



Wildland Fire Council Minutes
11400 W US HWY 24
Divide, CO 80814
April 16, 2025, at 8:30 AM

Call to Order: 08:35 AM

Attendees: 34 attendees introduced themselves.

Approval of Minutes: Motioned by Joe O'Conor and seconded by Chief Chris Hawkins

Welcome and Opening Comments from Commissioner Williams:

- Introduced the new Emergency Manager, Michelle Boley.
- Shared gratitude for the response efforts on Turkey Tracks Fire.
- Urged fire chiefs to submit preparedness data to assist burn restriction decisions.
- Michelle Boley is creating a dashboard for Fire Chiefs to update Preparedness Status and Fuel Moisture information to help with Burn Restrictions decisions.
- STR regulation and evacuation planning will be a summer BOCC priority.

New Business:

- WUI Bill – Commissioner Williams and John Geerde with CUSP:
 - **Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) Code ([HB 25-142](#))**
 - Counties may adopt the WUI code by March 1, 2026.
 - CWPP Rewrite Committee to review draft WUI map and present to BOCC.
 - **CUSP Mapping & Risk Analysis – John Geerde**
 - 99% of Teller County homes are at higher wildfire risk than average.
 - New WUI map incorporates post-fire impact and intermix zones.
 - Subdivision Ratings: 30 rated “Extreme” (2,136 structures, 20,081 acres).
 - Planning based on CWPP layers (e.g., vegetation, slope, infrastructure).
 - **Mitigation Ratings Concept – Commissioner Stone**
 - Proposal to assess & rate properties under 5 acres during real estate transfers. May need help from Fire Chiefs.
 - Would require figuring out a funding mechanism like homeowner-funded assessments.

Recurring Business:

- Fire Stats/Update & Fuel Moisture/Fire Restrictions – OEM
 - YTD: 27 Orange Flag & 5 Red Flag Days
 - Fuel Moisture: 4MFD – Very High; NETCO – Moderate

- Q1 Controlled Burns: 139
 - Q1 Fire Calls: 1,057 (20% increase for CCFD)
 - Notable Incidents:
 - CR 11 Fire (Mar 22): 14.5 acres
 - Turkey Tracks Fire (Apr 12): 148 acres
- 2025 Chipper Stats – OEM
 - 2023: 2,225 piles | 2024: 1,985 piles | 2025 starts May 1
 - Reach out to your local fire district to get on the schedule. See attached flyer.
- CO-SWAP Project Update – OEM
 - 7 project sites scoped.
 - Team Rubicon assisting May & July.
 - Seeking Project Manager via RFP.
- CUSP Mitigation Projects – John Geerde/CUSP
 - Catamount Open Space – Closing in on mitigating on 100 acres. Ongoing since 2018. Ties in with work the USFS and CSU mitigation efforts.
 - Chipping Program – Private property owners and HOAs/POAs can hire CUSP chipper and crew to come chip slash.
- 2025 Slash Site – John Geerde/CUSP
 - May 3 - Sept. 27. \$20 a load. Free mulch. <https://baileyslashsite.com/divide-slashsite/>
- CWPP Rewrite Status Update – John Geerde/CUSP
 - Draft should be out in the next few weeks for review. This is an umbrella plan for the county. We recommend that all subdivisions have their own CWPP. Having the community become a firewise community to help with insurance.
- CSU Updates – Jeremy Taylor/CSU
 - N. Catamount fuel mitigation nearly completed. The heavy machinery work with the harvesters is complete and the logs are hauled out. The only remaining work is the chipping of the generated slash material.
 - Collaborating with the CSFS and USFS for the catamounts with upcoming projects and Rx Burns.
- CSFS Updates – Mike Till/CSFS
 - Working with CSU, USFS, City of Woodland Park, and TCOEM on COSWAP – tying in with everyone to make sure they are having a cohesive plan.
 - 5 active contracts and 3 more upcoming.
 - Homesite Assessments - \$93 for CSFS to come out and do defensible space for property owners. In 15 years on 3 properties meet the fire ignition requirements for CSFS to sign a letter to the insurance. <https://csfs.colostate.edu/homeowners-landowners/homesite-assessments/>
 - Home Ignition Zone Guide by CSFS.
 - Home Ignition Zone Checklist by CSFS
- USFS Updates - Tim Ross & Christina Barba/USFS
 - The Turkey Tracks Fire: 148 acres, all on USFS on both sides of the FS 343. Thank you to all from Teller County who responded to Douglas. Working with Chief Lambert on putting together an AAR.
 - Road improvements underway on FS RD 343 for Fire Equipment to access the south end.
 - Christina Barba – The 40 CFR is going away. It was over reaching. They still have to follow the 36 CFR. Under Biden Administration they were giving an emergency authority to start work in the Pikes Peak area. USFS is starting the Pikes Peak Vegetation and Restoration Workshops with partners.

