



Linn County  
**Community Wildfire Protection Plan**  
**2022 Update Meeting**  
**NOTES**



**Wednesday, May 17, 2023**  
**2:00 PM– 4:00 PM**  
**Online via Zoom**

Zoom recording: <https://dlcd.box.com/s/motj4w5gtpkoky67ikn7toiadf4j9n4p>  
Presentation slides (combined): <https://dlcd.box.com/s/yi6st6u3r68hr21s8x1pzd0mibvrtm88>

### Attendees

Alyssa Boles, Planning Manager, Linn County  
Kate Bentz, Assistant Planner, Linn County  
Emerson Marsh, Emergency Management Coordinator, Linn County.  
Kayla Bordelon, OSU Extension Fire Program, Willamette Valley  
Marie Heuberger, Wildfire Adapted Communities Specialist, South Santiam Watershed Council  
Trent Tegen, Wildland Fire Supervisor, Santiam Unit, North Cascade District, Oregon  
Department of Forestry  
Chris Mushrush, Fire Planner, Northwest Oregon Interagency Fire Management, US Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management  
Jake Valentine Bentz, Santiam Hospital & Clinics  
Shane Wooton, Fire Chief, Albany Fire Department, and Linn County Fire Defense Board Chief  
Susan Millhauser, DLCD, Natural Hazards Planner-Wildfire, Project Manager

### Welcome/Introductions

- Attendees introduced themselves.
- February 22, 2023 meeting notes were discussed and approved.

### Risk Assessment and Mapping

Kate shared an update on work to define the risk assessment approach, map updates, potential new maps, and needed data:

- A work group of the Steering Committee met on May 1 ([link to meeting notes](#)), with a follow up discussion with OSU regarding data access.
- The 2023 PNW Quantitative Wildfire Risk Assessment (QWRA) data may be available by the end of June. The data can be scaled for Linn County relative to the county vs two-state relativity which the QWRA is based on. 2018 vs 2023 data, with refinements that may better represent risk in Linn County. (Learn more about the planned update for 2023: <https://pnw-quantitative-wildfire-risk-assessment-osugisci.hub.arcgis.com/>)
- Next steps: Linn County GIS can start working on some draft maps that don't necessarily rely on finalized data sources, such as:
  - Protection coverage
  - Response times
  - Preliminary maps using the 2018 QWRA that could be updated with the 2023 data
  - Possible access to 2022 WUI data via OSU/ODF based on the new methodology

- Would be helpful to have a unified approach for determining the WUI, the updated methodology has a more refined boundary based on building density where buildings are intermixed with as well as surrounded by fuels.

Committee discussion:

- Might make sense to start with existing data.
- What parts of the risk assessment aren't covered by the QWRA? Response time and social vulnerability, then could plug in the QWRA data.
- The goal is to have draft maps for the Steering Committee to review in June. Reviewed the project calendar – want to conduct outreach and engagement, including a community open house, prior to the Steering Committee finalizing the plan for Board of County Commissioners review and approval.
- The committee supported using the 2023 QWRA data and pushing out the calendar a bit.

## Outreach and Engagement

Kate shared outreach tactics used in the development of the 2007 CWPP and reviewed what's proposed for 2023 and the committee discussed:

- In lieu of doing a survey due to limited staff capacity and timeline, proposing a series of public meetings, including:
  - A stakeholder focus group with representatives from certain organizations and community service providers
  - Jurisdiction engagement meeting
  - Public meeting / open house after more targeted meetings to provide information about what a CWPP is and to share preparedness and prevention information
  - Additional website updates, County newsletter, social media
- Focus group
  - Discussed the purpose: to assess the needs of the communities that representatives work with or serve to inform action items and prioritization of projects that impact people more broadly, e.g., evacuation planning, communication, etc.
  - Potential representatives for engagement – including people highly vulnerable to the impacts of wildfire
  - Logistics – one meeting with 12-20 participants – community representatives, not fire experts. Steering Committee members/experts to attend and answer questions if things pop up.
  - Are we reaching out to Gates, Mill City, Lyons? Does Linn Fire Defense Board capture these cities?
    - Those cities participated in the Marion CWPP and fall under the Marion County Fire Defense Board (Emerson). Marion County Commissioners are finalizing the plan this week (Trent).
  - There was a post-fire public health assessment done for the Santiam Canyon that we could likely learn from, too:
    - <https://health.oregonstate.edu/sites/health.oregonstate.edu/files/research/studies/pdf/santiam-canyon-community-health-assessment.pdf>
  - We could also utilize the data collected during the Marion Co CWPP process to inform our canyon-related action items
  - Emerson is working on a fire evacuation exercise with the Santiam School District.
  - Anyone missing?

