

PLANNING DIVISION
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

3015 H STREET

EUREKA, CALIF. 95501-4484 PHONE (707) 445-7541

DATE January 3, 2005
TO: Humboldt County Fire Safe Council
FROM: Kirk Gothier, Assistant Planning Director
SUBJECT: Agenda and Staff Reports for FSC Meeting of January 18, 2005

AGENDA Humboldt County Fire Safe Council Meeting

Tuesday, January 18, 2005 Time: 1 to 4:00 P.M.
Location: USFS Six Rivers National Forest, 1330 Bayshore Way, Eureka

- 1. Call to Order and Introductions (1:00 – 1:10 PM)**
- 2. Approval of Minutes from 12/7/04 FSC Meeting (1:10 – 1:15 PM)**
- 3. Public Comments (1:15 – 1:30 PM)**
- 4. Risk Manager Presentation (1:30 – 2:00 PM)**
- 5. Continued Discussion of County CSA (2:00 – 2:45 PM)**
 - Identify Possible Range of Services
 - Select Working Group to Research Alternatives
- BREAK (2:30 – 2:45 PM)**
- 6. National Fire Grant Form Letter of FSC Support (2:45 – 3:00 PM)**
 - Review Draft Form Letter of FSC Support
 - Approve Form Letter of FSC Support
- 7. Review Chapters 6 & 7 of Master Fire Protection Plan (3:00 – 3:55 PM)**
- 8. Set Next Meeting – Date and Time (3:55 – 4:00 PM)**

DRAFT Meeting Summary (Action Minutes) DRAFT
Humboldt County Fire Safe Council
December 7, 2004

The eleventh meeting of the Humboldt County Fire Safe Council (FSC) was held on December 7, 2004, from 1:00 P.M. to 4:30 P.M., at the U.S. Forest Service Six Rivers National Forest conference room, 1330 Bayshore Way, Eureka, California. The FSC was appointed by the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors to guide preparation and implementation of the County Master Fire Protection Plan (Fire Plan).

Fire Safe Council Members Attending:

Kevin O'Neil, Cal. Dept. of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) Division Chief,
Humboldt-Del Norte Unit
Kirk Gothier, Humboldt County Community Development Services, Assistant Planning
Director
Ian Sigman, Honeydew Volunteer Fire Company Chief and Lower Mattole Fire Safe
Council
Dave White, Arcata Fire Department Chief and Humboldt County Fire Chiefs
Association Representative
Will Harling, Orleans/Somes Bar Fire Safe Council and Orleans Fire & Rescue
Debra Lake, Fruitland Volunteer Fire Department, Board Chair
Lucy Salazar, USFS, Six Rivers National Forest, Vegetation Management & Air
Coordinator
Dan Larkin, Humboldt County Office of Emergency Services
Peter Tittmann, Southern Humboldt Fire Safe Council
Manny Mello, Northwest Insurance
Tim Jones, BLM Fire Management Officer
George Duffy Bridgeville, Van Duzen FSC

Fire Safe Council Members Absent:

Glenn Ziemer, Humboldt Fire District #1, Fire Chief
Duane Sherman, Hoopa Volunteer Fire Department, Fire Chief

Public and Agency Representatives Attending:

Cybelle Immitt, Humboldt County Community Development Services, Planning
Kim Price, CDF, Fire Captain
Hugh Scanlon, CDF, Battalion Chief

Agenda Item 1: Call to Order and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 1:05 P.M. by the Fire Safe Council Chair, Kevin O'Neil.

Agenda Item 2: approval of minutes from 11-8-04 FSC Meeting

Discussion: Dave White was concerned about a potential misinterpretation of the following project ranking criteria developed at the last meeting: “Where applicable, demonstrate coordination between local fire departments and FSCs.” He wanted it to be clear that this would not be interpreted as FSCs being in the position to dictate the operations of fire departments. Planning Staff suggested that it could be made clear that this was not the case in the text of the Title III grant application. This would avoid the delay that would result from placing a criteria change on the agenda of the next FSC meeting.

Actions: A motion was made by Dave White and seconded by Will Harling to accept the minutes with minor spelling corrections.

Agenda Item 3: Public Comment

Discussion: No public comment

Actions: No action

Agenda Item 4: Review Brown Act Summary

Discussion: Kirk gave an overview of the Brown Act Summary in the staff report.

Kevin – Clarification of number of Council Members that can meet outside of an official meeting.

Kirk – One less than a quorum, or 6 for the FSC

Will – Public comment - can they add something to the agenda at the beginning of the mtg? Kirk – No. They would need to submit agenda changes earlier.

Kirk - Emphasized that FSC members should minimize conversations about FSC topics away from our designated meetings. Members should be open about topics that were discussed outside of official FSC meetings so the public is informed.

Lucy – What about members that are applying for county funding (possible conflict of interest)?

Kirk – That member should not vote on a decision made about funding awards.

Actions: No action called for.

Agenda Item 5: Fire Planning Funding and Work Products

Discussion: Kirk gave an overview of the staff report item summarizing HR 2389 funding use. He gave a history of what the money was used for. Kirk pointed out the current allocations that were approved by the Board of Supervisors and summarized attachment 5-1.

There were discussions on the topic of whether or not the GIS maps created through this process would be available off of the County website. Kirk estimated that it would be a while before that happened, but that it was planned. The GIS data can be requested on a CD with some limitations. It was suggested that an order form be designed listing all of

the data layers available through the County system including the new fire planning layers. People could just check the boxes indicating what layers they wanted.

Hugh Scanlon pointed out that much of the necessary fire planning data layers can be accessed on the web at this time. CDF may be able to support building an on-line GIS site but there will be limitations and may have to take security precautions. Someone will be needed to maintain the site. Kevin raised the concern that we need to make sure that the data is correct, and made the point that the information, in some cases, may not be that accurate or could be misinterpreted. For example the “goodwill” service areas could be misinterpreted and a landowner may read it as dedicated service.

ISO Report

Planning staff and a few members of the FSC had a meeting with a representative of Insurance Services Office (ISO) to gain a better understanding of how the ISO ratings are determined for fire departments. A few points are:

Kevin - ISO is a rigid system that takes into account, fire department capacity (personnel and training), Water supply and fire alarm/dispatch – it is a point system.

Fire departments may need to have 12 volunteers on the roster to get out of an ISO 10. This may be a factor supporting the case for combining fire departments. If Districts want to expand boundaries to include territories of non-district fire departments may need funding help to do necessary work.

A few things departments can do to improve their ISO ratings are to stagger locations of stations so they cover a 5 mile range, increase number of fire fighters, and increase water availability. However it may be different for each fire department and it is hard to project what will be needed to change a rating.

Westhaven just went through ISO certification process and may have gone from a 9 to a 10 – people who already have insurance will not be impacted but new home-owners will be impacted. It was pointed out that it is hard to get insurance if you are an ISO 9 or 10.

Manny - investment markets have an impact on availability of insurance, i.e. whether or not an insurance company wants to play in a high risk area has a lot to do with the potential investment return. Commercial buildings sometimes have their own ISO rating - ISO will come out and inspect them in a different way from a fire department.

Ian – Had insurance on his resort and found it was easier to get a commercial policy.

Hugh – It is common to get inquiries from insurance agencies about fire service.

Kevin – takes about 30,000 gal of water storage in a tank or series of connected tanks to get a good ISO rating. We may want to consider use of HR 2389 funding to improve water supply. Kim Price recommended we learn more about Del Norte’s water tank program.

Actions: No action called for. Staff agreed that it is important to learn more about Dell Norte water tank program.

