



## **Project Wildfire Neighborhood Coalition – July 17, 2025**

*Our mission is to support Project Wildfire’s Mission  
by improving fire-adapted readiness one neighborhood at a time.*

### **Meeting Minutes**

#### **ATTENDEES**

Austin Reimer  
Bill Erwin  
Carl Bass  
Catherine Smith  
Christina Maier  
Claudia MacDonald  
Clyde Evans  
Corinne Heiner  
Craig Renkert  
Danny & Kathy Rogers  
David MacLean  
Dean Richardson  
Deb Wren  
Elizabeth Weide, Co-Chair  
Eric Holsey  
Eric Moyerman  
Gary Godon  
Greg Bryant  
Gary & Debbie Grisamer

Guy Neal  
Heather Miller  
Helen Martson  
Holly J LaSan  
iPhone Jim  
Jamie Donahue  
Jeff Conrad  
Jeff Poteet  
Jeffrey Reaume  
Jim Larsen  
Johan & Jacqueline  
Schemmer  
Kathy Baker Katz  
Kathy DeBone  
Ken Bunt  
Ken Kennedy  
Kevin Moriarty  
Lauren Street  
Les Adams

Lisa Clark  
Lon Leneve, Co-Chair  
Lynn C King  
Matt  
Meagan Fummerton  
Melissa Steele  
Michael Gobler  
Nkonye Williams  
Paul Catino  
Paul Henninger  
Paula Salminen  
Pat Donald  
Peter Boehm  
Rex Lesueur  
Robin Church, Secretary  
Suzanne Butterfield  
Ted & Karen Summers  
Toby Rey

#### **WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS**

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 pm. Lon Leneve welcomed attendees and thanked Kathy DeBone and the Newberry Partnership for facilitating the logistics for the Project Wildfire Neighborhood Coalition (PWNC) to meet in La Pine. Attendees introduced themselves.

#### **MEETING MINUTES**

The MAY minutes will be posted to the PWNC library on Google Drive.

## DISCUSSION

### I. Outreach

#### **Project Wildfire**

Corinne Heiner, Fire-Adapted Communities Coordinator for Deschutes County, provided an overview of Project Wildfire, an organization created by county ordinance that focuses on wildfire risk mitigation across the county.

Project Wildfire is dedicated to developing long-term strategies, fostering disaster-resilient communities, and reducing the impact and severity of wildfires throughout Deschutes County. Project Wildfire coordinates preparation of Community Wildfire Protection Plans and sponsors FireFree, the free yard debris collection event held every spring for residents across the county.

Project Wildfire meets monthly on the third Tuesday of every month from 8:00 – 9:30 am at the Deschutes County Office Building, 1300 NW Wall St, Bend, OR. Corinne invited attendees those meetings either in person or by Zoom.

For Project Wildfire meeting notifications, contact:  
Corinne Heiner, Fire-Adapted Communities Coordinator, Deschutes County  
[corinne.heiner@deschutes.org](mailto:corinne.heiner@deschutes.org)  
(541) 322-7129

For more information:  
<https://projectwildfire.org>

#### **Project Wildfire Neighborhood Coalition**

Lon Leneve, Co-Chair, explained that the Project Wildfire Neighborhood Coalition was established in January 2023 as a subcommittee of Project Wildfire. PWNC supports the mission of Project Wildfire by focusing on wildfire readiness at the neighborhood level, sharing best practices and providing outreach, education and support. The coalition is comprised of agency experts (e.g. ODF, OSFM, local fire departments), expert consultants, neighborhood Firewise Coordinators, homeowners, associations and others.

Melissa Steele, Fire Inspector for the City of Bend, La Pine resident, and founding member of PWNC, expressed that the coalition focuses on education and preparation in advance of fire. Key learnings from last year's La Pine fires suggest there was confusion about "go bags" and evacuation. As such, Melissa encouraged everyone to participate in PWNC to learn more.

For Project Wildfire Neighborhood Coalition meeting notifications, contact:  
Corinne Heiner, Fire-Adapted Communities Coordinator, Deschutes County  
[corinne.heiner@deschutes.org](mailto:corinne.heiner@deschutes.org)  
(541) 322-7129

### II. Education

#### **Firewise Program Overview**

Austin Reimer, Stewardship Forester, Oregon Department of Forestry, provided an overview of the Firewise USA program and opened his presentation with a photo illustrating how defensible space around a home near Prineville helped save it from burning down during last Saturday's

fire. Like Prineville, La Pine lies in the wildland urban interface and wildfire continues to present a real threat to residents.

