

**Palomar Mountain Fire Safe Council Foundation**

PMFSC Board meeting April 27,2024

**PMFSC Activity Update for PMVFD June 1, 2024**

Topic	Status
Financial status	<p><b>FY23-24</b>  <b>Current Cash Balance (04/26/24)</b>  <b>Total cash \$ 17,446.29</b>  <b>Unrestricted \$ 15,568.94</b>                      Restricted \$ 1877.35 (SRFF SAFE grant)  <b>Grant deposits: \$ 0</b>  <b>Reimbursements due: \$ 1650 (Stumpmasters)</b></p>
Insurance	<p>Canceling current PMFSC insurance policy and buying NAI General liability and D&amp;O policy which is much less expensive. Will receive 5 mo Refund~ \$1969 (May-Sept)</p>
Fundraising/Donations	<p>No response from USFS or CAL Fire re placement of snow days Porta Potties to be donated by Diamond Environmental. Will inquire again early next fall if donations still offered.                      Fundraising mailer (August 2023): raised \$2000</p>
CAL Fire	<p>-New all wheel ambulance has arrived                      -Station 79 staff doing considerable overtime on ambulance duty. Ambulance staffing is continuum of care transport to Palomar Hospital for trauma &amp; specialized care &amp; Temecula Hospital for lower level care. Turnaround time at Palomar Hospital minimum 3 hrs, often longer depending on wait time at Palomar Hospital.                      -Rincon now has paramedic and new ambulance is completed                      -Station 79 staffing: 2 vacancies for the past year. Will get new paramedic engineer in June after his orientation completed.                      -County snowplowed front of Station 79 last snowstorm. RC helped clear snow for access to staff quarters behind equipment bay.</p>
SD Cty Fire Protection District (SDCty Fire Authority)	
Fire Advisory Board	<p>Next meeting in May</p>
USFS	<p>USFS FY24/25 Program of Work (Palomar Mt. Area) subject to change.  <u>Prescribed Fire (Feb-June):</u>                      Prescribed fire activity is weather dependent.                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jeff Valley Piles</li> <li>• Palomar Fuelbreak Broadcast (understory)</li> <li>• Fry Creek Piles</li> <li>• Morgan Hill (Machine) Piles</li> </ul> <u>Fuels Contracts (summer-late fall, except for herbicide typically applied in spring):</u>                      Contracts are funding dependent                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Birch Hill</li> <li>• Jeff Valley</li> </ul>                     Palomar Fuelbreak</p>

FSCSDC/RCD	<p><b>FSCSDC: Current programs</b>  On Palomar May 13 to May 24 Mon, Tues, Wed for PM site assessments  -Home Defensible space assessment in May/September  -Chipping 1 month post defensible space assessment  -DSAP</p> <p>-Free fire alarm installation available (Red Cross)</p> <p><b>FSC SDC Volunteer Celebration: CB attended</b></p> <p><b>RCD (Stan Hill): Healthy Forest II grant not funded . Will resubmit when application period reopens.</b>  RCD funding available for dead/dying tree removal on Palomar; defensible space prioritized. Will coordinate with SDG&amp;E including residual high trunks left from SDG&amp;E line clearance trimming.</p> <p><b>Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) update due (YV) Community Wildfire Protection Plan</b></p>
PMVFD/PMCFA	<p>PMVFD vs. USFS land boundaries bordering Summit Circle on east side where Conex and dumpster pending</p>
PMPO	<p>Pancake breakfast May 25  PMPO newsletter published</p>
CERT	<p>Next training academy is 15 and 22 June (2 Saturdays). On-line modules to complete. More information. BL contact info in the NextDoor posts.</p> <p>- Early effort in place host a Saturday event in July to get SDG&amp;E to update us on PSPS plans and implications for residents.</p>
CCPM	<p>No report</p>
All Completed grants	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.SDG&amp;E (2016) \$2500 for community education projects/workshops</li> <li>2.SDG&amp;E (2017) \$2500 for community education projects/workshops</li> <li>3.SDG&amp;E (2018) \$2500</li> <li>4. USFS/FSCSDC Palomar Fuel Reduction Grant (2017)Final report: Curbside chipping-65 homes; DSAP coast share prepwork-22 homes; dead trees removed-8. WUI workshop held 8/18.</li> <li>5.NRP (Neighborhood Reinvestment Program) 2017-18: \$10,000-All funds expended for Fire Gel home kits/2 diesel power washers.</li> <li>6. SDG&amp;E (2019) \$2500</li> <li>7. NRP (Neighborhood Reinvestment Program) 2018-19 \$48,328 Dumpster weekends (8) 116 land/homeowners/40.2 tons. Chipping (9 days/half days): 42 landowners</li> <li>8.SDG&amp;E 2020: (\$2500) Community education/fuel reduction.</li> <li>9. NRP 2020: Neighborhood Reinvestment Program (NRP) 2020 \$25,000) Grant backdated to July 1, 2020. Chipping 12 days; Dumpster 10 weekends; Barricade 1 Home Kit</li> <li>10. SDRFF2021 (\$2500) Dumpster, insurance, community education</li> <li>11. CCI (2019-2022) \$169,520 Emergency access/evacuation road improvement (BirchHill/Crestline)</li> <li>12. SDRFF SAFE (2022) \$12,000 Wildfire Safety community education, defensible space improvement</li> <li>13. NRP (2022) \$48,827 Defensible space fuel reduction, wildfire risk reduction, evacuation safety End: 09/30/23-Final Report submitted to SD Cty Supervisors 10/26/23. Activities: 12 chipping days @ \$1500; 7 dumpster days @ \$893; Fire Gel: \$22,680; 14. Evacuation signage: \$1877.82</li> <li>14. SDRFF SAFE 2023 (\$10,000) 6/1/23-4/15/24: Fuel reduction (dumpster/chipping), General liability/D&amp;O PMFSC Board insurance. 3 dumpsters, 4 chipping days, liability insurance</li> </ol>

