



Newsletter

Shela Boynton, Editor

Volume 7, Spring Issue

Spring, 2010

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Pat Boss, Project Manager
Mike Kellner, Project Manager
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MCFSC HOSTS COMMUNITY MEETING

"Preparing for the 2010 Fire Season"

**Thursday, May 20
6:00-8:00 P.M.**

Idyllwild School Gym

With presentations from
all local fire departments:
U.S.F.S., Cal Fire,
Idyllwild Fire Protection
District

This will be an opportunity to meet with and ask questions of those in charge of enforcing the abatement codes. Learn what we can expect for the 2010 fire season and what we as a community can do to mitigate the hazards. *We look forward to seeing you there!*

CHANGES ON THE HILL

Mike Esnard, President



The agencies responsible for fire prevention and suppression in the San Jacintos are very important to the Fire Safe Council, and we think their personnel changes are important to hill residents. With that in mind, here are some of the changes that have taken place in the last several months.

The group we literally work most closely with is the Cal Fire/Riverside County Pre-Fire Management Division. (They work upstairs at the Mountain Resources Center.) The new year brought the retirement of one of our favorite people from that office, Division Chief Kevin Turner. Chief Turner has been a leader in fuels reduction work over the years and a great friend of ours. We are happy to hear that he may return soon in an advisory capacity. The new Pre-Fire Chief is Bill Weiser who, at the moment, is performing Kevin's former duties. Bill came to the mountain from the Ben Clark Training Center in Riverside.

On the fire-fighting side of Cal Fire, Dan Johnson was appointed Chief of the Mountain Battalion late last year, replacing Walt

Holloway, who took a Cal Fire job in Sacramento. Dan is responsible for the stations in Pine Cove, Garner Valley, Pinyon, Anza (shared with the Forest Service), and Lake Riverside. In addition to fire suppression, the personnel at these stations are responsible for inspecting property in their areas to make sure the vegetation does not pose a fire threat to the community, which is where many residents come in contact with them.

In the US Forest Service, the holidays also saw the retirement of Greg Casselberry as Deputy District Forest Ranger. We knew Greg for his leadership in district efforts to conduct crucial fuel reduction plans throughout the mountain. He was also kind enough to lend me books and some of his time when I came on board and needed to learn at least a smidgen of forestry. Greg's position is being filled on a temporary basis until a search is complete, but the district fuel projects continue, though hampered by a lack of funds.

Finally, the Idyllwild Fire Protection District has seen the most significant change. Mike Mulhall is now the Interim Chief in the wake of

Steve Kunkle's sudden retirement in February. But an even bigger change occurred last November when Idyllwild district voters elected three new members to the Board of Commissioners, the district's governing body. They are Pete Capparelli, Chip Schelly, and Jeannine Charles-Stigall, who is now board president. The new board is working hard with Chief Mulhall to address some difficult problems left from the last administration, as evidenced by their March public meeting which lasted six hours. We are impressed and encouraged by their commitment and openness in addressing IFPD's challenges.

To all who are new either to the mountain or to their jobs, we wish you the very best. After all, your success is our safety.

CA. FIRE STATISTICS 2008

**Wildland Fires
5,812**

**Acres Burned
1,339,839**

**TOTAL COST
\$1 Billion**

The Mountain Communities Fire Safe Council Newsletter is funded by a USDA Forest Service grant through the California Fire Safe Council, sponsors, and donations. Donations to Mountain Communities Fire Safe Council are used to further public awareness and support fire prevention and hazard fuels reduction objectives.

NOTES FROM THE MCFSC OFFICE

Hazard Fuels Removal

It's time for SPRING CLEANING, not only in your house but in your yard as well. Mountain Communities Fire Safe Council currently has county funds to help you remove hazard fuels, limbs, pine needles, dry brush, etc., from your property and bring it into compliance with the Defensible Space Public Resource Code 4291. This law requires residents to provide 100' of defensible space around their homes and other structures on their properties.

If you need help with removal of hazard fuels from your property, or want help understanding what to do so your parcel complies with PRC 4291 (fire code), call us at 951-659-6208 to initiate the following process:

- A project manager will meet with you to help develop a site-specific plan.
- A written description of work to be done is given to local contractors, and they return a bid for the job.
- You are notified of the lowest bid and, if you agree to the price, the signed contract and cost-share is returned to MCFSC.
- Once the job is completed and you approve the work, we pay the contractor.

