

Minutes of the Jackson County Oregon Forestland-Urban Interface Fire Protection Act Classification Committee Meeting

March 12, 2003
White City, OR 1:00 p.m.

Attendees: Jim Wolf, Rick Gibson, Brian Ballou, Dan Thorpe, Bill Rose, Reeve Hennion, Michael Mattson, Lou Gugliotta, Keith Massie

Introductions (Ballou), distribution of certificates to committee members (Gibson), overview of act (Wolf), overview of committee's duties and responsibilities (Gibson), overview of Jackson County's interface situation (Wolf), and details of the classification process (Gibson).

(Rose) At what scale will the mapping be done at? Bill cited his experience at working at a fairly small scale for fire hazard mapping. Wolf responded that whatever scale works best for this task is the scale that will be used. Much of this is up to the committee, and Wolf and other ODF/county personnel will respond according to the committee's decisions.

Thorpe illustrated, using the county's maps, where the ODF protection district boundaries are. It was described to the committee that protection does not take place on irrigated, agricultural lands. Of the ODF-protected lands, only the lands with dwellings and which meet the other criteria under the Forestland-Urban Interface Fire Protection Act will be the concern of this committee.

Wolf noted that all of Jackson County has a common wildfire weather hazard value (3), and the county has a GIS data layer for slope hazard value. The vegetation hazard value "is probably the most important factor and the one have the least information for." The county has a GIS vegetation data layer, and ODF has orthographic layers, but neither are current. The map handed out at the meeting (Fire Behavior Fuel Model) employs USFS/BLM Farsite data, which uses the federal fuel model parameters. Wolf described that the Forestland-Urban Interface Act rules use the fuel models as guidelines, but are distilled into three classes. Most of the emphasis is on ground fuels rather than aerial (crown) fuels. (Wolf noted that he has software that can run flame-length scenarios based on location, fuel type, weather influences, so the committee could see fire behaviors in a given area according to fixed and variable elements.)

The committee has an option to work, with Keith, dynamically, using a computer that projects its image so the group can see and define specific geographic areas. Wolf summarized what the Deschutes committee is going to do, mapping-wise, that he is going to provide recommended situations for the committee to review and consider during its meetings.

Gibson passed out copies of the administrative rules and the statute.

Hennion made the comment that the committee's meetings need to be well publicized. Ballou noted that ODF is sending out news releases prior to each meeting, in that the meetings are public meetings, by law. Hennion, and others in the committee, concurred that items in the newspaper, and other news media outlets, is important so the committee does not become perceived as working in isolation.

Keith noted that if landowners are notified and not renters, then the wrong audience may be informed. He offered that the county has the data to reach both landowners and renters. Gibson concurred that it may be essential to contact both landowners and renters with notifications and evaluation/certification materials.

In the course of outlining the committee's rules, Gibson noted that the Deschutes County committee wanted the rules about quorums changed. In that instance, business can be conducted with fewer than four members, but decisions cannot be made. Gibson offered this change to this committee as well.

Comments from the public moved up to the point after the reading/approval of the previous meeting's minutes (Hennion). Better yet, public comment taken after minutes and at end of meeting. This will accommodate people who came to the meeting to comment, but don't want to sit through the whole meeting before getting an opportunity to speak.

Gibson recommended that committee members consider the rules and propose further changes, if desired, at the committee's next meeting.

Gugliotta and Hennion recommended that work sessions be identified as such, and not confused with meetings. (In the absence of a quorum.)

Preliminary map: not as a staff recommendation or staff proposal, but a visual reference for the committee to use.

Next meeting: April 3, 9:00 a.m., location TBA

Forecasted meetings: (May 14 1 pm, June 11 1 pm, July 9, 1 pm)

Next agenda: election of officers, review of draft of overlay map, review of changes to committee rules, develop calendar or other benchmark(s) for accomplishments (work plan)

Hennion asked that Ballou send staff e-mail/contact info to all committee members.

Adjourned: 4:05 p.m.

Bill Rose, Secretary

Date