WASHINGTON PRESCRIBED FIRE COUNCIL STEERING COMMITTEE

**Meeting Minutes [draft]**

**March 10, 2021**  
2:45 pm – 4:00 pm  
Virtual Meeting

**Present:** Chris Martin, Chair; Reese Lolley, Treasurer; Mike Norris, Secretary; Joe Murray; Sanjay Barik; Ernesto Alvarado; Jay McLaughlin; Jon Culp; Lee Hemmer; Lonnie Newton; Matt Eberlein; Sami Schinnell; Sarah Hamman; Shannon Murray; Tonya Neider; Dale Swedberg; Carolyn Kelly (alt. for Karen Zirkle)

**Also Present:** Kara Karboski, Coordinator; Savannah D’Evelyn; Aaron Rowe; Travis Dotson; Shane Robson; Rob Lionberger; Emily Hohman

**Absent:** Steve Pietroburgo; John Richardson; Ken Meinhart; Dana Skelly; Jonathan Tallman;

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **1. Agenda** | |
| Actions | **Agenda Approved** |
| Discussion/Decisions | **Motion:** Reese Lolley makes a motion to approve the agenda. Lee Hemmer seconds. Approved unanimously. |
| **2. Previous Meeting Minutes** | |
| Actions | **Minutes from November 17, 2020 and February 8, 2021 meetings approved** |
| Discussion/Decisions | **Motion:** Ernesto Alvarado makes a motion to approve the minutes; Joe Murray seconds. Approved unanimously. |
| **3. Steering Committee Membership** | |
| Actions | **Officers will follow-up with Steering Committee members who did not recommit today.** |
| Discussion/Decisions | **New Steering Committee Members:**  Two new Steering Committee members who are replacing previous members from the same organization:  Sanjay Barik, Regional Section Manager, Central Region, Dept. of Ecology  Shannon Murray, Northwest Fire Science Consortium  **Recommitment:**  Asking for recommitment from Steering Committee members. We will reach out afterwards to those who are not currently at the meeting to determine their commitment. Will establish process for doing this in the future.  **New Members and Recruitment:**  Need to focus time and capacity in the future on recruitment of new members, representation of organizations, and reaching out to potential new members. |
| **4. Officers** | |
| Actions | **Chris Martin continues term as Chair**  **Aaron Rowe is the new Vice-Chair**  **Mike Norris continues term as Secretary**  **Reese Lolley continues term as Treasure** |
| Discussion/Decisions | Nominations  **Secretary:** Lee Hemmer, moves to nominate Mike Norris for secretary. Dale Swedberg seconds. Approved unanimously.  **Treasurer:** Dale Swedberg moves to nominate Reese Lolley for treasurer. Joe Murray seconds. Approved unanimously.  **Vice-Chair:** Dale Swedberg moves to nominate Aaron Rowe for Vice-Chair. Reese Lolley seconds. Approved unanimously.  **Chair:** Joe Murray moves to nominate Chris Martin for Chair. Lee Hemmer seconds. Approved unanimously. |
| **5. Budget Update** | |
| Actions | **Financial Summary approved.** |
| Discussion/Decisions | Current financial summary shows agreements, awarded funding, expenses to date, and current balance. Have made a commitment to moving towards a budgeting process and profit and loss reporting. Kara and Reese are working to having that as soon as possible.  Future Funding:   * USFS Region 6 has provided funding for the Council that is moving through DNR and that agreement is being worked on * DNR has committed funding towards TREX * USFWS and BLM both have open cooperative agreements with additional potential funding.   **Motion:** Lee Hemmer makes motion to approve budget summary as presented. Dale Swedberg seconds. Unanimously approved. |
| **6. New Business/Member Updates** | |
| Actions | **Kara will follow-up with Ecostudies and Forest Stewards Guild on Rx insurance. Anyone with other info or insight should contact Sarah Hamman.**  **Chris is developing a proposal for an estimate to work with Cascadia Law Group. Will bring back to Steering Committee.** |