<p>2023-2024 Completed grants</p>	<p><b>NRP 2022 (\$48,827)</b> End 09/30/23 Defensible space fuel reduction, wildfire risk reduction, evacuation safety 7 chipping days, 7 dumpster days; Fire Gel: 36 Home kits distributed; Evacuation signage</p> <p><b>SDRFF SAFE 2023 (\$10,000)</b> 6/1/23-4/15/24: Fuel reduction (dumpster/chipping), General liability/D&amp;O PMFSC Board insurance.</p> <p>Supported 3/12 dumpsters removing 8.9 tons of debris; 4/11 chipping days producing 540 cubic feet of wood chips/day and partial coverage for Board General Liability, D&amp;O insurance</p> <p>Ramona Disposal 2023 dumpster price increase: \$693 to \$969 due to increased COL and use for mixed debris (not all green vegetation)</p> <p><b>Volunteer hours:</b> Our total annual volunteer hours for board meetings (prep/attendance/reports for community organizations), workshops, dumpsters, chipping &amp; all grant writing/administration/supervision/oversight, &amp; fundraiser totaled <b>939 volunteer hours</b> (valued at <b>\$34,743 @ \$37/hr</b>) last year</p>
<p>Current grants</p>	<p><b>CCI CAL FIRE: 5GG22153: (\$149,700)</b> 12/27/2023 - 03/15/2029 Emergency access/evacuation road improvement West Summit; Maintenance Crestline/Birch Hill</p> <p>CEQA (DRG PaulOlman) Service contract: \$20k initially, reduced to \$12.5k. Current CII grant budgeted \$7500 budgeted for CEQA (Previous CII 2019: DRG CEQA cost \$4550) Will need to take additional funds from contractor allotment. After discussion between Paul &amp; Cheyenne Borello our SD CAL FIRE advisor &amp; considering similarity to previous CCI Ceqa, will try to keep down to to \$8k. DRG rationale for marked increase in CEQA cost is increased State requirements/involvement with more back &amp; forth paperwork. Increase not related to road length. Recommendation is to do CEQA for all PM roads potentially brushcleared.</p> <p><b>NEW: RCD: ( \$150,000?)</b> Defensible space dead/dying tree removal</p> <p><b>NEW: 2024 SDRFF SAFE grant (\$10,000 / \$18,814 Requested)</b> Dumpster #1 June 8-14 TBS</p>
<p>2024 Submitted Grants</p>	<p>-</p>
<p>2024 Potential Grants</p>	<p><b>2024 NRP: summer/fall &amp; 2025 spring funding for chipping, dumpster, dead tree removal, &amp; rock Removal</b> <b>Will be submitted ASAP for 2024</b></p>
<p>Grants: Submitted/Not funded</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>SRA Fuel Reduction Grant-2016</b> \$200,000) for 1) improvement in Crestline/Birch Hill (Borland to Conifer) contingency evacuation route 2) fuel reduction on land outside the 100' defensible space.</li> <li>2. <b>(CALFIRE) 2017 Cap Trade Fire Prevention program:</b> \$274,086 PMFSC Evacuation Route Improvement/Fuel reduction Project for Crestline, Birch Hill, Observation Point for emergency vehicle access and resident evacuation</li> <li>3. <b>(CALFIRE) 2018 CA Climate Investments Fire Prevention Grants Program: (18-FP-MVU-2037)</b> Alternate Evacuation route (Crestline/32J/Conifer) submitted Dec 18, 2018. \$409,890</li> <li>4. <b>(CAL FIRE) CFSC grant-2019:</b> \$96,630. Contract work: \$56,000 total for chipping (\$30,000), dead tree removal (\$15,000) and DSAP (\$10,000). Sponsor: FSCSDC</li> <li>5. <b>(SDG&amp;E) Hazard Fuels Management Program 2019: (Defensible space/Fuel breaks/Roadside brushclearing) Roadside brushclearing (Crestline to Greenfield Rd/Conifer junction) \$91,212</b></li> <li>6. <b>CFSC 2020</b> (\$22,500) Submitted 6/17/20 for <u>18 days of chipping</u> over 24 months. 100% match with volunteer in-kind work and cash expenditure. Not funded.</li> <li>7. <b>FSCSDC MiniGrant:</b> (\$4980) Submitted 2020</li> <li>8. <b>CFSC 2022 (22-SFA):</b> (\$26,200) 2 yr: Fuel reduction (chipping/dumpster) Submitted 2023</li> <li>9. <b>CA Fire Foundation</b> (\$20,500 ) 1 yr Chipping &amp; dumpster. Submitted 2023</li> </ol>