Firewise is a community-based program focusing on collective action to reduce wildfire risks to neighborhoods. It is a recognition program that mitigates risk through education, vegetation management, fuel reduction, and community building. A key component of the program is the community risk assessment whereby fire agency experts assess home ignition zones across the neighborhood and provide specific mitigation recommendations to improve safety.

**1. Requirements to Become Firewise:**

- a. Must include at least 8 residences
- b. Must show an annual investment back into the community (1 hr/home or its financial equivalent)
- c. Must hold an annual “Firewise Day” (educational and fuel reduction event)

**2. Getting Started:**

- a. Form a Firewise committee or board; pick a leader
- b. Schedule a community risk assessment – Agency experts (ODF, OSFM and local fire department representatives) will identify 3 themes/priority action items to improve your community’s safety and overall resilience
- c. Develop a 3-year Community Action Plan to address identified items
- d. File your community’s application in the Firewise Portal (Note: It will take a few weeks for the statewide Firewise liaison to review and approve your community’s application.)

**3. Maintaining Firewise Recognition:**

- a. Update your Community Risk Assessment every 5 years
- b. Update your Community Action Plan every 3 years
- c. Track investments in your community
- d. Plan an annual “Firewise Day”
- e. Build community relationships and plan for succession

Austin and others addressed questions regarding the Firewise program. While some companies, like USAA, provide discounts to policyholders who live in Firewise Communities, others do not. It is difficult for insurance companies to document completed mitigations.

The minimum 8 residences do not need to be contiguous. Each Firewise committee determines how the community’s boundaries will be defined. Participation in fuel reduction and preparation will generally expand over time across the neighborhood. Grants are available from the county; Firewise Communities are prioritized in the review process. While the Firewise committee determines how grant money will be spent, it also depends on the requirements specified in each grant application. If you live in a community with a governance structure (e.g. HOA community), it is advisable for your Firewise committee to be part of the HOA and to have your board and architectural review committee aligned to support Firewise efforts.

For more information about Firewise USA, contact:

Austin Reimer, Stewardship Forester, Oregon Department of Forestry

[austin.b.reimer@odf.oregon.gov](mailto:austin.b.reimer@odf.oregon.gov)

(541) 233-3160

### **PWNC Google Drive**

Craig Renkert explained that Project Wildfire Neighborhood Coalition maintains an online library of resources, presentations and information files from agency partners and Firewise communities. Materials are posted online in an open access folder on Google Drive.

To access the PWNC Firewise Library on Google Drive:

Google Drive: [https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1HZKa1h5qTE4PJ1C2JtB7IPxESGfN\\_oHK](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1HZKa1h5qTE4PJ1C2JtB7IPxESGfN_oHK)

To send an email to PWNC: [pwncdc@gmail.com](mailto:pwncdc@gmail.com)

### **BLM Fire Prevention Team Update**

Lisa Clark, Bureau of Land Management Field Manager, provided an update on the mobilization of a National Fire Prevention Team (NFPET) to address human-caused fires in the La Pine Basin. The NFPET team is composed of fire prevention specialists from the Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service. Over 2020-2025, over 75% of La Pine Basin fires occurred on private land. 70% were human-caused. Of these fires: 42 recreation-based, 36 open burning-related, 5 arson, 84 other/undetermined.

The team interviewed over 500 residents in La Pine and identified the following action items:

1. Work with Watch Duty to clarify that “RV” denotes BLM’s “Rivers” Division, not “recreational vehicle”. (Note: BLM covers 4.5M acres across 13 counties. Workload is divided across 5 divisions, namely Cascade, Newberry, Crescent, Rivers and Prairie.)
2. Increase visibility of BLM representation within the Basin.
3. Post information/restriction signage on roads across BLM lands to USFS lands.
4. Purchase and distribution of fire suppression blankets to RV owners is effective
5. Create more “how to” educational products, such as how to clear for a camp fire
6. Continue to invest in fuel reduction on BLM lands (Note: BLM has invested over \$1M in fuel reduction in the La Pine area over the last 15 years and over \$100K in tows.)

For more information, contact:

Lisa Clark, Field Manager, Bureau of Land Management

[lmclark@blm.gov](mailto:lmclark@blm.gov)

(541) 416-6864

### **III. Support**

#### **Deschutes County Grants**

Kevin Moriarty, Deschutes County Forester, encouraged attendees to consider organizing their neighborhoods into Firewise Communities and provided an update about upcoming grant opportunities.