- Mechanical Treatments planned along Rampart Range Road up to Douglas County. In 2026, they are hoping to do a section west of Woodland Park.
- Pikes Peak Spring Prescribed Burns (Rx):
 - Crystal Res – 234 acres
 - Rainbow Gulch - 750 acres
 - Mothball Springs – 950 acres
- Proposed Pikes Peak Fall Rx – Phantom Creek 3,100 acres. In the development and public talking phase.
- Crow Gulch and Manitou Res – Fall/Winter RX. Above GMF to prevent fires from going down into the Hwy 24 Corridor.
- USFS is trying to burn 10,000 acres a year in ponderosa pine & dry mixed conifer ecosystems.
- BLM Updates – Tentative
 - Booger Red area – looking at a couple of hundred acres Rx
 - Forester is looking around the High Park Fire area for timber sales.
 - BLM will be issuing its Community Assistance Grant that will go live on Grants.gov, nationwide. Will share when posted.
- Central Colorado Forest Collaborative Updates – OEM
 - The group is still meeting and are accepting more partners to become part of the group. <https://co-co.org/central-colorado-forest-collaborative/>
- Pikes Peak Vegetation and Restoration Workshops- OEM
 - The USFS is holding 3 workshops with approximately 30 partners to evaluate the vegetation and restoration of the Pikes Peak District to help inform USFS as a guide on their Environmental Assessment and NEPA process.
- State Legislative Update – Commissioner Williams
 - Legislation on the table related to Wildland Fire:
 - [Creation of Wildfire Resilient Homes Grant Program](#) – a grant from the State to pay for making your home more resilient.
 - [HB25-1182](#) - Modeling on Insurance – meeting with the insurance commissioner. All counties are having issues.
 - There are 15 days left in the legislative session.
 - BOCC is trying to guardrail the cutbacks to help fund our local programs.
 - We are at a higher risk this year due to all the things discussed today. We will have to continue to work together. On the next incident, we do need to do an AAR and show the impacts due to the changes at the Federal level.

Open Discussion:

- B Lazy M: [HB 25-1009](#) – Vegetative Fuel Mitigation, signed on the first of March. Click the link to read more about this bill.
- Turkey Rock Resident: CR 33 – ATV enthusiasts have cut down trees to make the parking area bigger, and now you can see 25 vehicles and trailers blocking the road, and a danger to residents to evacuate or if they have a medical emergency.
- Chief O'Conor: We had a Wildland Fire Tabletop in March, we had all local, state, and federal partners working on the tactics of a fire. We will have to have a deeper bench locally. The Chiefs are working together and meet every month. Most of the resources on the Turkey Tracks were from Teller County in Douglas County, and they were able to keep it on the west side of Hwy 67.

- OEM: Integrated Preparedness Planning Workshop on April 28th with everyone. This is a strategic-level planning process to determine our training, equipment, and resource needs for the next 4 years. We will be working on our Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Next Meeting Date: May 21, 2025, at 08:30 AM

Adjournment: 10:25 PM