



Wildfire Prevention Report

Board Report & Measure T Update – January 17th, 2023

To: Truckee Fire Protection District Board of Directors
From: Eric Horntvedt, Wildfire Prevention Manager

Following the Holidays & start of the New Year, the Wildfire Prevention Team took some time to meet, review the accomplishments and lessons learned from rolling out all new programs during the 2022 fire season. There were some very positive and constructive conversations. We were able to use our existing CWPP and Measure T Implementation Plan as guiding documents to delineate and assign all of the priority work that needs to be accomplished in the back-of-the-house this winter to make sure that we are setup for a smooth and successful 2023 fire season full of wildfire prevention, mitigation, preparedness, and resilience projects. This report covers a fairly comprehensive update on the major program development and actions that staff are working on.

Defensible Space & Home Hardening

Wildfire Prevention Specialist Arden Heki is taking over the reigns to keep our defensible space program operating in line with state and local defensible space requirements, while providing the best ember ignition information so we can provide the best education and programs to our community to work towards wildfire resilient communities. Here's some of the major things we are working on:

- Preparing to fly a job announcement to hire up to 5 seasonal defensible space specialists. We want to fly for the positions early and longer this year so we can assemble another top-notch inspection team. We are also doing a review and update on our 2-week new hire training guide to make sure our new staff are brought up to speed with sufficient job knowledge and training.
- Creating a 2023 fire season defensible space, green waste, and Firewise work plan. This will capture our 4,000+ inspection goal, identify target neighborhoods that we will be inspecting, plans and opportunities for our green waste programs, Firewise community support & creation of new Firewise communities & expansion of existing Firewise communities.
- Creating a defensible space education guide that can be reference by residents and other groups on how to create defensible space through before and after images. Integrate into website with content updates.
- Planning to schedule a spring training and invite all contractors that are currently on our tree service and defensible space contractors list. Moving forward we will provide this training annually and all contractors that attend will be on our contractors list. This gives us an opportunity to educate our local business on what exactly the fire district is looking for and hopefully increase the professional understanding and knowledge of defensible space & home hardening techniques.
- Thorough review of our Fire Aside DSI application to make sure all configuration and language is crystal clear, easy to understand, and actionable in the resident report.
- We are also scheduling a meeting with the Tahoe Sierra Board of Realtors to collaborate and discuss all things property sale defensible space and home hardening disclosure related. We think there may be a reasonable opportunity to host a meet and greet session with our professional

real estate community to provide an overview of the laws, process, answer questions, and gain feedback on how we can best support each other and foster a positive and clear process.

- Eric & Dillon also took the lead on engaging with the Contractor Association of Truckee Tahoe (CATT) to explore the idea of CATT working with the Fire District's to host a Home Hardening contractors' workshop and create a Home Hardening Contractors List. Truckee Fire & other neighboring Fire Districts will be offering different forms of Home Hardening assistance programs so we thought the best initial move would be to work with CATT, engage and train our professional building community, create a list that residents could use, and then roll out our home hardening assistance program to the community. More to come.
- Staff also met with the Fire Safe Council of Nevada County (FSCNC), and we are exploring a partnership opportunity to work collaboratively with the FSCNC under their Access and Function Needs defensible space assistance grant funded program. Initial conversations sounded like we could utilize Measure T elderly, disabled, and low-income defensible space assistance funds as match to tap into a larger grant funded project and offer a County-wide program that aims to assist our residents in need with defensible space compliance. Their program typically uses an application to qualify, and then FSCNC hand crew comes out to the property and physically performs the on-the-ground work followed up with an inspection from the local Fire District to ensure fire safety compliance was met.

Firewise

Hats off to our community volunteers and leaders who carry out the Firewise program in their community. This program is directly related to insurability, and through these volunteer efforts Firewise communities are able to educate residents, host community workdays, increase outreach and education and help create wildfire resilient communities.

- Truckee Fire is up to 24 Firewise Communities
 - This includes adding 5 new Firewise Communities this year: Kingvale, Floriston, Plavada, Donner Crest, and Winter Creek
- 22 Communities have completed their annual renewal requirements and remain in good standing with the program through 2023. We are working with the last 2 to get their applications submitted
- We will continue to support & develop our Firewise Communities Program in close coordination with our county partners.
- Offer Firewise education and workday support via primarily staff presentations & 30-yard green waste dumpsters

Green Waste Programs: Pick-Up/Haul Away, Chipping, and Dumpsters

Total green waste program expenditures during the 2022 fire season totaled **\$471,290**

Local Contractors: \$354,272

ERL Green Waste Disposal Fees: \$57,875

6-Yard Dumpster Rebates: \$35,590

Firewise Workday Green Waste Removal: \$13,302

Miscellaneous costs, software, marketing, printing, and technology expenses: \$10,251

*TFPD staff time for program administration & management was not included. These are direct program implementation costs only. These costs represent the program costs for the 2022 fire season and span two FY budgets.

