

Plumas Underburn Cooperative

Meeting Notes

Friday, January 25th 2019 9:00am

Feather River Resource Conservation District Office
159 Lawrence St, Quincy CA

Attendance: Brad Graevs, Feather River RCD; Hannah Hepner, Plumas County Fire Safe Council; Don Gasser, Plumas County Fire Safe Council; Les Hall, Meadow Valley Fire Department; Dan Martynn, Natural Resource Conservation Service; Bob Beckwith, citizen; David Popp, citizen; David Kinateder, US Forest Service; Sally McGowan, citizen; Mike Yost, citizen; Ryan Tompkins, Galeppi Ranch Firewise

Bob Beckwith suggested a name with the word “cooperative” was more inclusive than “Plumas Prescribed Burn Association.” Plumas Underburn Cooperative (PUC) was accepted as the new name for the association.

Mr. Beckwith also requested that all future media state the purpose of the group.

“Citizens helping citizens to promote healthy, resilient forests and communities through the use of fire” was accepted as PUC’s mission statement.

Several goals were suggested, though none were formally adopted:

Fuel Reduction through collective effort

Establishing community networks

Improving public safety

Education and providing a model for why prescribed fire needs to be used and the historical significance

There will be a number of financial requirements including tools, maintenance, administration, and fire department support.

It was determined that membership fees will be accepted on a sliding scale, with a suggested \$25 annual contribution. A landowner must be a member for PUC to participate in a burn on their property.

In addition to membership fees, participating landowners are responsible for:

- lunches and beverages for participants on the day of the burn
- a per acre payment to PUC. Amounts suggested by Brad Graevs are \$25/acre for 1-5 acres, \$20/acre for 6-10 acres, and \$15/acre for 10-20 acres.
- a donation directly to the fire department (if fire department resources are involved)

If the landowner receives grant assistance for the project, a percentage of the assistance will also be paid to PUC.

It was clarified that Brad Graevs, as an employee of the Feather River RCD, will be the paid coordinator for the group. Sally McGowan was appointed Treasurer.

The group decided not to seek non-profit status, but rather exist as a program of the existing Plumas County Fire Safe Council 501(c)3. The default for handling funds will be through the Plumas County Fire Safe Council bank account.

Site-preparation requirements were discussed. Mike Yost provided a Preliminary Assessment document and a Prescribed Burn Plan template for the group. It was decided that a landowner cannot assess their own property. One experienced person is sufficient to evaluate a property, but two people is preferred. It was suggested that a list be created of individuals with appropriate skills. Site assessments will ideally be used as an opportunity for education of PUC participants. Forest Service partners can also be accessed to give advice. If a burn boss is contracted for a project, they will have the final say about site-preparation.

Tools needed for the preliminary assessment have be requested in a CAL FIRE grant. Don Gasser has some to donate and Bob Beckwith is happy to provide tools until the time that tools are purchased.

Templates for landowner and participant waivers will be requested from the Humboldt Prescribed Burn Association.

For liability reasons, the landowner will be required to be the first to put fire on the ground or designate a person to put fire on the ground.

There was a discussion about volunteer fire department willingness to participate. Brad Graevs suggested that landowner donations, training opportunities, and the possibility of additional volunteers should make it desirable for the departments to participate.

The group decided that a successful burn will answer a lot of the outstanding questions. A list of potential sites was discussed. A map of the sites will be created.

Next steps:

Waiver templates from Humboldt PBA

Mapping of potential sites

Clarification of Plumas Corporation/Fire Safe Council financial agreement

List of site inspectors

Creation of tracking systems