| Discussion/Decisions | **Developing Proposal to Hire Law Group:**  *Chris Martin:* Have been talking about hiring some “professional bandwidth” to better understand the Smoke Management Plan Update, as well as ensuring our funding is dialed in to the legislature. Considering hiring Cascadia Law Group to help us develop strategies as we talk to legislators and regulators. Also made it clear that we are not trying to be adverse, hiring to help us.  *Lee Hemmer:* Would give us more expertise when dealing with the legislators if we have better background that we have now, probably a good idea.  *Dale Swedberg:* Question about hiring the firm? Fiscal impact?  *Reese:* Chris has initiated those conversations. Developing a clearer proposal so there are no surprises. Something specific would get put forth to the Council Steering Committee.  *Chris:* Draft a scope of work and then get an estimate for it. Long-term goal is that is pays for themselves by those guys as lobbyists.  **Smoke Management Plan Update Webinar & Eastside AAR:**  *Carolyn Kelly:* Smoke Management Plan update a few weeks ago. Link to that webinar recording is available. Comments were open until March 7. Tomorrow will be holding the Eastern side of the state After Action Review and is open to all stakeholders who want to be involved.  SMP Webinar: <https://www.dnr.wa.gov/OutdoorBurning>. Tomorrow's state/federal after action review is at 1300. Shoot Carolyn an email if you'd like an invite: [Carolyn.kelly@dnr.wa.gov](mailto:Carolyn.kelly@dnr.wa.gov)  **Prescribed Fire Insurance:**  *Sarah Hamman:* Now with Ecostudies Institute (formerly Center for Natural Lands Management). Ecostudies is no longer under the insurance program that CNLM has, so now in this tricky situation without insurance. Interested in insurance for prescribed fire  *Kara Karboski:* Can make a connection between Ecostudies and Forest Stewards Guild contacts who have been working on insurance.  **Forest Stewards Guild:**  *Shannon Murray:* The Forest Stewards Guild has hired a PNW Coordinator, Maura Olivos. Could be a great contact. The Guild is also started a new offshoot called the Ember Alliance to manage their fire management program. Ember Alliance: <https://emberalliance.org/>  Maura Olivos is the new Forest Stewards Guild PNW Coordinator: [maura@forestguild.org](mailto:maura@forestguild.org)  **RVCC TNC Accelerator Grant:**  *Jay McLaughlin:* RVCC was given a TNC Accelerator grant looking in how to make the partnership between USFS and NGOs more efficient and for NGOS to burn with USFS on federal lands. Contact Jay if you are interested!  **Aaron Rowe, Oke-Wen NF:**  Introduction. Aaron works for the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest under Matt Castle (Fuels). Aaron coordinates with all the Ranger Districts and has been involved in Cascadia TREX in the past. The Forest is going to start burning as early as next week.  **Matt Eberlein, WDFW:**  Have started burning already. They did some endangered species burns around Moses Lake area. Looking at first part of April for starting forest burns.  **Lonnie Newton, BLM:**  BLM looking at spring burns this year, one unit by Orient. Also anticipate it will come in to prescription that mid-April time. Opportunities to partner with spring TREX.  Agreement between BLM and RC&D ends August 2021. Will be putting together a new agreement that will support WPFC (RC&D is fiscal sponsor of Council).  **Tonya Neider, NPS:**  Planning burns this spring but unsure if they will be able to move ahead with due to COVID restrictions with the agency. Burn units north and south of Kettle falls. Incorporating 6 acres of private land on the northern unit, and working with DNR to have them be responsible. Agreement with TNC is finalized to be able to utilize TREX.  **Shane Robson, Colville NF:**  Shane is with the Fuels Program. Burning starting mid to end of April. Last few years have rally focused on smaller scale burning in slash given harvest levels. Trying to get agreements with TNC for TREX moving forward. No problem hosting DNR employees. Interested in engaging in Steering Committee.  **Motion:** Dale Swedberg moves to adjourn the meeting. Sarah Hamman seconds. Meeting adjourned |