Agenda Item 6: Letters of Support for National Fire Grants

Discussion: Cybelle gave a brief summary of what the State Grants Clearinghouse is and shared with the Council that they may be approached soon to write letters of support for applications to the clearinghouse. She asked the Council to decide if they would be willing to sign such letters.

There was much debate on this item regarding whether or not the Council should or could play this role and if there would be sufficient time to look at the applications before the February 4th Grants Clearinghouse deadline. Dan Larkin made the point that we may be doing the applicants a disservice if we do not have the time to sufficiently analyze the applications. Tim Jones pointed out that the HCFSC's support will be helpful to local applicants in a very competitive process. Many Council members maintained that they were not sure if the FSC was prepared for this role at this time.

Lucy Salazar felt that this could be an important role for the HCFSC in the future but we need to set up a process and structure.

Actions: On a motion from Will Harling seconded by Tim Jones it was unanimously decided that the task of analyzing the applications would be relegated to Humboldt County Planning Staff. Staff will determine if the application is consistent with the goals and objectives in the current draft of the Master Fire Protection Plan and send a form letter drafted by Staff and approved by the HCFSC on behalf of the HCFSC. This process only applies to the February 4th, 2005 Grants Clearinghouse proposals.

Agenda Item 7: Formation of a Countywide CSA

Discussion: Kirk stated that there are a range of options before us. He asked the Council members for a short list of what the FSC thinks can happen to retain and improve fire service.

Glen Ziemer's email comments on this topic were handed out.

Dan Larkin wanted to know more about what other rural Co. are doing in regards to supporting local fire service. He stated that we need to look at best practices and form a strategy that works best for our county. Dan observed that other counties have a more proactive role in fire service than Humboldt County. He does believe that Humboldt Co. fire service works well together out of necessity.

Ian – Out in Honeydew and Petrolia, Petrolia FPD is the only district and it was formed 50 years ago and things have changed. One major problem is a lack of funding from people who get the service who live outside the boundaries. It would make sense for Honeydew Fire and Petrolia Fire to be joined up. Need to draw a new line. This would

greatly benefit the fire depts. because they would have more resources to fix apparatus and for training.

Kevin – There are a variety of ways it is done in other Counties. - San Diego is an example - in the past the large number of independent departments have had a hard time with coordination and problems arise. Some Legislative analysts perceive that the Counties in California are not doing enough to support fire service.

George – Are there mutual aid agreements?

Dave – There are some mutual aid agreements some of them getting old. Auto aid is between neighboring fire depts. Any Fire Protection District formed after proposition 13 can't access the property tax revenue.

There was some discussion about how development can be required to contribute to the fire service. George said that when developers make a subdivision, in addition to putting in hydrants and so on there could be a maintenance district formed. Kevin pointed out that we don't get very big housing developments is Humboldt. It is harder to institute such things with piecemeal development.

Ian pointed out that there are not many departments that are operating at a high level. There is no formal way to pay for the operations of the departments.

Shasta Co. has County Fire model that provides support for training and vehicle maintenance.

Need to settle on something between the following two ranges:

- Develop a tool that all agencies can use to form or expand district boundaries (standardized template).
- Expand CSA Countywide, which can drop insurance rates. County would have an administrative role in operating the CSA.

Hugh - Don't forget that prop 172 could become available.

Will – Sustainable funding is important

Kevin – \$95,000 is not that much money

Ian- Would the engineering study still be useful down the line if it fails the first time?

Yes

Peter – Can an assessment be used to support prevention activities? Yes

Will – Can something be done to make people more comfortable with the County being involved (i.e. worry about funding getting eaten up in administrative costs)?

Dave - This list should be put before the fire Chiefs Association.

Kevin – We are looking at how to best leverage volunteer efforts.

George – The potential loss of timber resources should be used to educate the public as its loss will have a great economic impact on the County. We need to quantify that potential loss.

The FSC members present identified the following list of services most needed by fire departments in Humboldt County that could be provided by a CSA:

1. Amador agreements
2. Insurance umbrella
3. Access to reliable maintenance for all equipment – engines, SCBA tests (Dan said that he is working on providing a lower cost for this), fit testing etc. (Cooperative maintenance agreements.)
4. Assess fire departments (Testing/certifications)
5. Training support (evenings/weekends)
6. Compensate fire districts for goodwill service (Fire prevention efforts)
7. Administrative support (Cal/OSHA Compliance, fire reports, workman's comp, etc.)
8. Equipment acquisition and maintenance (including EMS equipment)
9. Dispatch center/communications
10. Facilities acquisitions/improvements (fire stations, water tanks)

Actions: No action called for. There was not sufficient time to make a decision on this topic so the discussion will be continued at the next FSC meeting.

Agenda Item 8: Review Chapters 6 & 7 of Master Fire Protection Plan

Actions: On a motion from Will Harling and seconded by Tim Jones, it was unanimously decided to continue agenda item 8 to the next meeting.

Agenda Item 9: Set Next Meeting – Date and Time

The next meeting will be held at the U.S. Forest Service Six Rivers National Forest conference room on **January 18th, 2005.**

Adjournment

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 4:30 P.M.

AGENDA ITEM 4
For Meeting of December 7, 2004

DATE: January 3, 2005
TO: Humboldt County Fire Safe Council
FROM: Kirk Gothier, Assistant Planning Director
SUBJECT: Risk Manager Presentation

Recommendation

Receive a presentation from the Risk Manager on County efforts to help fire districts and volunteer fire departments secure insurance.

Background

At the December 7, 2004 FSC meeting, the FSC identified umbrella insurance coverage as one of the benefits of forming a County CSA.

Discussion

The County Risk Manager has been working on helping local districts and volunteer departments participate with the County in securing coverage. The Risk Manager will describe the efforts to date and the options available. Formation of a County CSA may be one way to provide local volunteer departments with insurance coverage at lower rates.

AGENDA ITEM 5
For Meeting of January 18, 2005

DATE: January 3, 2005
TO: Humboldt County Fire Safe Council
FROM: Kirk Gothier, Assistant Planning Director
SUBJECT: Formation of County Service Area

Recommendation

1. Complete the Discussion of the Possible Range of CSA Services
2. Select a Working Group (or Groups) to Research Alternatives

Background

As documented in the minutes for the last meeting, the FSC had an extensive discussion about a County CSA and identified a list of most needed services by local fire departments. The item was continued to the December meeting for further discussion.

Discussion

As indicated in the staff report for this agenda item at the last meeting: “Once the FSC identifies the possible range of services, staff is recommending that a working group (or groups) be established to complete a more detailed assessment of the costs and benefits associated with delivering the prioritized services. The alternatives basically range from developing a template for local districts to use in pursuing assessments, to having the Planning Division prepare a preliminary engineering report in support of forming a CSA to deliver specified services. “

At the last meeting, it was also suggested that other counties are more proactive in fire service than Humboldt County. However, in checking with CDF staff they were not aware of a data source for how other California counties handle fire protection.

In a quick perusal of the internet, Planning Staff could only find 14 counties with county fire departments, (Alameda, Butte, Contra Costa, Kern, LA, Marin, Merced, Orange, Riverside, San Francisco, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Shasta, and Toulare). Also, these counties were all over the place with their fire service structure: from the counties delivering just administrative services, to counties delivering the full range of fire protection services with annual budgets exceeding one hundred of million.

How other counties deliver fire protection services is an important question that will have to be answered before proposing assessments for services. Local residents will need to know that we have examined all relevant models and are proposing the best system possible for Humboldt County. Planning and CDF staff will continue to research this question while the working group(s) are researching the best way to deliver the list of most needed services locally.

Attachments

Attachment 5-1: Appendix A, Discussion of County Wide Service Area.