Staff is currently working to update and refine the Request for Proposals (RFP) & Contract and is planning to advertise the RFP as a District-wide 2023 green waste pick-up and haul competitive

bid that local contractors, business, and others could bid on. We are anticipating a 20%+ increase in the use of this program next year which could mean servicing 3,500+ piles in 2023! Staff has also proactively met with Tahoe Truckee Sierra Disposal (TTSD) as there may be an opportunity to partner with TTSD on this curbside green waste program as well.

Forest Management & Fuels Reduction Projects

Dillon Sheedy, Truckee Fire's Forester has been working hard to take info and lessons learned from the 2022 Measure T Block Grant pilot projects and prepare to release a notice of funding opportunity, procedural guide, and grant application virtual workshop. We are planning to have our documents completed in early 2023, and be setup to release the documents and open a grant application period during the winter of 2023, followed by notification of award in the spring, and likely set award of funds/notice to proceed as of 7/1/2023. This local block grant program will allow us to fund important and priority wildfire prevention projects (fuel reduction, forestry equipment, early fire detection, evacuation improvements...etc.) and increase our capacities, pace and scale by working with various applicants and partners. Where possible we are going to ask applicants to bring cash and in-kind match to the project that way, we can realize the greatest community and economic benefit of these Measure T funded projects.

Grant Applications:

Truckee Fire is taking the lead with a group of multi-jurisdictional partners to submit a competitive CAL FIRE Forest Health grant application. We had our second collaborative grant proposal meeting on January 4th, all 9 partners have identified project areas and are working on getting the grant writing team all needed information by the end of January. Dillon and I will be working closely with partners the next 2 months to develop and write the grant application. As of now we have identified around 3,300 acres of treatments, and will likely be asking CALFIRE for 5~6 million with potential for 1-2 million in matching contributions from our partners. Truckee fire will assume an administrative role in this project, and will collect the 12% indirect cost to recover the costs associated with this task, with potential revenue to the department around \$700,000 after successful completion of the project, which is expected by the end of 2028.

We will be coming to the Board in February with a resolution to authorize this application, which is required by CALFIRE. The deadline to apply is February 28, 2023.

Proposed projects include;

North Tahoe Fire- Alpine Meadows Forest Health -105 acres-- Combination of manual and mechanical thinning, chipping, pilling and pile burning

SPI – SPI Mastication – 1,307 acres-- Mastication only

Northstar CSD – Northstar CSD Forest Health- 223 acres ---Manual and mechanical fuel reduction, With biomass utilization

Martis Camp- Martis THP- 453 acres --Commercial Harvest with Biomass utilization

TTAD - Waddle Ranch Mastication – 60 acres

Sugar Bowl – Sugar Bowl THP – 154 acres--Commercial Harvest with Biomass utilization

TDLT – Royal Gorge Forest Health, Billy Mack THP, Red Mtn/carpenter valley THP

- Total of 491 acres on Royal gorge and Billy Mack
- Red mtn/carpenter valley THP **approx. 300 acres**
- Commercial Harvest with Biomass utilization

Vail/Northstar – potentially 50-100 acres, commercial harvest with biomass utilization

Tahoe Donner – Waiting on shapefiles from TDA.. approximately 100 acres of fuel reduction with around 20 acres of reforestation/planting work.

Community Wildfire Prevention Plan Update (CWPP)

Truckee Fire hosted a virtual CWPP Kick-off meeting on Monday, December 13th and we are officially underway with the CWPP project. For this initial kick-off meeting we had 25 partner agencies and land managers attend with representation from: Truckee Fire, Town of Truckee, CAL FIRE, Forest Service, Nevada County OES, Fire Safe Council of Nevada County, Placer County OES, Placer County RCD, Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation, Tahoe Donner, and Truckee Donner Land Trust. It was great to see this many partners come out, and we were able to identify the core project team that will continue to meet monthly, and create a list of stakeholder agencies, and community stakeholders to engage during the CWPP process.

