

Lincoln County Firesafe Council Agenda

Location – Zoom Conference Call

Date- April 15th, 2021

Time-9:00 AM - 09:45 AM

Note Taker: Jacob Jeresek

In Attendance: Jacob Jeresek, Jeremy Rank, Brian Ressel, Jennifer Nelson, Gary Kedish, Steve Lauer, Doug Turman, Josh Letcher, Derek Luchik, Brent Teske

New/Old Business:

- NRCS Update (Brian)
 - NRCS received their budget for FY21 grants. NRCS received a little over \$700k for fuels reduction projects between the Glen Lake project receiving \$500,000 and Edna-Fortine project receiving \$200,000. This funding will accomplish over 400 acres of thinning. Everyone that has applied within the Glen Lake project area has received funding to get work done on their property.
 - Brian is working on a new proposed grant area called the Fire Adapted Fortine project for FY22.
- Grant Updates (Jennifer)
 - KFRI can be used anywhere in Lincoln County. Jennifer is avoiding areas where NRCS is working to avoid confusion amongst landowners. There is currently a lot of interest in the Troy and Libby areas. In the Troy area, interest is in the Rabbit Tracks, Lake Creek, Iron Creek, and Bull Lake areas. In the Libby area, interest is in Bobtail area (Hutton Drive/Bobtail Lane).
 - Jennifer received the paperwork for Western States. Currently there are three landowners that are interested with one landowner owning a larger area and two landowners owning smaller areas.
 - Jennifer is working on the agreement for MFAP Rabbit Tracks project. The MFAP committee asked for the proposal to reduce the total price awarded by \$15,000 for unknown reasons. Within the Rabbit Tracks proposal, Stimson has dropped tree planting and the Forest Service dropped some of the roadside mastication to meet the request.
- Joint Chief's Update (Gary)
 - Agencies have received the letter from the Regional Forester with timelines for FY22 project proposals. Timelines for FY22 proposals are as follows: First draft is due to the Regional Office by May 20th, the Regional Office will provide feedback by June 5th, final project proposals are due to the Washington Office by June 25th.
 - The Region will only pick three projects in Region 1 to submit to the Washington

Office. Proposals this year are allowed six pages with two maps. Feedback from last year's proposal was our maps were too busy so the committee will be working on revising the maps.

- In the Joint Chief's webinar, the evaluation committee recommended balanced proposals across all lands. The State of Montana has come up with additional units they would like to add to the proposal. Additionally, Jennifer and Brian will look at including more private landowners to meet this intent.
- Mo Bookwalter is working with Gary and has offered to help revise our proposal. She is fully supportive of our proposal and would like us to submit the same proposal as FY21. She felt we had a very strong proposal and was able to secure \$150,000 in forest health and protection funding from the Region to help fund work in the Flower Creek and Hoodoo areas.
- One of the FY21 project proposal downfall was NEPA ready projects. The Kootenai National Forest received the Biological Opinion for the Ripley project back from the USFWS with a few things to address. This should allow for the Ripley project to maintain its current timeline.
- Conservation Finance (Gary)
 - Gary and Jennifer have listened to Conservation finance training webinars in the last week. This training is trying to use innovative finance for national forests grant funding to leverage private investors to fund innovative projects. There are more webinars in the future that Gary and Jennifer will attend.
- Skidale Media Proposal (Tim)
 - With the Skidale project, there is the potential for smoke complaints and potential impacts to the impact zone when the resultant landing piles are burned. Tim would like to have a media blitz when the piles are burned to educate the public on why we're burning in and around Libby. His idea is to have the Forest Service, DNRC, and Libby Rural Fire Department participate in the burning and mop-up of piles while having the media tell the story of why we are burning.
 - Steve thought this would be a great joint training opportunity between agencies and offered his support. He also offered to provide a letter of support from the Libby Rural Fire Department and acting as a permit provider for management burning within the Libby Air Pollution Control District if this is desired.
 - The Forest Service still needs to get agency administrator support for this project.

Round Robbin:

Adjourned