

**Central Oregon Fire Chiefs Association**  
**April 23, 2009 – 1:30 PM**  
**La Pine Rural Fire Protection District – Main Station**

In attendance:

Traci Cooper, Redmond Fire & Rescue

Dan Daugherty, La Pine Fire

Jim Gustafson, La Pine Fire

Kevin Benton, ODF

Joe Stutler, Deschutes County

Tom Jaca, Jefferson County Fire

Don Webber, Deschutes County Emergency Mgmt

Kyle Kirchner – Crescent Fire District

Chris Hoff, COFMS

Bob Schnoor, Crook County Fire

Tay Robertson, Sisters-Camp Sherman Fire

Jay Olsen, Jefferson County Fire

Larry Langley, Crooked River Ranch Fire

Katie Lighthall, Project Wildfire

Meeting called to order at 1330 hours by Chief Robertson. Previous minutes approved. Slight change in agenda.

#### Old Business

COFCA Bylaws – The group confirmed the decision at the last meeting that COFCA will not become a Non Profit Corporation, but remain an Association. Highlighted changes to document were reviewed. The group agreed that the new COFCA logo should be included on the first page. Motion to approve bylaws with highlighted changes made by Joe Stutler. Chief Gustafson 2<sup>nd</sup>. Approved. **Katie will finalize bylaws with logo and changes and distribute to everyone and include on website.**

Mutual Aid Agreement – The group reviewed the agreement as presented and decided that it should be formally recognized as the Central Oregon Municipal Fire Department Mutual Aid Agreement. Chief Langley motioned to approve agreement with noted name. Chief Robertson 2<sup>nd</sup>. Approved. **Katie will forward to each department for signatures. The signature sheet will be posted on the website with the document.**

Fire Defense Board Chiefs Bylaws – The group reviewed the document and made changes. Motion made by Chief Gustafson to accept bylaws with changes. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Joe Stutler. Approved. Don Webber suggested that if any Chief is going to be unavailable for more than five days, that he notify all the Chiefs via email and update the rotation for everyone and dispatch.

#### New Business

**Pre Season Meeting** – Joe Stutler announced the annual pre season meeting. June 12, 2009 in the South Sister Room at the Deschutes County Fair and Expo at 9 AM. Along with a recap of 2009 resources, Dr. Noreen Krusel will be presenting a candid discussion about the recent tragic fires in Victoria, Australia and their national policy of *Go Early or Stay and Defend*.

**Coordination of End of Burn Season** – Chief Robertson led discussion about coordinating this effort. The group agreed that due to varying weather and green up conditions across the three counties, coordination can be a challenge. As that time approaches, Chief Robertson will call all the Chiefs and see if they can coordinate the close of burn season as close together as possible.

**Brush Low & Brush High response discussion** – The group agreed to switch from low to high at the same time that they close burn season.

**Air Resources; New Rules** – Chris Hoff led discussion about the new rules that will apply to aircraft retardant drops. Costs are skyrocketing so if you order retardant drops, be prepared to pay for them. State (ODF) tankers are not approved for use on federal land. There are 19 tankers available nationally. If there are no federal tankers close by, you can call the regional office and get approval for State ships. This is an “imminent threat”

policy where there is a life hazard or the fire is headed for private land. If retardant is ordered because the scenario looks bad, but when the smoke clears and you find out the fire is totally on private land, the private land jurisdiction pays for the drop. Chris suggested that if federal agencies are on a fire as mutual aid, there should be a frank discussion about the ordering of retardant for the affected lands. Communication is strongly recommended. Considering the Unified Command structure, it will be important to determine where the fire is. Retardant drops are about \$10,000 each. Conversations should happen at the IC level before a drop is ordered. It would be wise to get a supplemental agreement before.

## Financial Report

In savings COFCA has \$3,849.74 and in checking we have \$599.24 for a total of \$1,386.72. Total \$5,236.46

## Association Reports

**County Fire Chiefs:** No report from Crook County. No Deschutes County rep at meeting. Chief Jay Olsen said Jefferson County will be meeting with local fire chiefs to discuss “protect in place” options for when evacuation is not possible – Three Rivers, Crooked River Ranch have evacuation route issues in particular.

**COFOG:** The group is cleaning up the language for the Haz Mat SOG’s and an SOG for ladder guidelines.

**911:** No report.

**COCC Public Safety Advisory Committee:** Chief Gustafson reported that participation doubled at the annual COCC held an open house for fire safety.

