

**MARIN WILDFIRE PREVENTION AUTHORITY**

For the Meeting March, 2021

To: Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority Board of Directors

From: Rich Shortall, FIRESafe Marin

Subject: Update from FIRESafe Marin on projects/ programs

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

Receive report from FIRESafe Marin on MWPA supported projects and programs.

**BACKGROUND:**

FIRESafe Marin has been contracted to provide a variety of services and programs for MWPA. Attached is an update on those programs/projects. Rich Shortall who will be available for questions.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

Funds for FIRESafe Marin have been allocated in your FY20-21 budget.

## **MWPA Project Update March 2020**

### **Monthly Webinars**

**FSM-2020-C01**

Our eighth webinar featured covered Zone 0 – Ground Zero When Protecting Your Home From Embers and the home ignition problem. Speakers: Jack Cohen, Fire Scientist (retired U.S. Forest Service Research) , Todd Lando, Hazard Mitigation Specialist/Battalion Chief (Central Marin FD) & Steve Quarles, Chief Scientist (retired) IBHS. Attendance was approximately 240 including attendees from several other fire councils. The next webinar, Tuesday March 30 will focus on Defensible Space Zones 1, 2, & 3.

### **5 Community Wildfire Protection Workshops 5 (1 in each zone) FSM-2020-C02**

Unlike the webinars, the workshops are designed around skills that can be employed by residents to improve wildfire safety. The planning for the workshops is complete. We are now editing video content. Representatives from each of the five MWPA zones have been assigned to participate in their respective workshop to highlight local MWPA projects and concerns. We will host one workshop each week starting first week of May. We ask MWPA Board members to please help publicize these important events.

### **Annual workshop for Landscape Professionals**

**FSM-2020-C03**

FSM is working with CA Landscape Contractors Association - North Coast Chapter and UC Marin Master Gardeners to develop an educational program for landscape contractors. Course content is under development and first draft of the program is complete.

### **Annual Workshop for Home Hardening Contractors**

**FSM-2020-C04**

FSM is partnering with graduate students from UC Davis to create a plan for a new home hardening contractor program. The goal is to recruit and train economically disadvantaged young adults to provide basic home hardening services such as installing screens on gutters and vents. New State legislation requiring fire home hardening disclosures at time of sale along with emphasis on home hardening as a critical component of wildfire safety is expected to increase demand for home hardening services.

### **Prevention and Preparedness in schools "Get Ready Fifth Grade" FSM-2020-C05**

This project has been completed and delivered to the Marin County Board of Education. The feedback from teachers who have piloted the course is very positive.

### **Prepare Educational materials such as brochures and handouts FSM-2020-C06**

We continue to distribute our educational materials. The popular “Homeowners Guide to Wildfire Preparation in Marin” was revised and 25,000 new copies have been printed and delivered primarily for distribution by the wildfire mitigation specialists. We are

working with the WMS planning group to support the next round of training for wildfire mitigation specialists by creating new educational materials.

**Develop Spanish language training and educational materials**      **FSM-2020-C07**

The FSM website is now equipped with the Google Translate feature so that all of the information is available in multiple languages. Our popular “Evacuation Checklist” has been translated into Spanish and posted on the website under our new “Espanol” heading that links to additional original Spanish language content. Hard copies of the Spanish language checklist have been printed. A Spanish language video to accompany the Red Flag Warning project has been completed and is posted on our website. FSM has been awarded a grant from the California Firesafe Council for what is called the the Listos Outreach Toolkit which includes Spanish language educational materials and \$3000 in additional discretionary project funding. We are working with the San Rafael Fire Department and other agencies on an outreach program utilizing these new materials.

**Support Wildfire Mitigation Specialists**      **FSM-2020-C08**

We are working with Mark Brown's committee on development of the next WMS training program. Executive Officer Mark Brown Glass Fire narration video has been edited as a training film for the WMS's class. We are in the process of shooting a new video describing how a D-space evaluation should be conducted. We will utilize the data from this program to help Firewise communities update their action plans for next year.

**Monthly Firewise online Community Meetings**      **FSM-2020-C09**

We continue to host the monthly Firewise Leaders meeting immediately after the FSM Board meeting on the second Friday of each month and we routinely participate in local Firewise meetings.

