costs for 3.1.1, 3.1.4, and 3.1.5 are included in the table, though they will be borne by the American Red Cross directly.

Paragraph	Activity	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
3.1.1	Emergency shelter supplies	\$3790	\$ 0	\$ 0
3.1.2	Emergency shelter storage unit	\$3610	\$ 0	\$ 0
3.1.3	Emergency shelter lighting	\$5020	\$ 0	\$ 0
3.1.4	Shelter disaster training	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
3.1.5	Safety training	\$1080	\$ 540	\$ 540
3.1.6	Disaster kits	\$3000	\$ 0	\$ 0
3.1.7	First-aid/disaster kits	\$1200	\$ 600	\$ 600
3.2.1	Example houses workshop	\$1400	\$1400	\$1400
3.2.2	Manton School class activities	\$2000	\$ 0	\$ 0
3.2.3	Chipping and pickup by PG&E	\$2100	\$1500	\$1500
3.2.4	Volunteer chipping bee activity	\$ 950	\$ 950	\$ 950
3.2.5	Fire-safe drama activity	\$ 0	\$4200	\$ 0
3.2.7	Video taping expenses	\$ 400	\$ 400	\$ 200
	Total cost each year	\$24550	\$9590	\$5190
			Total cost	\$39330

4 Business aspects

The following sections describe the business organization proposed to manage the Manton Fire Save Council project for the American Red Cross. This organization would handle purchasing, payments, and invoicing to the American Red Cross.

4.1 The proposing organization

It is proposed that all business matters, as well as overall project oversight, be conducted by the Battle Creek Watershed Conservancy (BCWC) on behalf of the Manton Fire Safe Council. The BCWC formally agreed to take on the task of managing the Manton Fire Safe Council in 2005.

The BCWC organization was incorporated in 1997 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit California corporation. It operates with headquarters in Manton, with a paid staff person (Sharon Paquin-Gilmore, who has been chairing the Manton Fire Safe Council).

The stated objective of the BCWC is to “restore and preserve the environmental and economic resources of the Battle Creek, California, watershed through responsible stewardship, liaison, cooperation, and education.” The BCWC has taken on the management of the Manton Fire Safe Council, as a task wholly in accord with the BCWC objectives just listed.

The BCWC has been working toward its objectives by cooperating with federal, state, and local agencies on issues affecting its areas of concern, and by implementing environmental and educational programs, typically funded by federal and state agencies. BCWC projects are implemented directly or through subcontracts.

With more than ten years of experience in working with government contracts, at an annual average level of approximately \$150,000, the BCWC has developed the financial, business, and management skills required to implement projects of the type proposed. The main tasks required by this proposal include:

- Project task management and delegation;
- Progress monitoring and reporting;
- Financial controls and records.

The BCWC also carries liability insurance sufficient for all proposed projects.

4.2 Cash-flow management

Some of the items in this proposal are to be provided directly by the American Red Cross, but others will be purchased by the BCWC.

In the latter case, the BCWC proposes to invoice the American Red Cross for specific items prior to the time of purchase, so that cash-flow problems do not occur. So as not to generate frequent invoices, purchases would be grouped in bundles.