



Klamath County Fire District No. 1

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To: Oregon Public Utility Commission
From: Fire Chief, Greg Davis and KCFD1 Board Director, Gene Rogers
Date: January 5, 2021
RE: **Public comments Docket No. AR 638**

What are your objectives/expectations for wildfire mitigation?

Klamath County Fire District 1 is surrounded by forested timberlands, juniper outcroppings, hillsides and open grazing lands. Each of these environments pose their own challenging and potentially hazardous fire condition when fuels treatments are not conducted and pre incident planning is not coordinated.

Our objective is to identify, plan and prepare to address these hazards to the best of our ability. Because our fire district is faced with these challenges we feel it necessary to work closely with local mutual aid partners and State and Federal agencies to identify wildfire prone areas, plan and provide fuels reduction treatments, preplan for incidents, conduct training, purchase specialized fire apparatus and equipment and provide informative prevention and education materials to the public.

Without taking these steps we realize that when conditions favor severe wildland fires, emergency responders are at times overwhelmed due to the lack of fuels treatment and limited resources. More often than not, the structures that survive a wildfire are the ones where effective fire mitigation work has been completed. This work takes coordination and support by landowners, departments and organizations.

What are the components of a comprehensive electric utility wildfire mitigation plan (WMP) e.g., what does the table of contents look like?

In the wake of recent devastating wildfire seasons, west coast utilities companies have been involved in the development of Wildfire Mitigation Plans to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). Organizations such as Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E), Southern California Edison (SCE) and San Diego Gas and Electric (SDGE) are among the most recognizable. These Investor-Owned Utilities (IOUs) have considerable experience with wildfires and have become integrated with the various fire service entities in their respective regions. A WMP drafted in cooperation between utility companies, response agencies, and elected city officials should solicit the buy in from all affected organizations. The Table of Contents for this WMP would have to begin with a status check conducted via a SWOT analysis. This analysis would identify where our focus should be to reach the desired finish line.

Table of Contents

Introduction

 Background

 Statistics/Profile

Klamath County SWOT Analysis

 Strengths

- Relationships Amongst Mutual Aid Partners
- Available Resources
- Training
- Weaknesses
 - Planning
 - Communications
 - Funding
 - Type III Apparatus
 - Age of Infrastructure
- Opportunities
 - Fuels Reduction Grants
 - GIS Mapping & Surveys
 - Interagency Training
 - Planning for Future
- Threats
 - Topography & Climate
 - Fuels Abundance
 - Potential Exposures
 - Weather
 - Human Factors
 - Vehicular Traffic
 - Animals/Birds
- Solutions
 - Reactive
 - Disaster Response
 - Proactive
 - Disaster Planning
 - Underground Utilities
 - Wooden Pole Conversion
 - Fuels Mitigation
 - Periodic Inspection
 - Public Education Programs
 - Electrical Shutdown Protocol
 - Emergency Preparedness
- Conclusion
 - Recommendations

What are your priorities and/or what are the most urgent issues to tackle before next fire season?

As a department we've worked closely with other organizations to build Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs). These plans have identified wildfire prone areas immediately surrounding the community we protect. It also provides guidance for fuels treatment and mitigation efforts and gives us the framework to reference as we outline our priorities when addressing potential wildfire threats. The current Klamath County CWPP is available at: <https://www.klamathcounty.org/DocumentCenter/View/957/Klamath-County-Community-Wildfire-Protection-Plan-2016-Update>.

In an effort to better inform our local community about the risk of wildfire and its impacts to our citizens the local website (Klamath Ready Set Go www.kcrsg.org) was developed. The website helps people plan before a wildfire happens, and gives residents reference tools and information in order to help when a wildfire does start. The website also allows local residents the ability to look at their property and see how they can reduce their risk.

The priorities for the district are listed in the following order:

- Work with our local, state and federal partners in continuing to identify potential wildfire threats.
- Provide fuels Management – recognition of areas of high risk to severe wildfire that results in implementation of mitigation measures. These priority areas have been identified previously in many cases by Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs). Work with our County Community Development Department in outlining land use planning and zoning, permitting and construction material standards which will address potential wildfire impacts and threats.
- Conduct training for our department. Plan for emergency situations and work in a coordinated effort with our mutual aid partners.
- Build and increase our department's capacity.
- Educate the public about the threats of wildfire.
- Increased capacity – a property that has been hardened to wildfire by the owner adds capacity to the fire service.
- When we do have an incident, conduct worthwhile After Action Reviews (AARs) – these processes need to move beyond a meeting and generate actual mitigation work on the identified priority issues.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.



Greg Davis, Fire Chief KCFD1



Gene Rogers, Director KCFD1