Attachment 5-1

Appendix A discussion of County-Wide Service Area

COUNTY-WIDE SERVICE AREA FOR FIRE PROTECTION

The Humboldt County Master Fire Protection Plan has been prepared as a means to reduce fire risk/hazards and improve the capabilities and fiscal condition of local fire departments. The Countywide Service Area implementation measure outlined further in chapter 7 is intended to establish a county-wide mechanism to provide services and organizational support for local fire departments, establish a means of funding to improve department stability, and support a higher level-of-service to County residents.

Background Information

Many Counties throughout the State of California use County Service Areas (County Service Area Law, Government Code Sec. 25210 – 25211) to provide fire protection services. County Service Areas (CSAs) were created by the State Legislature as a means for counties to “extend” municipal services, including structural fire protection, to areas of the county that are experiencing growth. Humboldt County has already used a CSA to fund winter-time fire protection. CSA 4 provides fire protection to communities along the coast between Crannell and Freshwater Lagoon, excluding Trinidad.

One of the most promising solutions to the County’s fire protection service gaps and funding short-falls throughout Humboldt County is to extend CSA 4 or to form a new fire related CSA. This could involve the annexation of those areas not currently served by a local fire protection agency (either by a special district or city providing fire protection) and voter approval of additional assessments to fund fire protection. Or, this County-wide CSA could involve the annexation of the entire County and the establishment of zones providing different services and levying different assessments depending on the needs of that community.

Many other California counties use CSAs to provide fire protection services in the unincorporated area. Shasta County, for example, has used a CSA to provide fire protection to a significant portion that County since 1974. Shasta County established CSA #1/Shasta County Fire Department to provide fire protection to all areas of the county outside existing fire protections districts and cities providing fire protection. The SCFD contracts with CDF to provide all department administration and operations functions. In addition, the SCFD supports 19 volunteer fire companies by providing oversight, administrative support, training, maintenance, funding, and dispatching.

County Service Area Organization and Operations

The desired outcome resulting from the formation of a County-wide CSA and establishment of new fire related assessments would be:

- A local government agency providing fire protection throughout the County;

- Continued and expanded management of CSA operations by CDF;
- The desired minimum level-of-service provided to all residents of Humboldt County (minimum level-of-service to be established through the Humboldt County Master Fire Protection Plan process);
- Enhanced Fire/EMS dispatch services including all or most Fire/EMS providers through increased funding to CDF;
- Training, technical assistance, support services, provided to volunteer fire departments;
- Administration of assessment revenue/ongoing funding, technical assistance with grant applications, pooling of insurance and administrative costs, and other services by Humboldt County; and
- Augmented community fire protection services, both winter-time and year-round, provided by CDF, depending on the specific area of the County and community need.

AGENDA ITEM 6
For Meeting of December 7, 2004

DATE: January 3, 2005
TO: Humboldt County Fire Safe Council
FROM: Kirk Gothier, Assistant Planning Director
SUBJECT: Letters of Support for National Fire Plan Grants

Recommendation

1. Review The Draft Form Letter of FSC Support
2. Approve The Form Letter of FSC Support

Background

At the December FSC meeting, it was unanimously decided that the task of analyzing the applications would be relegated to Humboldt County Planning Staff. Staff will determine if the application is consistent with the goals and objectives in the current draft of the Master Fire Protection Plan and send a form letter drafted by Staff and approved by the HCFSC on behalf of the HCFSC.

This process only applies to the February 4th, 2005 Grants Clearinghouse proposals.

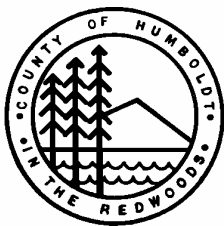
Discussion

Planning Staff has drafted a form letter of FSC support for National Fire Grant applications that are consistent with the goals and objectives in the current draft of the Master Fire Protection Plan: (Attachment 6-1). Staff is recommending that the FSC approve the form letter for use only in the February 4, 2005 Grants Clearinghouse proposals.

Attachments

Attachment 6-1: Draft Form Letter of FSC Support

Attachment 6-1
Draft Form Letter of FSC Support



PLANNING DIVISION
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT
3015 H STREET
EUREKA, CALIF. 95501-4484 PHONE (707) 445-7541

January 6, 2005

To: Whom It May Concern

From: Kirk Gothier, Assistant Planning Director

Subject: Project proposal to the Fire Safe California Grants Clearinghouse

The Humboldt County Fire Safe Council (HCFSC) endorses the *(proposed project name)*. The project grant proposal was evaluated and determined to be consistent with goal number ## of the draft Humboldt County Master Fire Protection Plan (please see attached list of goals). The Master Fire Protection Plan can be viewed on the Humboldt County Community Development Services website at <http://www.co.humboldt.ca.us/planning/>.

The HCFSC is committed to supporting local organizations in their efforts to reduce the risk of catastrophic fire in Humboldt County. The benefits gained through the implementation of the *(proposed project name)* will help our County take one more step toward reducing the overall risk of wildfire damage. For that reason the HCFSC recommends the *(proposed project name)* for funding.

Sincerely,

Kirk Gothier
Assistant Planning Director
Humboldt County Community Development Services
Planning Division
(707) 268-3725

MASTER FIRE PROTECTION PLAN GOALS:

Goal 1. Fire Protection Capability – Support the development of local fire organizations’ and Fire Safe Councils’ efforts to maintain adequate staffing levels and to serve as public safety agents, and monitor these efforts.

Goal 2. Fire Safe Education – Promote local fire safe planning, fire safe standards, fire education programs addressing fire risk in rural areas, and measures that local communities can implement to be fire safe.

Goal 3. Risk and Hazard Assessment – Encourage effective and risk-based allocation of fire prevention and suppression services.

Goal 4. Risk Reduction and Management – Encourage countywide efforts to reduce or modify fuel loads for community protection and fire prevention.

Goal 5. Community Preparedness and Response – Assure adequate fire protection for people, property, and communities.

Goal 6. Funding and Fiscal Measures – Support the prevention and resource protection efforts of: local communities, Fire Safe Councils, special districts with fire safety responsibilities, fire organizations and Joint Powers Authority (JPA) cooperative services (e.g. dispatching, hazmat, training and other cooperative opportunities).

AGENDA ITEM 7
For Meeting of December 7, 2004

DATE: January 3, 2005
TO: Humboldt County Fire Safe Council
FROM: Kirk Gothier, Assistant Planning Director
SUBJECT: Review Chapters 6 & 7 of Master Fire Protection Plan (MFFP)

Recommendation

1. Review Revisions made by Staff based on 8/2/04 FSC Meeting
2. Review Chapters 6 & 7 of the Master Fire Protection Plan
3. Recommend Further Revisions if Needed

Background

The Consultants Draft of the Master Fire Protection Plan was completed in July of 2004 and reviewed at the August 2004 FSC meeting by the FSC members present.

Discussion

Staff has made several revisions to the Consultant Draft MFFP based on feedback from the FSC and has forwarded these revisions to the FSC members. As mentioned at the November FSC meeting, staff will also be adding a Chapter to capture the more detailed regional information being collected as part of our community outreach program.

Staff is recommending that the FSC begin reviewing and making recommendations on Chapters 6 & 7 at the December meeting. While these Chapters were discussed at length by the previous FSC, they include the key recommendations and implementation of the Fire Plan, which should be reviewed by the reformed and expanded FSC.

Attachments

Attachment 8-1: Chapters 6 & 7 of the Master Fire Protection Plan

Attachment 7-1
Chapters 6 & 7 of the Master Fire Protection Plan

6 Policy Recommendations

The Fire Plan policies in this chapter will also be incorporated into the Natural Resources and Hazard Element of the Humboldt County 2025 General Plan. These policies can guide fire safe mitigation strategies and implementation contained in the following chapter.