**Staff to support Firewise sites with technical and direct support**      **FSM-2020-C10**

We have created a new Universal Firewise Activities guide for Firewise sites to better standardize the program. A powerpoint training on evacuation that can be delivered to residents by individual Firewise leaders has been created that includes several scaled options for conducting local evacuation drills.

FSM staff successfully helped our 70+ Firewise sites with this year's NFPA renewal process. Our Firewise metric project is complete and is being used to measure improvements in organizational capacity and effectiveness. Firewise site listings are all updated.

**Maintain current and comprehensive website library of resources**      **FSM-2020-C11**

We are working with US Digital Response which provides pro-bono technical expertise

to help reorganize our website and to make it more user friendly. Project completion date is targeted for April. The website is very popular and we receive questions about sharing our content from fire councils throughout the State.

**Educational video- creation and distribution**

**FSM-2020-C12**

A new “Introduction to FIRESAFE Marin” video has been produced and will be placed on the landing page of the website. Content from each of our webinars has been edited into shorter video clips on specific topics. These clips are used to help illustrate educational content on our website and will be incorporated into the Spring Community Workshops. This is an ongoing project which will include a new convenient directory to help find video content. We are in production for several new videos including a guide for Firewise leaders to do neighborhood walks. We have added a new “highlight reel” feature to our newsletters to encourage views of webinars from the preceding month. Our Youtube channel has significantly expanded its content and now includes over 70 videos.

**Respond to resident inquiries and requests in timely manner**

**FSM-2020-C13**

We continue to provide same day response to virtually every request for information. Our ability to respond in a comprehensive and timely manner greatly reduces the workload of our fire departments.

**Prepare and distribute monthly newsletter**

**FSM-2020-C14**

Monthly Newsletters are normally sent out on the second Tuesday. Our average open rate are very high for a non profit. Be sure to check out the monthly “Fire Smart Landscape Tip” from UC Marin Master Gardeners, the new highlight reel feature and links to interesting articles on topics related to the webinar. We will be adding a new feature highlighting the accomplishments of the MWPA.

**Prepare articles for print media: Marin IJ, Pacific Sun**

**FSM-2020-C15**

We have developed a series of new Public Service Announcements for the Marin Independent Journal that align with the webinar series. We have been successful in finding a sponsor each month which funds the publication of these PSA's.

**Fire Smart demonstration gardens throughout the County**

**FSM-2020-C1**

The Sleepy Hollow Fire Protection District is funding a major Fire Smart landscaping demonstration project in Sleepy Hollow. An experienced fire safe landscaping architect is designing the project. Representatives from UC Marin Master Gardeners are auditing the project. We expect to present a proposal for a new fire smart landscaping demonstration garden at Dominican College as part of next year's request.

**NOAA Weather Radios**

**FSM-2020-C17**

1000 NOAA weather radios were distributed to the 17 MWPA jurisdictions on a

pro rata basis. Additional batteries were received from the manufacturer and distributed to users. FSM will collect survey data on the effectiveness of the program.

### **Countywide chipper program**

**FSM-2020- C18**

The final report on the 2020 Chipper Program has been distributed to MWPA Board members and is posted on our website. The planning team for the 2021 program developed a recommendation for an expanded curbside chipper program covering most of Marin County. The recommendation was approved by the MWPA Operations Committee and has been forwarded to the full Board for consideration.

### **Alert and Warning via Red Flag Warning signs**

**FSM-2020-C19**

The prototype for larger, permanently installed road way flip signs has been fabricated. The signs display the “Red Flag Warning Today” when open and may be used to display other public safety messages when the signs are closed. The final design has been approved by the planning team. We have placed an order for 19 signs this year which we will distributed to the MWPA zones on a prorata basis.

A-frame Red Flag Warning signs have been distributed equitably in the 5 zones. This is a pilot project to test the effectiveness of the signs. An additional 10 signs that are designed to attach to existing Firewise Site signs are being distributed for testing as a lower cost alternative to the A-frame signs. We are exploring an option to have creative safety messaging displayed on the backside of the new signs.