Manton Fire Safe Council Meeting Notes  
May 9, 2013

BCWC Watershed Coordinator and Chairperson of the MFSC, Sharon Paquin-Gilmore convened the meeting. Round table introductions followed.

Attendees: Manton residents Sharon Paquin Gilmore, Steve Gilmore, Martha Schraml, Kathy Bishop; Manton Volunteer Fire Dept. representative Marion Rocksvold; Tehama County Cal Fire representatives Gus Boston, Steve Osenton, Jeff Schori; and Shasta County Cal Fire representative Joe Roberson; TCRCD representatives Mike Marvier and Tom McCubbins; Board of Supervisors representative Dennis Garton.

Discussion topics

- Cal Fire report:
  - They have been sampling moisture in vegetation (fuel moisture) to judge how severe the fire season might be. It is already as dry as it would be on July 1st in a normal year. Thousand hour fuels, which are 3” to 8” in diameter, are setting all-time records for how dry they are and they are much drier than normal for this time of year.
  - Cal Fire reported that normally they wouldn't staff engines until June but this year they will have 7 engines by May 13th and 12 engines by May 27th. They are 6 weeks ahead of schedule with equipment and staff.
  - Cal Fire is going “full steam ahead” with signage and mapping to identify water sources.
  - Fire Captain Matt Wallen has accepted a promotion and has been transferred. Gus Boston is the new Fire Captain at the Manton station.
  - Steve Gilmore asked if string mowers are considered safer than regular mowers and was told that they are safer, however a mower with a hot engine on top can cause seed heads to flame when they hit the top of the mower. It is recommended that string trimmers and mowers be used before 10:00 a.m. It is also a good idea to clear beneath the mower rather than let grasses, etc., build up underneath because they can start burning.
  - Steve asked the Cal Fire reps if they thought that global warming was responsible for increased wildfires. The response was that maybe it was, or maybe it is just another trend. One of the reps commented, “Things are getting progressively drier, with summers getting hotter and winters getting warmer”.
  - Cal Fire will be doing some property inspections this year with the assistance of volunteers who will inspect targeted areas. Due to a lack of funding, they plan to target a particular community one year and a
different community the next. They plan to schedule the inspections during April, May and June. If a property is not in compliance with clearance regulations, the owner will be issued a “fix-it” ticket and will be re-inspected 2 weeks later. If they are still not in compliance, they will be issued another ticket. If after the third inspection the property is still non-compliant, the issue will be referred to the D.A.’s office.

- Volunteer Fire Department report:
  o Bob Cords was unable to attend the meeting but a Cal Fire representative said that the Manton volunteers are holding steady and they have a new applicant.

- Tehama County RCD report on fuel breaks, the chipper program and a proposed Integrated Weeds Management Plan:
  o Mike Marvier reported that the fuel breaks along Hazen and Deer Springs Road are completed. They are currently working in the Mineral area but will return to Hazen Road in a few weeks. The RCD has sent out a second mailing to the property owners along Forward Road, requesting permission to spray herbicides in the areas that were previously chipped. So far, they have received permission to spray from a third of the property owners.
  o The RCD has applied for funding for a fuel break along Rock Creek Road and part of Wilson Hill Road. They will receive notification in July.
  o Supervisor Garton asked if the RCD could re-spray herbicides along Lanes Valley Road. Mike Marvier responded that the property owners on Lanes Valley Road are opposed to using herbicides. He added that he can spray along the highway right-of-way without permission but no further.
  o The RCD may be able to provide a one-day, free chipping service in Manton. Mike and Sharon will coordinate the date and send a flyer out to the community.
  o The Fire Safe Council will have a 2014 funding round. Tom McCubbins said they are considering a proposal for a fuel break from Sky Ranch to Shake House on Plum Creek Road or a Tramline fuel break from A-Line to Manton. He said that if they could combine Stevens Act funds with Fire Council funds they would have enough to do a really great project. He added that they might be able to get from A-Line all the way to Viola. In order to qualify for a Stevens Act grant, it was suggested that a case be made that the project will be beneficial to Forest Service lands. Tom responded that the Forest Service did the last application and hired the RCD to do the work. He said that what drives it is wherever the Forest
Service has done NEPA. Tom said that the Forest Service is already on board with the fuel break. He suggested that the Manton Fire Safe Council send a letter of support for the project but he said he also needs to know what Cal Fire thinks. A Cal Fire representative said they should drive the route and look at the conditions before making a determination.

- Concerns and questions from community members:
  - SPI - The bulk of SPI’s burn harvesting is done but there are still a few areas to complete. They are ahead of schedule due to the dry winter.
  - Digger Butte – Cal Fire has removed the lookout and logged the butte. Revenue from the timber sale paid for the cost of a helicopter to pluck the lookout from the butte. It is now at Cal Fire’s Davis facility. Now that the lookout has been removed, the property can be sold but the easement belongs to SPI and cannot be transferred.
  - Emergency shelter unit and equipment – Sharon reported that the shelter units and supplies were used for the Ponderosa Fire. Martha commented that she slept on one of the cots. The remaining funds from Red Cross donations were used to purchase stand pipes and other equipment.

The next meeting date was set for Wednesday, **June 12th @ 6:30** p.m. at the Manton Volunteer Fire Station.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.