While the County is not directly responsible for responding to fires, maintaining fire apparatus, or hiring firefighting personnel, it has a key role in the fire planning process. This has traditionally included incorporating fire safe practices into the land use planning process and maintaining current district and services information through the LAFCO process.

A policy is a specific statement that guides decision-making and indicates a commitment of the local legislative body to a particular course of action. Many of these policies originated as objectives developed by the County Fire Safe Council. Others have been formulated to address needs identified through the community risk assessment process, and to respond to issues identified through the surveys conducted for the Fire Plan. Each of the numbered topics below contains individual policies.

It's important to note that no individual policy will be effective in making Humboldt County's communities fire safe. Actions that are consistent with overall policy direction, and carried out as prescribed by related implementation measures will be most effective for reducing fire risk/hazard and responding to fires when they occur. Numbers in parentheses located at the end of the policy statements indicate a nexus with the associated recommendation from chapter 5. Emphasis has been placed on developing policy statements for the recommendations that had a high priority placed on them by the Fire Safe Council during their December 15th, 2003 meeting.

6.1 Fire Protection Capability

Given the relatively high number of local fire organizations that provide fire protection services in the County, coordination of local fire service delivery is a need that has been identified in the Fire Plan. Also identified are the needs for equipment and apparatus, training and training facilities, and improved regional and local organization. The following policies address coordination of services.

- 6.1A Establish minimum levels of fire protection service for Humboldt County communities. (Recommendation 5.1-1)
- 6.1B Support the Humboldt County Fire Chiefs Association in establishing an appropriately located regional fire training facilities that includes classrooms, burn tower, as well as fire and rescue training props. (Recommendation 5.1-2)
- 6.1C Support the Humboldt County Fire Chiefs Association/Fire Training Officers Group in establishing regular fire training programs/classes at the local level, by region, throughout the County (i.e., Southern Humboldt, North Eastern Humboldt,

Northern Humboldt, Eel River Valley, Humboldt Bay, etc.) (Recommendation 5.1-2)

- 6.1D Support local volunteer fire department recruitment and training efforts (Recommendation 5.1-2)
- 6.1E Schedule regular regional workshops, throughout the County, facilitated by the Humboldt County Fire Chiefs Association, that are designed to disseminate information about local, state, and federal regulations (qualifications, fire safety, reporting, etc.) that impact the volunteer fire department operations. (Recommendation 5.1-2)
- 6.1F Through the Humboldt County Fire Chiefs Association, establish a network whereby surplus apparatus/equipment can easily be distributed from departments with excess to departments that are in need. (Recommendation 5.1-3)
- 6.1G Support pre-fire planning, mutual aid agreements, sphere of influence reorganization (i.e.: consolidation), and cooperative Federal and State agreements to provide adequate fire protection and to overcome limitations on fire response assistance. (Recommendation 5.1-3)
- 6.1H Periodically disseminate funding information about purchase of fire equipment, technical assistance information for fire training and updated fire fighting technology, and identifying funding sources for staffing, fire prevention/protection programs and educational materials. (Recommendation 5.1-3)
- 6.1I Promote efficient and flexible fire planning and coordination among all agencies (Recommendation 5.1-3)
- 6.1J Support communication and collaboration between fire and public safety agencies. (Recommendation 5.1-3)
- 6.1K Encourage the provision of fire protection services for every community through districts/agencies with career firefighters. (Recommendation 5.1-4)
- 6.1L Support additional fire protection services for unprotected and under-protected areas of Humboldt County. (Recommendation 5.1-4)
- 6.1M Encourage local cost/benefit assessment of fire resources, devoted to specific fire safety activities, to determine needed levels of fire suppression and prevention. (Recommendation 5.1-4)

6.2 Fire Safe Education

- 6.2A Provide fire safety education to homeowners to and the homebuilding, real estate, and building supply industries. This would include information about non-combustible roof coverings, fire safe construction for high fire risk areas, techniques for home ignition zones, adequate emergency water supplies, address and roads identification (visible house numbers and road signs), road clearances, and emergency evacuation procedures. (Recommendation 5.2-1)

- 6.2C Provide descriptive maps to county residents that make them aware of what areas and assets are currently within a fire protection district and which ones are not. (Recommendation 5.2-2)
- 6.2D Expand existing community and school fire prevention education programs countywide, and coordinate dissemination of program materials (Recommendation 5.2-3)
- 6.2E Coordinate with appropriate federal, state and local government agencies (i.e.: USFS, BLM, CDF, local non-governmental organizations, local fire organizations, local Fire Safe Councils, local schools, etc.) and also volunteers and the media to provide ongoing educational information to make Humboldt County residents fire safe. (Recommendation 5.2-3)

6.3 Risk and Hazard Assessment

- 6.3A Identify community areas and assets at greatest risk and the corresponding level of desired fire protection. (Recommendation 5.3-1)
- 6.3B Every five years update the Risk Assessment portion of the Master Fire Protection Plan to determine those unincorporated County areas at greatest risk from wildfire. (Recommendation 5.3-1)

6.4 Risk Reduction and Management

- 6.4A Consider the wildland/urban fire interface in the planning process, and address future needs and requirements. (Recommendation 5.4-1)
- 6.4B Coordinate vegetation management plans with the appropriate federal, state and local government agencies (i.e.: Transportation, Public Works, etc.) and condition new subdivisions to control vegetation alongside roads and in public areas to reduce risk of fire spreading to or from private property. (Recommendation 5.4-1)
- 6.4C Establish guidelines for the use of fire resistive construction materials for new residential construction in areas of high fire risk (Recommendation 5.4-1)
- 6.4D Define and identify strategies to assist local communities. (Recommendation 5.4-1)
- 6.4E Require fire risk disclosures for new development in fire risk areas, and condition new development to provide onsite protection measures (i.e.: fuel breaks, adequate water source). (Recommendation 5.4-1)
- 6.4F Promote biomass conversion and utilization strategies to reduce fuel loads and provide energy. (Recommendation 5.4-2)
- 6.4G In cooperation with landowners, support programs that will provide strategies for biomass conversion and utilization to reduce fuel loads on private lands (Recommendation 5.4-2)

6.5 Community Preparedness and Response

- 6.5A Promote the goals and objectives of the Humboldt Fire Safe Council and other local fire safe councils within Humboldt County. (Recommendation 5.5-1)
- 6.5B Coordinate with other County Fire Safe Councils, especially Del Norte, Trinity, and Mendocino Counties(Recommendation 5.5-2)
- 6.5C Maintain the Humboldt Fire Safe Council for fire plan oversight, review, implementation recommendations, fund dissemination, and as the Humboldt County focal point for funding, coordination, and representation to the California Fire Safe Council. (Recommendation 5.5-3)
- 6.5D Incorporate wildland fire safety measures, fire hazard mitigations, accessible roads data, emergency water supply locations, flammable vegetation clearance for defensible space techniques, and other fire safety techniques, into local community planning. (Recommendation 5.5-7)

6.6 Funding Sources and Fiscal Issues

- 6.6A Provide technical support to local organizations that seek to establish (tax) benefit assessment areas as well as alternative funding mechanisms, in coordination with state/federal government funding programs (i.e.: Amador) as a source of funding for community fire protection. (Recommendation 5.6-1)
- 6.6B Encourage the provision of fire protection services through a district or local agency with a stable source of revenue from property tax, assessments, fees, or other source. (Recommendation 5.6-1)
- 6.6C Establish funding and resource pools for various fire department administrative, purchasing, and expense categories such as vehicle maintenance and insurance (workers compensation and liability) that can be maintained through Humboldt County, the Humboldt County Fire Chiefs Association, or similar local organization. (Recommendation 5.6-1)
- 6.6D Support reallocation of Proposition 172 funds, to local fire agencies (Recommendation 5.6-2)
- 6.6E Support the allocation of a portion of Title III funds to local FSCs for coordination and planning (Recommendation 5.6-3)
- 6.6F Provide resources to assist local fire organizations and local fire safe councils with grant writing and funding pursuits related to fire service activities. (Recommendation 5.6-4)

7 Mitigation Strategies & Implementation Measures

The Humboldt County Master Fire Protection Plan (Fire Plan) mitigation strategies and implementation measures are intended to reduce fire risks and hazards identified in Chapter 3, and carry out the prioritized recommendations and policies contained in Chapters 5 and 6.

