

SHFSC CWPP Emergency Response Capacity Discussion Notes

SHFSC CWPP – Emergency Response Capacity Working Session

Discussion notes - June 8th, 2006

Garberville CDF station, 1-4 pm

In attendance: Cybelle Immit, Joel Ficklin (Palo Verde), Bill Eastwood, Sal ?? (Shelter Cove), Lou Iglesias, Tim Jones, Hugh Scanlon, Ed Locke, John Rogers

Discussion of outreach to Fire Department Chiefs

Attendance by steering committee members good. Attendance by Fire Chiefs poor.

Suggestion: Bring specific issues to Fire Chiefs Association meeting on the 26th at 6pm. Turn Fire Chiefs meeting into workshop. Let chiefs know in advance what to bring to the meeting. Pre survey each department?

Agenda:

Present current Hum Co plan info

Review/update equipment personnel status

Review/update fire department needs survey

Review community IDed emergency response projects

Issues:

Workers Comp Insurance: current cost? / Eligibility for county group plan? / Number of employees/volunteers covered.

Discussion of filling gaps in service areas with new departments vs supporting existing departments

Discussion of relative benefits of creating new fire departments where gaps in service exist vs supporting strongest existing departments vs supporting weakest departments.

Discussion of potential for new fire dept in Alderpoint/Blocksburg led to discussion increased complexity issues resulting from multiple fire agencies within the shfsc area

Sprowell Creek / Whale Gulch and Van Duzen identified as weak in communication ie no dispatch / high liability risk / likely response capability variable

Discussion of relative department preparedness as regards department liability
Importance of paper trail to demonstrate volunteer training and preparedness.

**General agreement that supporting existing departments will yield most benefits

SHFSC CWPP Emergency Response Capacity Discussion Notes

Discussion of potential to merge existing So Hum departments

Discussion of potential to merge existing departments into 3-4 consolidated districts with/tax base to increase administrative / purchasing economies of scale and to fund core staff on an ongoing basis. LAFCO process required. Eg Beginnings, Telegraph Whitethorn.

Discussion of Amador Model

Discussion of CDF staffing policy changes. Fire stations require 3 staff to mobilize a fire truck and remain open – therefore closed during off season. Amador Model: Could potentially remain open and respond to structure fires and medical emergencies if funding could be found to offset additional costs (food, overhead, liability, staff) approx 40k. Possibility of funding paid on-call volunteers to field a fire truck on an as needed basis. Issue: volunteer availability?

Discussion of Fire Code enforcement.

SC Fire Chief indicated that signing off on developer building plans in Shelter Cove place an undue burden on local fire chief. Some districts have adopted a fire code. County needs to adopt state unified fire safety code. Enforcement should be the responsibility of the County Fire Marshall. Group suggests that this recommendation be put in the CWPP and communicated to county representatives.

Discussion of training and recruitment needs/program.

HROP program was aimed at high school age students. HROP program's impact on recruitment for VFDs: 40 students went through the program – 8 of those students now involved in local VFDs, 2 were hired by BLM. It was suggested that we evaluate the success of that program as a source of ideas for a potential recruitment/training program. Targeting older students through the community college may improve results.

The importance of training as a VFD recruitment tool was emphasized. Several possible locations were discussed for a centralized training facility. Redcrest was mentioned. There was general agreement that a facility located in the So Hum area would be appropriate. Miranda High School and Redway VFD were both mentioned as possible locations – both locations are developing plans for new or remodeled facilities.

Funding for a centralized facility may be available through Air Quality Management for brownfield sites. BLM has also prioritized funding for training projects.

Discussion of potential for shared equipment and group purchasing

Examples:

Shared water tender

Portable air tank supply for air packs

Group purchase of Floto pumps

Admin support for grants / paperwork etc.

SHFSC CWPP Emergency Response Capacity Discussion Notes

Draft SHFSC CWPP Emergency Response Capacity Recommendations

1) Investigate the potential for a centralized shared training facility in the SHFSC region both to maintain training standards and to encourage recruitment for VFDs.

HCMFPP Implementation Plan 8.1.2 *Recommendations*: “Establish regional fire training facilities in appropriate locations; facilities should include classrooms, a burn tower, and fire and rescue training props (Recommendation 6.1-2). Ensure that all first responders have adequate training and equipment (Recommendation 6.1-8). Establish regular fire training programs/classes at the local level throughout the county to serve different regions: i.e., Southern, north-eastern, and northern Humboldt, Eel River Valley, Humboldt Bay, etc. (Recommendation 6.1-6).”

2) Investigate the potential to merge existing VFDs in the SHFSC region into 3 or 4 consolidated districts with/tax base to increase administrative / purchasing economies of scale and provide funding for core staff functions.

HCMFPP Recommendations 6.1-4 “Facilitate the consolidation, expansion, or formation of special districts that provide fire protection services”

3) Develop capacity to meet SHFSC VFD’s needs for large or costly equipment through maintenance of shared equipment pool. Increase capacity for group purchasing of equipment and supplies to reduce costs.

HCMFPP Recommendations 6.1-9 “Identify strategies to provide a support network for fire service agencies and organizations via improved communication and coordination.”

4) Investigate the possibility of implementing the “Amador” model of additional incremental funding and on-call volunteers to keep local CDF stations open, engines staffed and resources available during the off-season.

5) Recommend that Humboldt County take steps to relieve local volunteer fire chiefs of responsibility for building code fire inspections, approvals and enforcement.