Introducing the MCFSC Crew

Mary Carroll, Office Assistant, is the first contact and keeps the database current. Project Managers **Don Patterson**, **Pat Boss**, and **Mike Kellner** meet with property owners and oversee the abatement process. Project Manager **John Hauer** monitors fuel breaks for the Forest Service and keeps the office computers and equipment for the Woodie volunteers running. **Edwina Scott**, Executive Director, oversees daily operations.



Edwina, John, Mary, Pat, Don, Mike

Annual Membership Drive

We look forward to working with you and hope you will join us by completing the membership application (back page) and returning it along with a \$10 member fee in the enclosed self-addressed envelope.

The May Valley Project



On Saturday, March 20, members of the MCFSC and about 25 other interested individuals attended a planning session and field trip hosted by the U.S. Forest Service to acquaint the community with the planned May Valley Fuels Reduction Project (photos above and below). The goal of the Forest Service is to work with community members and special interest groups as they develop the plan. It is hoped that early agreement to the project will alleviate lawsuits which may impede the project at a later date.

Based on participant votes, the four most popular focus objectives are:

1. Access and egress for firefighters and public safety.
2. Potential impacts of operations on recreation opportunities, e.g., hiking, biking and horseback riding.
3. Types of treatment and when or where each is appropriate.
4. Impacts of thinning operations on wildlife and plants.

(Objectives courtesy of J.P. Crumrine, 03/18/10 Idyllwild Town Crier)



Mountain Disaster Preparedness News

Veronica Alt, President

We are excited to report new car signage to identify MDP volunteers when we are out doing assessments at the request of our fire department, or when we are serving as CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) volunteers in emergency situations. This will also make it easier for residents to report neighborhood issues, people in need, missing individuals or any other concerns so that we can radio the appropriate agencies for assistance.

All DAS (Disaster Aid Stations) units have been inventoried and appropriate redistributions or purchases will be made soon. A big THANK YOU to the DAS Captains for their prompt, hard work. Also, Cal Fire is assisting MDP in updating its DAS maps which will be invaluable to all of us in an emergency.

Finally, we have begun to set up our July Fundraiser committee and will have more information in our regular gmail blasts and in next month's newsletter. If you are not on our gmail blast, please contact us at www.MDP-Idyllwild.com.

MILE HIGH RADIO HAM RADIO LICENSE CLASS

Intro to Ham Radio April 24
Class May 8, 15, 22
Idyllwild Fire Dept. Training Room

Exam on final weekend for all 3
Amateur License levels:
Technician, General, Extra

Contact Bill Baker

659-4366

mhrc@arri.net

**WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS
HAM RADIO WORKS**



FOREST CARE STRATEGIES

Ernesto Ale, Eco-Arborist



Trees produce two kinds of roots, woody and non-woody. Both types transport water and dissolved minerals to the leaves, providing raw materials for the tree to manufacture its own food, or "photosynthate". This is accomplished with the help of the sun in a process we call "photosynthesis". Once the food is made, it is transported downward to be used to carry out various tasks such as the creation of new cells, defense against infections and infestations, branch and twig shedding, and leaf and non-woody root shedding. The last thing a leaf (or needle) does in its life is produce the resources needed to fuel next year's growth and to create a barrier at the point where the leaf will be shed. A leaf does not actually turn brown; it stops making food, the last of which moves out of the leaf, thereby exposing the true color of the leaf. Hence, the leaf was never really green but, rather, full of green.

The non-woody roots are similar to leaves in that they are shed and re-emerge on a regular cycle. They tend to emerge in late winter/early spring and fuel the "coming alive" of the tree which happens from the top-most and outer-most points. If you look at the trees in the spring at the beginning of the new leaf growth, you will see this bisipetal procession which, of course, was fueled by stored energy from the previous year, and the uptake of water and dissolved minerals by both types of roots. The part we see is the result of a complex and orderly series of events carried out invisibly and silently, often below snow-covered and frozen soils.

The timing of tree care and pruning is most effective when plant phenology is considered. Plant phenology deals with the timing of annual processes and is actually quite simple to apply using the following guidelines:

AVOID PRUNING ANYTIME LEAVES ARE FORMING OR FALLING. These are high-energy use activities, and it is best not to add to the demands being placed on the tree at these times.



DO NOT FERTILIZE OR DISTURB ROOT ZONES DURING LATE WINTER/EARLY SPRING. The addition of chemicals or fertilizers of any kind can be like an acid trip for the non-woody roots and may burn or damage them. This will be reflected at the opposite end of the tree by poorly formed leaves, buds, reproductive parts, etc.