To ensure that the Fire Plan reflects community priorities, the Fire Safe Council has worked closely with organizations such as the Humboldt County Fire Chief's Association to focus implementation efforts on the most critical issues to local fire protection. The Fire Plan implementation strategies in this chapter represent the specific and achievable actions that will address the most important issues identified during the planning process.

The implementation measures outlined in this chapter are based on the Fire Plan recommendations that were identified as priorities in chapter 5. These commendations were prioritized by the FSC at their December 15th, 2003 meeting.

The mitigation strategies implementation measures are organized by six topics:

- 7.1 Fire Protection Capability
- 7.2 Fire Safe Education
- 7.3 Risk Reduction and Management
- 7.4 Community Preparedness and Response
- 7.5 Funding Sources and Fiscal Issues

(Risk and Hazard Assessment is not included in this chapter as there were no prioritized recommendations under this category)

These topics are consistent with the overall goals identified in Chapter 1, findings and recommendations in Chapter 5, and policies in Chapter 6. Specific implementation strategies are numbered to relate to the topics, but reference information relating to the original recommendation is retained.

Implementation of the strategies included in the Fire Plan should result in safer communities for Humboldt County residents. Successful implementation should improve the stability, capacity, and coordination between local fire departments, comprehensive fire safe education programs, as well as reduced fuel loads and increased biomass utilization.

7.1 Fire Protection Capability

FSC Goal: Support the development of local fire organizations' and Fire Safe Councils' efforts to maintain adequate staffing levels and to serve as public safety agents, and monitor these efforts.

Chapters 2 and 4 describe the critical issues facing local fire departments, and how challenging it can be for the all-volunteer departments to meet those challenges. These challenges include the administrative requirements associated with managing an all-volunteer fire department; insufficient funding; lack of essential training and equipment; and difficulty in recruiting volunteers. In addition,

new federal homeland security and occupational safety and health requirements passed by the State Legislature in 2001 (SB 1207 - codified as Section 6303 of the California Labor Code), place a burden on local departments that has not been fully evaluated.

There is a significant difference between the level-of-service available to residents living in an urbanized area such as Eureka and residents living in more remote rural communities. Local departments use formal and informal mutual aid and automatic aid agreement to augment the level of protection provided to the residents that they serve, but level-of-service differences between communities still persist. The Fire Safe Council acknowledges the importance of establishing a count-wide level-of-service standard so that service gaps can more easily be identified and addressed and residents are aware of the level of protection available to them.

- 7.1-1 Develop level-of-service standards for the provision of all fire protection services (fire, EMS, HazMat, rescue) in the County, and make such standards public so that landowners and residents are aware.
- 7.1-2 Establish regional fire training facilities in appropriate locations; facilities should include classrooms, a burn tower, and fire and rescue training props.
- 7.1-3 Improve communication and coordination between local fire departments, CDF, and federal agencies during fires and other emergencies.

7.2 Fire Safe Education

FSC Goal: Promote local fire safe planning, fire safe standards, fire education programs addressing fire risk and hazard in rural areas, and measures that local communities can implement to be fire safe

The Fire Plan acknowledges that the use of effective fire safe education programs is one of the most successful ways to reduce fire risk and minimize loss due to fire. When residents have information about fire safe strategies and understand the costs associated with not utilizing them, the likely result will be less fire related damage in the community.

However, most departments do not have the capacity to deliver fire safe education in the community, nor are there county-wide standards for school- or community-based fire safety education programs. In recognition of this, the FSC has placed a high priority on incorporating consistent fire safe standards into local land use planning, and providing fire safety education materials to homeowners through a variety of means.

- 7.2-1 Provide fire safety education to homeowners and to the homebuilding, real estate, and building supply industries. This would include information about non-combustible roof coverings, fire safe construction for high fire risk areas, techniques for home ignition zones, adequate emergency water supplies, address and roads identification (visible house numbers and road signs), road clearances, and emergency evacuation procedures.

7.3 Risk Reduction and Management

FSC Goal: Encourage countywide efforts to reduce or modify fuel loads for community protection and fire prevention.

The wildland urban interface extends into nearly every community in Humboldt County, and as a consequence, numerous communities are on the Federal Register's list of Communities at Risk of wildfire (refer to a list of such communities). The historic development patterns of the County have resulted in many small isolated communities that have only limited municipal services, most notably fire protection. In addition, the effects of excluding normally recurring wildfires, the current health of Humboldt County's forests, and increasing fuel loading – if not addressed - will likely lead to higher fire intensity, and higher fire suppression costs.

Measures for reducing fire risk range from establishing defensible space around individual homes to constructing fuelbreaks on public resource lands. However, such measures are most effective when they are tailored to address specific hazards. Fire Plan related interviews and analysis indicate that fuels reduction efforts are carried out by a variety of agencies and are not done in a coordinated manner. Further, fuel reduction efforts are not keeping pace with fuel loading, and as a result wildland fuel hazards to communities continue to increase.

The Fire Plan emphasizes countywide fuel management planning and the coordination of fuel projects by all involved agencies. The Fire Plan further encourages a linkage between fuels reduction and the development of biomass utilization programs, such as power generation. Because a specific fuel reduction recommendation was not identified as a priority in chapter 5, the following implementation measure was modified to include a reference to fuel reduction. This was done to explicitly meet the goal of the Risk Reduction and Management topic and in recognition that fuels reduction projects need to take place to produce the biomass referred to in 5.4-1.

- 7.3-1 Update Humboldt County Fire Safe Standards to identify specific hazard zones and improve fire safe measures for community planning areas and/or other unincorporated rural residential areas in Humboldt County to address roads, vegetation setbacks, and enforcement
- 7.3-2 Emphasize countywide fuel management planning and the coordination of fuel projects by all involved agencies. Develop a biomass utilization program to build commercially viable markets for fuel reduction projects, wood products and residue.

7.4 Community Preparedness and Response

FSC Goal: Assure adequate fire protection for people, property, and community.

There are numerous local Fire Safe Councils as well as community based organizations, such as the Red Cross, that help communities in the County become fire safe and help coordinate community response in the event of an emergency. Local Fire Safe Councils are in the best position to involve communities in the process of prioritizing community assets and values for the purpose of emergency planning. The Humboldt County Fire Safe Council can serve an important role in

supporting local Fire Safe Councils and coordinating future countywide fire planning. The Fire Plan recommends that the Humboldt County Fire Safe Council be maintained to support countywide fire planning as well as community based fire and emergency efforts.

- 7.4-1 Maintain the continuance of the Humboldt County Fire Safe Council after the Fire Plan is completed.
- 7.4-2 Incorporate wildland fire safety measures, fire hazard mitigations, accessible roads data, emergency water supply locations, flammable vegetation clearance for defensible space techniques, and other fire safety techniques, into local community planning.

7.5 Funding Sources and Fiscal Issues

FSC Goal: Support fire prevention and resource protection efforts of local communities, Fire Safe Councils, special districts with fire safety responsibilities, fire organizations and Joint Powers Authority (JPA) cooperative services (dispatching, hazmat, training and other cooperative opportunities).

