

2020 Cibola County Community Wildfire Protection Plan Update

Core Team Meeting

February 26th, 2020

Anna Larsen
Duwayne Eraicho
Darryl Wilson
Mike Sweet
Dustin Middleton
Yann Nicholson – NMDOT

Communities at Risk

Duwayne Eraicho recommended that we make sure to reach out to large agency jurisdictions like FS, NPS, and others. They already have data surrounding the area.

Timberlake is a high concern to Duwayne Eraicho because of the complexity of the landscape in that area and the southwest winds in that area.

Anna mentioned the FAWRA about treatment in the Bluewater area.

La Jara is a high risk community, during the Bluewater/ Diener fire the fire made a run towards the community and they want to make that community a priority.

San Mateo should remain high fire risk.

James Valley and Tierra Verde are separate communities

Fence Lake response area covers Techado. These two communities could be merged and will be considered one census designated place.

Timberlake and Cloh-chin-toh should be considered one community.

Duwayne Eraicho recommended that Nicol can be called Dog Lake because that is what Navajo response calls it. This is unit 1 in their system.

The Garley Fire (sp?) showed high alignment with the southwest winds, showing how this main weather influences fire behavior in the county.

Move Lobo Canyon point to the center of both Lobo Canyon and Lobo Creek.

Sam asked what should be buffered in the county?

- Wind farm marked by Anna on Map

- Solar facility marked by Anna
- Main transfer lines for power (Still need PNM)
- Gas line transwestern pipeline (Dustin has map)
- Planned Subdivisions, are there any ask county planning?

Evacuation routes

- Hwy 53
- 117
- 36
- I-40
- BIA 125
- County rd. 47
- County rd. 49
- County rd. 50
- Timberlake road access

Priority fuel projects

La Jara Subdivision along Hwy 53 should be looked at for treatment.

PJ treatment in Pinehill, Ramah Navajo jurisdiction has completed burning near Old Alligator to enhance protection for Candy Kitchen.

More projects are underway along the boundaries of private inholding and boundary of reservation itself. They are slowly chipping away at it.

Forest Road 50 area is another area of concern. There are homes in that area that need defensible space thinning only about 50 homes or so. This is the Oso Ridge/ Cibola Trails area.

County has business registration and has 3 or 4 contractors that do thinning, these could be referred to people that are interested.

Lobo creek and Lobo Canyon, both need defensible space and evacuation route thinning. The area has a designated "Safety Zone" by the county, and in 2012 had a small project doing thinning in defensible space that built on the previous CWPP.

Priority Actions

Create a contractor list, ones that have been approved by the county/ have business license.

Identify leaders that can bridge the gap between communities and fire prevention leaders, and emergency managers.

Burn bans/ burn permit program is newly minted and set up online it seems to work well.

Reduce Structural Ignitability

Promote accurate signage, the county is working on updating county signage ordinance to create a requirement for the type of signage and creating a best practice. They could share this once it's finalized to try and standardize signage across jurisdictions.

Promote defensible space education.

Fire Responders and Equipment

A lot of training is offered at the NWCG level and the county is setting a high standard. This should continue with cross listing classes and provide training across the county to multiple jurisdictions.

The County is trying to provide a training center, that has adequate space for training, Chiefs association has developed plans for this and has the funding, they just need to secure the property.

County non-redcarded firefighters can provide initial attack for the first four hours. Then they need to have redcards or they will be released. Developing more redcarded firefighters would help with response in the county and the ability to send crews out of the county to campaign wildfires.

Equipment is a struggle, and we need to upgrade engines and fire trucks. We'll get more feedback on this at the Fire Chiefs meeting in March

Evacuation planning

Timberlake one road in and out.

Forest Road 50 La Jara can go both ways but the road is rough and difficult to travel.

Lobo Canyon paved road to MM 12 then turns into Forest Road, and the road can get washed out

Candy Kitchen single road but goes out either direction, not a very good road, weather makes it difficult to navigate. Candy kitchen half is maintained other half is not maintained, so while there are technically two escape routes, one direction is slow.

Some County maintained roads, need to prioritize the maintenance to provide for evacuation, Maybe implement a co-op program to provide maintenance. The checkerboard of jurisdictions makes maintains difficult, as roads cross different jurisdictions. Swap one for one for maintenance, Figure out how to split up the work load and make it more consistent.

Some easements prevent federal access across Forest Road 50. Work on securing easements so that roads can be officially maintained.

Communication

Improving cell services where there are none.

Fence Lake – community association approached by cellular one.

Candy Kitchen

Lobo Canyon – spotty Verizon

El Morrow- Verizon only

Radio system is better, will be improving with more repeaters on a current grant.

- Davenport mountain
- Cactus mountain
- Mt. Taylor

Candy Kitchen doesn't have radio access and there plus Lobo canyon and San Mateo will get improved with new repeaters.

Some Federal agencies won't give their frequencies to the county and this makes communication difficult.

The new grant will cover a Project 25 radio for each district that will help standardize communication.

Need to hold a Pre-season and post-season Fire suppression cooperators meeting to iron out issues such as coms before the fireseason begins.

Water Resource

Ramah has very scarce water, Ramah has agreements to fill water under suppression but it's difficult to find water for RX

Cibola County can dispatch a tender for Rx if only for a couple hours don't need to bill but they can meet and fill Ramah's engines.

Watershed protection

Bluewater/ Zuni Mountain to the east of Ojo Caliente

Rio San Jose near Bluewater acres and comes down through Grants could send debris down through Milan and Grants.

Mt Taylor, Water Canyon is being listed as a Wild and Scenic

San Mateo Spring and reservoir

La Mosca Tank?

Riconada? Provides water for cattle and ranches

San Fidel provides water for traditional acequias.