AVOID PRUNING ANYTIME FRUIT, CONES OR REPRODUCTIVE PARTS ARE FORMING. The tree is recreating itself for future generations, also a high-energy use activity. It is always safe and beneficial to remove dead wood from the tree, as it is no longer vascular and not subject to the same sensitivities of the living parts. Removing dead wood, while not harming living parts, builds sensitivity to tree anatomy that helps us move into the more complex realm of pruning living parts.

(This article was previously published in *The Idyllwild View*.)

MCFSC BIDS FAREWELL TO RON BOWLES

Board member and Woodie volunteer, Ron passed away March 12. The following letter to wife, Jeri, reflects our sadness and sense of loss:

Dear Jeri, As part of your and Ron's extended family, we offer our condolences and deepest regrets. With heart and soul, Ron represented us with his unique blend of class, caring and humor. We were honored to have him named "Woodie of the Year" in 2008. *He led by example.* We are proud to be part of his legacy. The Woodies



Ron at center with wife, Jeri

Join Us in Making Our Communities Fire Safe

It is an old saying but it's true: there is strength in numbers! If you and others in your family, along with your neighbors, join the Council, we are more able to carry out our programs and move closer to making the mountain communities fire safe.

Awareness of the issues and challenges involved in making a community fire safe will help you understand why it is everyone's business. Talk to a Council member. Attend the monthly board meetings. **BECOME INFORMED!!**

Once you have a grasp of what is involved, call, write or email our area's elected representatives. Let them know how important it is to support the initiatives being taken by our local fire agencies. You can become a member of **your** Fire Safe Council for only \$10 per person or \$20 per family. Send the completed application form (below) with your check to MCFSC, PO Box 507, Idyllwild CA 92549.

ABATEMENT SEASON IS HERE

Inspections start soon. Off-Hill property owners should visit their mountain properties to assess any damage to trees and/or structures. Clean-up of properties is essential to reducing fire hazard.

The contractors advertising on this page are used by the Fire Safe Council for grant work. They are licensed, insured, and bonded. Financial help is available through FSC.

The views and conclusions contained in this document are those of the authors and should not be interpreted as representing the opinions or policies of the California Fire Safe Council or the U.S. Government. Mention of trade names or commercial products does not constitute their endorsement by the California Fire Safe Council or the U.S. Government.

\$2,000,000.00
Liability Insurance

\$1,000,000.00
Fireman's Fund Insurance

\$1,000,000.00
Workman's Comp Insurance

MOUNTAIN FIRE ABATEMENT

Tree Removal
Trimming
Topping
Felling Service

Locally owned
and operated
Uniformed Professionals
Abatements to code

And Tree Service

Protect yourself and your property: Always ask for a copy of license, liability insurance and Workers Compensation Ins. for your records before any work is started on your property.

- Members of the California Tree Trimmers Association
- Members of the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA)
- Members of the Western Chapter ISA- #CH-08164
- Members of the Associated California Loggers (ACL)

(951) 659-1157 • (951) 659-5590 fax

State Lic. #642638 C-27, D-49, C-61 • State Timber Operator's Lic. #A10209
ISA Member #CH-08164

PINO TREE SERVICE
951-231-5107

LICENSED AND INSURED

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

(\$10 per person or \$20 for family)

(Name)

(Property Address on the Hill)

(Mailing Address)

(City State and Zip)

(Phone)

(Email address)

MCFSC

PO Box 507

Idyllwild, CA 92549

**PLEASE JOIN US IN OUR EFFORTS TO
KEEP YOUR COMMUNITY FIRE SAFE.**

2010

If you would like to receive a newsletter via email, please send your email address to execdir@MCFSC.org. Remember that your contributions are tax deductible.

Pacific Slope Tree Co.
Josh Whitney

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TOTAL TREE SERVICE

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BOISSED OWNER

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Locally owned and operated since 1979.
Residents since 1970.

Serving Idyllwild and surrounding mountain communities.

Have worked in partnership with Southern California Edison, Verizon, Riverside County Road Department.

- Members of the Tree Trimmers Association
- Contractor for Mountain Community Fire Safe Council
- Workman's Comp Insurance: \$1,000,000
- General Liability: \$2,000,000
- Logger's Insurance: \$1,000,000

Cell: (951) 206-9671
Phone: (951) 659-3676
Fax: (951) 659-9996
Mike & Emily Pearson

Pearson's fully donated the tree used for the 1997 Tree Management. He also regularly donates firewood to the Idyllwild Center for those in need.