Funding for local fire departments is one of the most critical issues identified during this planning effort. Local departments indicate that revenue is insufficient to meet the requirements involved in providing “all risk” fire protection services. The impact of additional occupational safety requirements mandated by SB 1207, no matter how critical to firefighter safety, could be “the straw that breaks the camel’s back.”

The variety of methods by which local fire departments are organized, and the funding sources that are available to each type of department, makes identifying “one size fits all” funding solutions very difficult. In Humboldt County there are 43 “local” departments providing fire protection. The organizations that support those fire departments include four different types of special districts (Fire Protection District, Community Services Districts, Resort Improvement District, and a County Service Area), city departments, volunteer companies supported largely by timber/lumber companies, volunteer departments that receive a portion of their annual revenue from local Indian Tribes, and volunteer fire companies not affiliated with local agencies that are most often organized as non-profit corporations.

The success of many of the implementation strategies identified by the Fire Plan will depend on the ability of local fire departments to not only maintain but to increase their level of funding and level-of-service. The Fire Plan has identified implementation measures that should accomplish the Fire Safe Council’s goal.

- 7.5-1 Develop reliable sources of on-going funding for fire protection districts, such as revenue exchange agreements, benefit assessments, mitigation and user fees.
- 7.5-2 Support reallocation of a portion of Proposition 172 funds, to local fire agencies and assist with developing and implementing new measures/propositions to increase fire protection revenues.

- 7.5-3 Pursue the formation of a County-wide County Service Area or other appropriate assessment/funding implementation to fund fire and emergency services protection, prevention, and training.

7.6 *Matrix of Implementation Measure*

The following sections contain a matrix that divides the implementation measures into four of the general topic areas that are used throughout this plan. The implementation matrix also reflects the priority of the recommendations from Chapter 5 (as established by the FSC during its working sessions), a description of the end-state that will likely result from its successful implementation, and the series of steps necessary to achieve the desired outcome (including the responsible party, essential resources, and a proposed schedule).

7.1 Fire Protection Capability					
Topic:	FIRE PROTECTION CAPABILITY		Recommendation:	Develop level-of-service standards for the provision of all fire protection services (fire, EMS, HazMat, rescue) in the County, and make such standards public so that landowners and residents are aware. (5.1-1)	
Measure	7.1-1 LEVEL OF SERVICE STANDARD				
<p>Description: A countywide level-of-service standard for the provision of “all-risk” fire protection (fire, EMS, HazMat, rescue) and establish maximum incident response times (by zone), incident reporting requirements, equipment and apparatus requirements, minimum department scope of service, as well as training, staffing, and health and fitness levels for firefighters. This level-of-service standard is important for the following reasons: 1) it will improve the ability of real estate professionals, public safety personnel, and government officials to inform landowners and residents of the level of fire protection that is available to them; 2) it will support fire departments grant requests to local, state, and federal funding sources for purchase of apparatus, equipment, and training to meet standards; and 3) local government can effectively plan for municipal service delivery and population growth. However, it may be a challenge for some of the smaller departments to bring their level of service up to the agreed upon standard and ISO ratings may be influenced based on changes in service delivery and discloser.</p> <p>Planning for County level-of-service standards involves several steps: The Humboldt County Fire Chief’s Association (HCFCA) will establish a working group of its members to evaluate the existing level-of-service in the County and level-of-service standards used by other jurisdictions; HCFCA will propose an appropriate level-of-service standard; Each fire department will indicate the resources required to meet the standard; and then, working in consultation with the HCFCA, Humboldt County, and the local fire organizations will establish a schedule for implementation of the standard and identify available resource to assist departments in meeting the standard. Additional strategies will be explored to mitigate any hardship placed on local fire protection services as a result of setting in place a minimum standard of service.</p>					
Steps		Responsibility	Resources	Schedule*	Notes
	Review CalOSHA, NFPA, ISO, & Cal Fire Marshal requirements as baseline	HCFCA/CDF		3 months	
	Select basic LOS for personnel, app/equip, response time	HCFCA/CDF		1 month	
	Coordinate with City/County Planning	HCFCA/Co & City staff.		1 month	
	Develop LOS recommendations	HCFCA/CDF.		1 month	
	Perform fiscal analysis	HCFCA/CDF		TBD	May require consultant
	Coordinate with County-wide CSA effort	Hum. Co / HCFCA			
	Implementation	All		on-going	
*As funding and staff are available					

Topic:	FIRE PROTECTION CAPABILITY	Recommendation:	Establish regional fire training facilities in appropriate locations; facilities should include classrooms, a burn tower, and fire and rescue training props. (5.1-2)		
Measure	7.1-2 REGIONAL FIRE TRAINING FACILITIES				
<p>Description: The development of fire and emergency services training facilities in Humboldt County are critical to the delivery of emergency services in the County. In acknowledgement of the fact that 90 percent of firefighters in Humboldt County are volunteers, many of whom live in outlying areas; multiple training facilities may be required to support countywide training programs. Regional fire training facilities are also essential to local firefighters in meeting an established level-of-service standard.</p> <p>Several local education organizations, such as the Humboldt County Office of Education (HCOE), College of the Redwoods (CR), and Humboldt State University (HSU), may have programs or resources that will contribute to this strategy. To accomplish this task, the HCFCA will coordinate with local education organizations and survey its membership to determine the level of department interest in a regional training facility (RTF), department resources available for this purpose (funding, land, equipment, staff), in addition, the HCFCA will work with allied agencies (police, Sheriff, ambulance, etc) to determine interest in working jointly with fire departments to develop the RTF. Next, the HCFCA, working with local planners, will evaluate prospective locations for RTF (including an analysis of the proximity to agencies served). The HCFCA will propose alternatives for RTF development.</p>					
Steps		Responsibility	Resources	Schedule*	Notes
	Evaluate regional training needs and propose scope of services for training center, including off-site classes	HCFCFA/CDF/HCOE/CR/HSU		6 months	
	Evaluate locations for facility	HCFCFA / Hum. Co.& CDF		1 month	
	Evaluate facility & program costs	HCFCFA / HCOE CR/HSU		2 Months	May require consultant
	Evaluate sources of funding	HCFCFA / HCOE / CR/HSU Hum. Co.		1 month	
	Coordinate with County-wide CSA effort	HCFCFA / Hum. Co. & CDF		24 months	
	Implementation	All		On-going	
*As funding and staff are available					

Topic:	FIRE PROTECTION CAPABILITY	Recommendation:	Improve communication and coordination between local fire departments, CDF, and federal agencies during fires and other emergencies (5.1-3)		
Measure	7.1-3 IMPROVE INTER-AGENCY COMMUNICATION				
Description: Effective communications between all fire agencies, EMS, and allied agencies, are critical to the health and safety of local residents. Communications includes information sharing, dispatch, and inter- and intra-departmental radio communications. This implementation strategy strives to improve all levels of communications by supporting entities already involved in communications.					
To accomplish this task, the HCFCFA and their southern Humboldt Fire Chief’s Group, Humboldt County Fire Dispatch Cooperative, Humboldt County Sheriff’s Office (SO), and other local public safety agencies will first identify the strengths and short-falls associated with the existing communications structures (such as centralized dispatch services, lack of radio coverage within certain areas, the inability to communicate between allied agencies, or confusion caused by multiple dispatch centers). Next, this group will propose the ideal communications structure for the County and evaluate its feasibility. Finally, this group will determine the best alternative for County-wide communications and identify the organizational changes, funding requirements, and system improvements required to achieve this.					
Steps		Responsibility	Resources	Schedule*	Notes
Evaluate County-wide fire/EMS dispatch and identify issues & opportunities		HCFCFA, HCFDC, CDF, Hum. SO Cities		3 months	
Propose “ideal” dispatch structure		HCFCFA, HCFDC, CDF, Hum. Co SO., Cities		1 months	
Evaluate cost & prepare cost share allocation		HCFCFA, HCFDC, CDF, Hum. Co. SO, Cities		1 months	
Review funding alternatives		HCFCFA, HCFDC, CDF, Hum. Co. SO, Cities		1 months	
Coordinate with County-wide CSA effort		Humboldt County Planning & all of the above		24 Months	May require a consultant
Prepare implementation plan		All of the above		TBD	
*As funding and staff are available					