**COFIA:** No report

**ECEMS:** No report.

**CO Fire Prevention Co-op:** The Co-op is involved throughout April, May and June in Team Teaching which provides basic fire safety information to EVERY first grader in five counties.

**IAAI:** No report.

**OSFM:** Dave Fields reported that Randy Simpson is the new Oregon State Fire Marshall and his official oath of office will be administered by Governor Kulongoski on March 13, 2009. Recruitment for a new Deputy State Fire Marshall has begun to fill in behind Randy. Dave’s area is fully staffed at the current time and the entire staff has been working on two fatality fires in Warm Springs in cooperation with federal agencies and expects the trial may be 2-3 years out. The Governor’s Task Force on unprotected lands is still looking at boundaries of Rangeland Associations in respect to response times and coverage capabilities.

**OSFM Overhead Teams:** No report.

**OR-ARNG:** Katie read Bill McCaffrey’s report in his absence: He just returned from the NIFC-DoD 2009 Pre-Season Wildland Fire Conference hosted by NIFC in Boise last week. On the topic of wildland fire season planning, with the deployment of the 41st Brigade this spring, the Oregon National Guard (ORNG) will have an estimated 293 soldiers and airmen available this season who were wildland fire trained and qualified by ODF last season. In the event of major fires, which may necessitate the call-up of National Guard resources this coming season, the current planning calls for these personnel to be mobilized and deployed to the incident at which time they will be provided the RT-130 Annual Fireline Safety Refresher training. Only after the 8 hour RT-130 training will these personnel be available for fireline duty on an incident. ODF and the ORNG estimate that this process will take 48 to 72 hours before the 293 personnel will be available for fireline duties. There are

additional ORNG ground fireline resources available but those personnel will have to mobilize and deploy to a training location for the full basic fireline training prior to moving to a fire incident and would not be available for fireline assignments for approximately 4 to 5 days after being mobilized (this is the old traditional Oplan Smokey time schedule).

As for aviation resources, the ORNG has no UH-60 helicopters available this coming fire season. While there are CH-47 helicopters available out at Pendleton, we are limited by having only three air crews available. Current planning calls for three CH-47 to be available for an immediate surge based out of Pendleton, however extended operations across the State will be more limited due to crew limits and sustainment options for areas away from their Pendleton base. In short, the ORNG is planning to have only two CH-47 heavy lift helicopters available for a fire deployment of up to two weeks in duration or one CH-47 helicopter available for sustained indefinite operations across the State.

**FS & BLM National Fire Info:** Starting into prescribed fires on projects across the county. Fire crews are more cautious about mop up and patrol.

**ODF:** Kevin Benton reported that ODF is bracing for a 30% cut in the budget. They will know by the end of the fiscal year how bad it will be. Resources will include the Deer Ridge Correctional Facility workers – four crews of 10. He also mentioned the Oregon Ways & Means Committee that will be in Bend on April 29<sup>th</sup> – he encourages as much local support as possible.

**Project Wildfire:** Joe reported that they are busier than ever with FireFree and ongoing fuels projects. Beyond the Flames educational insert will come out the first week in June with a distribution of 52,000. He also previewed the new Evacuation Route signs that they purchased with the last FEMA education grant. They will go to high risk neighborhoods under the CWPPs. The grant bought 3,100 signs.

Good of the Order - Roundtable

Chief Langley mentioned that three of the Chiefs agreed to speak at the Oregon Ways & Means Committee meeting on April 29<sup>th</sup> in support of issues here.

Don Webber announced the Cascade Peril Exercise to be held on April 29<sup>th</sup>. He also mentioned that the County is going after a Homeland Security Grant for GIS software, MDTs and four generators.

**Deschutes County Fire Defense Board Chief:** Because of Jim Gustafson's planned retirement and upcoming conferences, COFCA voted Sunriver Chief Art Hatch as the new Fire Defense Board Chief. This selection is out of the normal rotation but it was decided to select Art and the City of Bend will bump back one position to fill the slot when the rotation occurs. Tay Robertson will send out the rotation for COFCA members. It was also agreed that since only a small portion of Crooked River Ranch Fire Department is within the boundaries of Deschutes County that the Chief /Department should not be in the rotation for Deschutes County.

Meeting adjourned at 1630 on April 23, 2009.

**Next meeting: June 25<sup>th</sup> @ Redmond Fire & Rescue @ 1330.**

**Pre- Season Wildland Fire Meeting – June 12<sup>th</sup> at 0900.**