

To: Mineral County CWPP Steering Committee
From: Matthew Rohrbach, Land Solutions
Date: May 21, 2018
Re: Mineral County CWPP Revisions

Purpose

The purpose of this memo is to outline revisions made to Mineral County's draft CWPP in light of public comment and the steering committee's review on May 14, 2018.

Revisions

- Page iii – Changed Lynnee Maillet's organization from DNRC to Bitter Root RC&D
- Page iii – Added Ashleigh Burwick, DNRC to steering committee list
- Page 1, CWPP Update Process section – Update language to reflect public meetings.
- Page 7, Fire Ignition section – Broke out wildfire ignitions from 1992 – 2003 and 2004 – 2015 to show the increasing rate of human caused ignitions. Also, add discussion that human caused ignitions are increasing.
- Page 9, Fire Ignition section – Added the following paragraph on I-90 and the rail corridor as fire ignition sources: *"Through the public engagement process both I-90 and the railroad corridor were identified as wildfire ignition sources needing ongoing fuels mitigation in the respective rights-of-way of the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) and Montana Rail Link (MRL). Both MDT and MRL address this issue through mowing and removing fuel build ups, however, each organization's respective rights-of-way cover a large area, making routine fuels management a challenge. Nevertheless, the County needs to continue to work with MDT and MRL on ensuring fuels reduction is completed and maintained throughout the I-90 and railroad corridors."*
- Page 16, Mineral County Subdivision Regulations section, second paragraph below bullets – Added the following sentence in regard to subdivision regulations requirement for proposed subdivisions in high fire hazard areas: *"However, it is not clear where each of these agencies identify high fire hazard areas."*
- Page 20, Creating Resilient Landscapes in Mineral County section, second paragraph – Added the following sentence to reflect commercial timber harvests since 2005: *"Additionally, over 14,000 acres of commercial timber harvests have been completed on state and federal lands in Mineral County since 2005 - see Figure 10."*
- Page 22 – Added Figure 10, Map of commercial timber harvests on state and federal lands.
- Page 25, Home Assessments and Financial Resources sections – Updated sections per DNRC comments to more accurately reflect how home assessments are done, which organizations provide assessments, and how cost-share grants are administered.
- Page 26, Coordination section – Added section on the Good Neighbor Authority.

- Page 28, Access section – Added the following sentences to address heavy fuel loads along roads accessing residential areas: *“Adding to this risk is the presence of high fuel loads abutting roads leading to and from residential areas, which is not uncommon in Mineral County. In these areas, concerted efforts are needed to reducing fuel loads adjacent to roadways.”*
- Page 28, Access section – Added the following sentences to address access limitations for fuels treatments on public lands: *“Another factor limiting access to public lands for fuels treatments is the lack of legal access through private lands adjacent to state or federal land. In some instances, the lack of legal access through private land can cause restoration or fuels treatment projects on public lands to be more costly, delayed, or not completed. In these cases, access easements could facilitate a project moving forward quicker to completion.”*
- Page 34, Updating the Plan section, last paragraph – Added the last sentence of: *“This effort should also be coordinated with updates to the Cooperative Fire Management Plan and the Local Annual Operating Plan.”*
- Page 35, Action Plan – Added new action 1.6: *“Work with homeowners on identifying primary and alternate escape routes to be used during emergency events.”*
- Page 37, Action Plan – Added new action 2.7: *“Reach out to the Forest Service and DNRC on developing Good Neighbor Authority projects in Mineral County.”*
- Page 38, Action Plan – Added new action 3.4: *“Reach out to the Forest Service, DNRC, FWP, Weyerhaeuser, and other large landowners about evaluating keeping roads open on a case by case basis for ongoing forest management and fire response.”*
- Page 38, Action Plan – Added new action 3.5: *“Work with the Montana Department of Transportation and Montana Rail Link on completing and maintaining fuels reduction projects in their rights-of-way.”*
- Page 38, Action Plan – Added new action 3.6: *“Reduce fuel loads on County roads accessing residential areas.”*
- Page 38, Action Plan – Added new action 3.8: *“Work with private landowners adjacent to public lands on establishing access easements for land management agencies to access public lands for fuels treatments.”*
- Page 38, Action Plan – Added new action 3.9: *“Work with public and private landowners on ensuring logging and thinning slash is properly treated.”*
- Throughout Action Plan – Added Bitter Root RC&D as a partner to the following actions 1.2, 1.4, 2.2, 2.3, 2.7, 3.1, and 3.2
- Page 41 – Added Appendix A: Summary of Public Outreach

Next Steps

The Mineral County Commissioners are scheduled to review the draft CWPP on Friday, May 25th at which point they will decide whether to open a 30-day public comment period. At the end of the 30-day comment period the County Commissioners will then review comments received and decide whether to adopt by resolution, Mineral County’s 2018 CWPP update.