7.2 Fire Safe Education

Topic:	FIRE SAFE EDUCATION	Recommendation:	Provide fire safety education to homeowners, homebuilders in rural areas, real estate agents, and building supply stores. This would include information about non-combustible roof coverings, fire safe construction for high fire risk areas, techniques for reducing flammability in home ignition zones, adequate emergency water supplies, address and roads identification (visible house numbers and road signs), road clearances, and emergency evacuation procedures. (5.2-1)
Measure	7.2-1 FIRE SAFE EDUCATION		

Description: Fire safety education programs can reduce fire risk and minimize loss due to fire. When the public understands fire safe strategies and the associated costs of not utilizing them, the likely result will be less fire related damage in the community

Successful implementation of County wide fire safety education programs will involve the cooperation of construction and real estate professionals, and home building supply retailers. These entities can assist local government and fire departments in distributing information regarding fire safe standards (see 7.1-1). Contractors and real estate agents could be instrumental in the education effort by disclosing information regarding high fire risk areas. However, hazard maps (see 7.3-1) and evacuation information will need to be developed by local government and emergency service providers to facilitate disclosure.

Steps toward implementation of this measure include: establishment of partnerships with construction, real estate, and retail interests; compilation of materials regarding local fire safe standards and home fire safety techniques (construction materials, defensible space, rural water supply, road maintenance and signing, etc); disclosure of hazard zones and evacuation strategies; and establishment of local real estate disclosure requirements for high fire hazard areas.

<i>Steps</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Resources</i>	<i>Schedule*</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Review existing fire safe education programs and materials	HC & local FSCs, CDF, Hum. Co.	Institute for Sustainable Forestry (ISF)	3 months	
Establish partnerships with real estate, contractors/developers, and building supply stores	HC & local FSCs, CDF, Hum. Co.		3 months	
Prepare/compile fire safe materials, including hazard zone maps, evacuation/disaster preparedness, etc.	HC & local FSCs, CDF, Hum. Co.		6 months	
Distribute new and current local fire safe materials			Ongoing	

*As funding and staff are available

7.3 Risk Reduction and Management

Topic:	RISK REDUCTION AND MANAGEMENT	Recommendation:	Update Humboldt County Fire Safe Standards to identify specific hazard zones and improve fire safe measures for community planning areas and/or other unincorporated rural residential areas in Humboldt County to address roads, vegetation setbacks, and enforcement. (5.4-8 change accordingly)
Measure	7.3-1 HAZARD IDENTIFICATION		

Description: The Risk Assessment and Mitigation Strategies (RAMS) analysis prepared for this Fire Plan has established a baseline for the development of fire hazard zones for Humboldt County. The addition and refinement of vegetation, fire protection capability, and fire history data over time should produce even more accurate fire risk zones. The use of these zones in community planning should facilitate better allocation of fire prevention, suppression, and code enforcement resources as well as land use planning decisions.

Successful implementation of this measure will require the implementation of Measure 7.2-1; adoption of a standard risk assessment technique/model; procedures to continually gather data and update Humboldt County GIS systems; and the incorporation of fire hazard identification into the regular update of local emergency operations plans.

<i>Steps</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Schedule*</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Work with Local FSCs, HSU, local governments, and State and Federal Agencies, to continually improve risk/hazard GIS data	Hum. Co. / FSC/ Local FSCs / CDF / USFS/ Tribes	Ongoing	
Regularly update risk/hazard mapping	Hum. Co. / FSC/ Local FSCs / CDF / USFS/ Tribes	Ongoing	
Implement risk & hazard reduction programs based on most current data	FSC/ Local FSCs / CDF / USFS/ Tribes	Ongoing	

*As funding and staff are available

Topic:	RISK REDUCTION AND MANAGEMENT	Recommendation:	<u>Emphasize countywide fuel management planning and the coordination of fuel projects by all involved agencies.</u> Develop a biomass utilization program to develop commercially-viable markets for fuel reduction project wood products and residue. (5.4-1)		
Measure	7.3-2 BIOMASS UTILIZATION				
<p>Description: The implementation of fuels reduction programs (defensible space, shaded fuelbreaks, forest thinning, and forest plantation management) is known to reduce fire hazard and the resulting risk to life and property. However, funding for these activities is scarce. Establishment of programs to add incentives to carry out fuels reduction, such as a biomass utilization program could increase the likelihood that it will occur.</p> <p>Successful implementation of a self sustaining biomass utilization program will require the following steps: establish an industry/agency working group (including resource and air quality management agencies as well as environmental interests); compile all local and regional biomass utilization studies; identify additional local biomass utilization resources/assets as well as local, state and federal funding sources and programs; development of recommendations by the industry/agency working group to stimulate biomass utilization and fire hazard and risk reduction.</p>					
Steps		Responsibility	Resources	Schedule*	Notes
Establish County/Agency/Industry working group (CDF, Timber Co's, PG&E, HEA, NCUAQMD, USFS, HSU, Hum. Co., etc)		CDF / FSC / Hum. Co. Planning & Econ. Devel.	ISF	2 months	
Compile and review existing local/regional biomass planning reports		Industry Working Group		3 months	
Develop preliminary biomass utilization strategy		Industry Working Group			
Seek funding and prepare feasibility study		Industry Working Group / Hum. Co. Planning & Econ. Devel.	Grant sources		
*As funding and staff are available					

7.4 Community Preparedness and Response

Topic:	COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE	Recommendation:	Maintain the continuance of the Humboldt County Fire Safe Council after the Fire Plan is completed (5.5-3)
Measure	7.4-1 COUNTY FIRE SAFE COUNCIL		

Description: The Fire Plan found that local and Countywide Fire Safe Councils play in integral role in implementing fuel reduction projects as well as prioritizing community assets and values. One of the main tasks of the FSC will be to oversee and guide the process of forming a countywide CSA. Additionally, The Humboldt County Fire Safe Council will play an important role in many of the measures developed to implement other Fire Plan recommendations as well as coordinating funding to local Fire Safe Councils.

In order to maintain the FSC, the Board of Supervisors will need to revise the Fire Safe Council “Purpose” and “Term” contained in the Resolution establishing the Fire Safe Council and provide the necessary resources to support the FSC.