##### **1. 2025 Fall Fuel Reduction Grant**

Deschutes County will be allocating \$125K in funds from OSFM and the Oregon Lottery towards community-based, fuel reduction projects this fall. The application will be posted on the Deschutes County Natural Resources webpage. The grant review process prioritizes Firewise Communities. If your Firewise Community is not part of a homeowners’ association, you will need to find a fiscal sponsor, such as UDRC.

Application site: <https://www.deschutes.org/forester>

Application period: September 1-30, 2025  
Award: \$1,000 - \$5,000 per community

**2. Bin Dumpster Program**

Deschutes County piloted a bin dumpster program for yard debris during FireFree two years ago and repeated it this past spring with 30 participating communities. The program will be held again next spring and prioritize new participating communities.

**3. Community Wildfire Defense Grant**

Deschutes County applied for a \$3.5M grant from USFS focusing on outreach, sweat-equity defensible space projects, and fire protection coordination in southern Deschutes County and La Pine. Kevin is waiting to hear if the grant has been approved.

For more information about Deschutes County Grants:

Kevin Moriarty, County Forester, Deschutes County

[forester@deschutes.org](mailto:forester@deschutes.org)

(541) 322-7117

<https://www.deschutes.org/forester>

**OSFM/IBHS Collaboration**

Heather Miller, Fire Risk Reduction Specialist, Oregon State Fire Marshal, provided an update on the collaborative partnership between OSFM and the Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety in Oregon. OSFM is working with the DFR and ODF on how to institute that partnership. Heather addressed questions about the status of Oregon’s defensible space code and shared that OSFM is working to develop model defensible space code for cities to adopt.

**Wildfire Home Protection Strategies Workshops**

Heather Miller invited everyone to sign up a scheduled Wildfire Home Protection Strategies class or complete an interest form for notifications about upcoming classes. This FREE workshop focuses on reducing wildfire risk to homes. Topics include: defensible space landscaping, building material recommendations and assessing risks around homes and neighborhoods within Central Oregon.

Register to attend a workshop in August:



Complete an interest form to be notified of upcoming workshops:



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **Hollingshead Water-Wise & Community Garden – Open Garden Event**

Hosted by OSU Extension Service, Central OR Master Gardeners Association & City of Bend  
Free. Tours of the community & demonstration gardens. Booths on Firewise, waterwise & more.  
No registration required

Saturday, August 9, 2025  
9:00 am – 12:00 pm  
1235 NE Jones Rd, Bend OR

### **Wildfire Home Protection Strategies Workshops**

Hosted by Central Oregon Fire Prevention Co-op & OSU Extension  
Free. Learn how to reduce wildfire risk to your Central Oregon home.  
Register: visit <http://beav.es/cTP> or email [rachel.humpert@oregonstate.edu](mailto:rachel.humpert@oregonstate.edu)

#### **August 14, 2025 – For Homeowners / Renters**

5:30 – 8:30 pm  
Deschutes County Extension Office, Deschutes County Fair & Expo Center | Bldg. 3,  
3800 SW Airport Way, Redmond OR

#### **August 22, 2025 – For Landscapers / Contractors**

8:00 am – 12:00 pm  
Deschutes County Extension Office, Deschutes County Fair & Expo Center | Bldg. 3,  
3800 SW Airport Way, Redmond OR

#### **October 4, 2025 – For Homeowners / Renters**

Location: La Pine, OR  
For more details or to register, email [rachel.humpert@oregonstate.edu](mailto:rachel.humpert@oregonstate.edu)

## ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 pm.

## FUTURE MEETINGS

Third Thursday of every month from 2:00 – 3:30 pm, except June and December.

Via Zoom (NEW 2025 Link):

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83528252632?pwd=GyJzHWcGXxAZYqHq7Jx1orGSOmljFY.1>

Meeting ID: 835 2825 2632

Passcode: 559910

August 21, 2025 – Deschutes County Road Department, 61150 SE 27<sup>th</sup> St, Bend OR  
September 18, 2025 – Sisters-Camp Sherman Fire Dept, 301 South Elm St, Sisters, OR  
October 16, 2025 – Deschutes County Road Department, 61150 SE 27<sup>th</sup> St, Bend OR  
November 20, 2025 – Location TBD, Redmond  
December 2025 – No PWNC Meeting