This updated CWPP is very important, as it will give the District an opportunity to engage with partner agencies, land managers, and the community to develop a comprehensive wildfire mitigation roadmap that be used to best prioritize implementation of the Measure T Community Wildfire Prevention Fund. The CWPP will capture many of the large land fuel reduction projects in the WUI from participating land managers/property owners. Typically, over 20 local land managers, Federal and State firefighting agencies, and the public participate in the process. The CWPP will provide a prioritized list of WUI forest management and fuel reduction work and identify other wildfire issue focus areas where Measure T funds can be used with the greatest impact to create wildfire resilience.

We continued to meet at the core project team level over the holidays, and have been working to iron out exactly how we will be incorporating best available data, modeling and insights from Land Tender & Ladris into our comprehensive CWPP process.

Purpose:

The Truckee CWPP will serve as a framework, and wildfire mitigation roadmap to identify and prioritize future wildfire protection projects, and foster a community wide collaborative approach to reduce wildfire risk and hazards to life, property, community, and natural resources.

Goals:

- Enhance Fire & Life Safety
- Mitigate Wildfire Impacts & Create Wildfire Resilient Communities
- Convene Decision Makers & Land Managers
- Engage Community & Stakeholders
- Establish Community Priorities
- Restore & Maintain Fire Resilient Communities & Landscapes

Objectives:

- Provide for public and firefighter safety by improving fire preparedness, prevention and increasing mitigation efforts

- Identify and quantify risk and hazards at a community-scale, and measures to reduce these risks and mitigate hazards
- Collaborate with key agencies, stakeholders, and the public to develop a multi-jurisdictional CWPP that fosters close cooperation and support
- Develop an implementable and prioritized plan for risk-reduction activities and monitoring that promote wildfire resilience in Truckee both short and long term
- Align the Truckee CWPP with existing and future wildfire and fuels planning documents and strategies of partner agencies
- Ensure wildfire mitigation efforts are appropriate for the forested WUI intermix communities of Truckee, and take into account the growth of Truckee communities

Communications & Public Relations

District staff has engaged with some Public Relations experts and consultants and request Fior Partners to present to the Board at the January Meeting. Staff sees the value in engaging with a professional to develop a Public Relations strategy that can help us tell our story and elevate awareness and education of our Measure T programs and successes. Goals:

- Establish foundational messaging and a comprehensive PR strategy to help drive and support Truckee Fire’s Community Wildfire Protection Plan long-term goals
- Achieve coverage among regional mainstream news outlets to educate and inform the public about realized achievements and programs in place
- Communicate to the community, residents and property owners about how their tax dollars are being spent and what programs are available to promote wildfire resilient communities in Truckee and in Donner Summit communities.
- Engage with local and national media to ensure Truckee Fire and its team of experts are on their radar for comprehensive coverage on wildfire prevention programs.

Citizens’ Oversight Committee

Joyce & Eric have been working in the background to identify training needs and meeting rooms options. A communication will be going out to all 7 members and 5 alternates in January to assign required trainings, and conduct a poll to identify a date so we can schedule the first Citizens Oversight Committee (COC) meeting. Additionally, staff has been working with Fire Aside to also prepare a year end accomplishments report in anticipation of getting everything ready for the first COC meeting. We anticipate that the COC will meet in late February or March.

Budget

Truckee Fire Protection District will receive their first Measure T tax revenues in January. This is expected to be approximately half of the total taxes collected. The District will use them to reimburse the operational reserves that were expended last FY and this current FY to begin implementing some of the major wildfire prevention programs that were identified in the Measure T Implementation Plan. Any remaining revenues will be transferred to Measure T reserves to be used to support financial stability of the Wildfire Prevention Division as we prepare for a productive and actionable 2023 fire season. Staff has been engaged in the fiscal year budgeting processes to ensure a smooth transition between fiscal years, proper expense tracking, and planning additional program expenditures once Measure T parcel tax money is received in 2023. Finance has also been working with our auditor to prepare a FYE 2022

Measure T report that will be presented to the Board at the January meeting, and then to the Measure T Citizen's Oversight Committee at their first operational meeting.

Measure T Staffing

Current staff consists of:

1 Wildfire Prevention Manager

1 Assistant Wildfire Prevention Manager/Forester

1 Wildfire Prevention Specialist II

Coming Spring 2023: 4-6 Seasonal Defensible Space Specialists

With direct support from Truckee Fire Executive, Administrative, and Prevention staff.