<i>Steps</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Schedule*</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Review activities of other County FSCs	Hum. Co. / FSC	ASAP	
Develop revised proposal for FSC “Purpose” and “Membership”	Hum. Co. / FSC	ASAP	
Adopt new FSC authorizing ordinance	Hum. Co.	ASAP	

*As funding and staff are available

Topic:	COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE	Recommendation:	Incorporate wildland fire safety measures, fire hazard mitigations, accessible roads data, emergency water supply locations, flammable vegetation clearance for defensible space techniques, and other fire safety techniques, into local community planning (5.5-7)		
Measure	7.4-2 FIRE SAFE PLANNING				
<p>Description: The implementation of uniform fire safe standards can reduce future losses of life and property. The most current fire safe techniques must be incorporated into the planning regulations, and most importantly enforcement measures, of local jurisdictions throughout the County. To accomplish this, the HCFCA shall meet with local agency planners to evaluate the standards in effect within each jurisdiction. The HCFCA- Fire Prevention Officers Section has already begun working to clarify the implementation of State and Federal fire prevention construction and occupancy standards in order to assist contractors, business operators, local government, and local fire agencies to improve fire safety. To that end, they are developing standards for smoke detectors, key boxes, fire department connections, fire sprinkler inspector test and alarm monitoring, fire extinguishers, cooking hoods, premises identification, roads, burn permits, and gated communities. The work of the Fire Prevention Officers Section will serve as an effective springboard for additional coordinated fire safe planning and enforcement efforts.</p> <p>Steps toward accomplishing this measure include: establishing priorities for the HCFCA and local planners; research regarding model standards available from State and Federal agencies; agreement between jurisdictions (fire departments, cities and the County) as to minimum County wide standards; development of enforcement mechanisms (responsibilities and revenue sources); and codification of standards by local agencies.</p>					
Steps		Responsibility	Resources	Schedule	Notes
	Review State and Federal model fire safe standards and existing local ordinances	HCFCA, CDF,		3 months	
	Develop model ordinance for uniform County & City fire safe standards	HCFCA, CDF,		3 months	
	Work with County and Cities	HCFCA, CDF, Hum. Co., Cities		3 months	
	Coordinate with County-wide CSA effort	Hum. Co & all of the above		24 months	May require a consultant
	Implement model ordinance	Hum. Co.Planning/ cities/CDF		2 months	
*As funding and staff are available					

7.5 Funding Sources and Fiscal Issues

Topic:	FUNDING SOURCES AND FISCAL ISSUES	Recommendation:	Develop reliable sources of on-going funding for fire protection districts, such as revenue exchange agreements, benefit assessments, mitigation and user fees (5.6-1)
Measure	7.5-1 DEVELOP RELIABLE REVENUE SOURCES		

Description: The Fire Plan identifies funding to local fire departments is a critical issue. Personnel related costs such as workman’s compensation, even in all volunteer departments, have increased many times faster than the growth of revenue. Proposition 13 and subsequent changes to the State Constitution have made it extremely challenging for local agencies to increase taxes for fire protection, and fund raising by all-volunteer departments is difficult and time-consuming. To maintain capable fire protection, it is important to establish adequate and reliable revenue sources for local fire departments as well as innovative cost-sharing programs to increase the efficiency of service provision.

The Humboldt County Board of Supervisors has established a County/Fire District Working Group to evaluate and report on fire district funding requests. The efforts of this group should serve as a spring-board for additional work to be coordinated by the FSC. Additional steps necessary to implement this measure include: Re-authorization of the FSC and revision of its membership (see 7.4-1) (this may include members of the working group); coordination with Measure 7.1-1; analysis of the gap between the “true” cost of providing fire protection at the level-of-service desired and available funding; compilation of information regarding funding strategies used by other Counties/fire districts within Counties; development of recommendations.

<i>Steps</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Resources</i>	<i>Schedule*</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Compile information including funding strategies and cost data.	FSC / Hum. Co Planning and Econ Devel.	No additional	3 months	
Coordinate with County-wide CSA effort	Hum. Co. Planning & all of the above	No additional	24 months	May require a consultant
Develop recommendations	FSC / Hum. Co Planning	No additional	12 months	

*As funding and staff are available

Topic:	FUNDING SOURCES AND FISCAL ISSUES	Recommendation:	Support reallocation of a portion of Proposition 172 funds, to local fire agencies and assist with developing and implementing new measures/propositions to increase fire protection revenues. (5.6-2)		
Measure	7.5-2 PROPOSITION 172 AND OTHER NEW FUNDS				
<p>Description: In 1993, the voters of California passed Proposition 172, the Local Public Safety Protection and Improvement Act of 1993 (Art. XIII, Sec 35, California Constitution), which added an additional ½ cent to the Sales and Use tax to fund public safety (including fire protection). This tax was placed on the ballot by the Governor and the Legislature in an attempt to reduce the impact of the shift of property tax funds from local government to schools that resulted from the implementation of the Education Revenue Augmentation Fund. Proposition 172 also created the Public Safety Augmentation Fund. Subsequent laws approved by the Legislature that implemented Proposition 172 (Gov. Code Sec. 30051-30056) did not specifically mention Special Districts as entities eligible to receive allocations from the Public Safety Augmentation Fund, even though Special Districts were affected by the ERAF shifts. As a result, Special Districts providing fire protection in Humboldt County do not receive Proposition 172 funds.</p> <p>The Humboldt County Fire Chief’s Association has been actively working to include local fire related districts in the allocation of Proposition 172 funds. This measure supports the reallocation of a portion of Proposition 172 funds to fire related districts as well as the implementation of new measures to increase funding for fire protection.</p> <p>To accomplish this, the Working Group referenced in Measure 7.5-1 will continue its evaluation as it relates to Proposition 172 and in other funding alternatives; Humboldt County Community Development Services will seek funding for studies required to support the establishment of new assessments and evaluate the most efficient organizational structure for fire protection in unincorporated lands outside of existing fire related districts; and develop and implement a funding strategy.</p>					
Steps		Responsibility	Resources	Schedule*	Notes
Continue County/Fire District Working Group and coordinate closely with HCFCFA		County Working Group		Continuous until agreement	
Coordinate with 6.6-1		County Working Group		As above	
Coordinate with County-wide CSA effort		County Working Group & Hum. Co. Planning		24 months	May require a consultant
Develop funding strategy		County Working Group		As above	
Work with County and Cities to establish new funding sources		County Working Group		As above	
*As funding and staff are available					

Topic:	FUNDING SOURCES AND FISCAL ISSUES	Recommendation:	Pursue the formation of a County-wide County Service Area to fund fire and emergency services protection, prevention, and training.		
Measure	7.5-3 FORMATION OF COUNTY-WIDE COUNTY SERVICE AREA				
<p>Description: County Service Areas (CSAs) are a means for counties to “extend” municipal services, including structural fire protection, to areas of the county that are experiencing growth. Humboldt County has already used a CSA to fund winter-time fire protection. CSA 4 provides fire protection to communities along the coast between Crannell and Freshwater Lagoon, excluding Trinidad. Subject to approval of the Humboldt LAFCo and the voters, CSA 4 could be expanded or a new CSA created to fund expanded fire protection, emergency dispatch services, prevention, and training throughout the County or in specific areas of the County. The CSA could “over-lay” existing fire related districts to extend new services (e.g., dispatch or training) or augment existing services. Formation of the CSA must be accompanied by a special tax, assessment, or fee structure to fund the services to be provided.</p> <p>This measure will be carried out through a coordinated effort by the County FSC (see 7.4-1) County Planning and CDFT. The steps necessary to accomplish this measure include: identify funding sources to support CSA planning; evaluate range of services to be provided and feasibility of offering menu of services to existing districts, cities, allied agencies that chose to be part of districts or chose to contract for services; develop rough estimate of cost of providing service; evaluate potential district boundaries; research issues relating to assessments, parcel tax, fees, property tax exchange, other revenue, zones of benefit, and develop rough estimates of revenue; proceed to district formation.</p>					
Steps		Responsibility	Resources	Schedule*	Notes
	Seek funding to support planning	Humboldt County		Completed	
	Evaluate range of services to be provided	Working Group		4 Months	
	Evaluate potential district boundaries	Working Group		4 months	
	Research funding alternatives	Working Group, Humboldt County & FSC		6 months	May require consultant
	Seek approval to form district	Working Group, Humboldt County		3 months	
	District formation	Working Group, Humboldt County		1 year	May require consultant
*As funding and staff are available					