- Chambers of Commerce? Economic development agencies? Oregon West Cascades Council of Governments
- Recreation / seasonal workers
- Case managers and wildfire survivors
- Linn County Farm Bureau
- Ag and timber owners – potential connections via the watershed council
- There's an active Small Woodland Association group in Linn Co., personal connection to current President
- County Parks & Rec? I believe they manage many of the recreation areas in the county.
- Mountain bike groups – Chris has some contacts, out of Sweet Home; backcountry horse riders
- Tribes – may own land mostly used for conservation – more formal tribal engagement – engage at the leadership level also land managers. Marie has some contacts. I believe there are three separate parcels owned by Grand Ronde in Linn County on the south side of North Santiam River? (Marie)
- Next step is to identify who to reach out to.
- Feedback on logistics for focus group meetings
  - City manager's meeting – maybe hybrid?
  - For both, have a facilitator and a tight agenda to avoid derailing
  - Time of day – share potential options
  - Location – possibly at the fairgrounds if a larger group, Sweet Home community center. In the canyon, Gates FD Hall and Santiam High School in Mill City - have connections with both and have used both spaces before. Scio is another central location and recently had a wildfire there. Chief Wooten will help to connect Kate to Scio Fire Chief.

### **CWPP Action Item Development**

- Draft updated goals - the steering committee reviewed and discussed the draft updated goals ([linked here on Box](#)):
  - Committee members like the updates.
  - Are the goals in priority order? We can make it clear that these aren't in priority order in the document narrative. Can note that they guide the action items.
  - Do they need to be padded out a bit? SMART goals? Or ok being short and concise and clear. The action items are how we're going to accomplish the goals. Action items are objectives.
  - Something to be said for making them similar in terms of content/impact. Concise and purposeful. Make them equal length?
  - Share draft goals with the steering committee for potential edits. Revisit in June with refined language.
- Action items –
  - Looked at the action item worksheet submitted by Chris for a new USFS action ([linked here on Box](#)) and reviewed the additional information we'd like to collect.
    - Makes sense to break down into geographic areas. Chief Wooten Fire Defense Board meets next week and can ask about geographic areas.
    - Chris will send shape files for USFS projects.

- Chief Wooten will reach out to Marian County Fire Defense Board chief and ask him how he'd like to proceed in terms of being involved in the Linn CWPP update.
- Jake can outreach to non-fire chiefs in the canyon. Santiam Canyon Long Term Recovery Group received a grant from the Office of State Fire Marshal to do community wildfire risk reduction (projects in the canyon. Marie would also like to be engaged in connecting with them.
- Combined action items and discuss/brainstorm new actions – didn't review due to time. Susan will send a link and ask people to review and continue to make updates. Link on Box: [2007 Linn County CWPP Action Items Table updated-ALL 05-03-23](#)
- Education-related actions – Kayla shared information about proposed education priorities.
  - Reviewed the proposed language
  - <https://www.tahoelivingwithfire.com> does a great job on community fire adapted education from a cross-jurisdictional standpoint if you're looking for possible examples/places to build from.
  - Link on Box: [Education-related Action Items - Proposed 5-5-23 SC Review](#) for additional review and edits. We need to identify partners and funding sources. If you're listed as a partner, please let us know if that works.

### **Next Steps**

- Continue to refine action items, update action item worksheets
- Discuss mitigation strategy and plan maintenance process
- Conduct Public engagement
- Support this project by linking the following webpage to your jurisdiction's webpage: <https://www.co.linn.or.us/planningbuilding/page/community-wildfire-protection-plan>

**Next meeting:** TBD, late June 2023. Susan will send out a poll.