Community Activities & Workshops	PMPO pancake breakfast: Memorial Day Weekend (May 25)
Other	<p><b>Community meeting following PMFSC Board Meeting: 500 kV transmission line:</b>  Palomar is the only unburned mountaintop in SoCal; an ecological treasure in the middle of Cleveland National Forest, a premier 4-season recreational destination in SD Cty/ SoCal/nationally, home to over 250 people, the site of scientifically critical Cal Tech Palomar Observatory, home of an endangered species (Laguna spinner butterfly) and host to thousands of visitors each year.</p> <p><b>PMFSC focus: Potential wildfire risk related to high voltage electrical transmission lines on Palomar Mountain.</b></p>
<b>Next PMFSC Board Meeting:</b> June 29, 2024 @ 9 AM at PMCC In-person & ZOOM (4 <sup>th</sup> Saturday of the month)	

**Post meeting: Addendum re 500kV transmission line (Not meeting minutes)**

- Palomar Mountain is designated by the State as a *very high fire risk* Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ)
- Extremely low humidity, dry vegetation, high wind during extended periods including summer and fall & during year-round Santa Anas, make wildfire hazard high to extreme throughout the year.
- Wildfires move very rapidly upslope in dry, high wind conditions. Fire historically moved extremely fast up Palomar Mountain on steep South face where multiple deep draws between steep ridges accelerate the speed of advancing fire.
- It is extremely unlikely, even if possible, to electively “de-energize” a 500 kV transmission line providing power to a major population center, Los Angeles, during high risk weather conditions.
- The power line siting along East Grade is downslope and perpendicular to multiple deep draws between steep ridges occurring all along the north side of power line, draws that lead directly up into the Palomara community along the mountain crest.
- The Palomar community has only two Cal Fire/County designated Palomar community wildfire evacuation routes, S6/ South grade and S7/East Grade, both on the steep southern face of the mountain. There are no other designated contingency or emergency evacuation routes for Palomar. The powerline site runs for 11 miles adjacent to S7/East Grade and appears to cross both S7 and S6/South Grade evacuation routes at their summit junction near the Post Office & Station 79. Power line related wildfire along the proposed route would cut off access to at least one and potentially both Palomar evacuation routes.
- The power line siting along East Grade Road (S7) is immediately below Crestline/Birch Hill area, the most densely populated part of the Palomar community. The power line site would be a maximum of 1/3 mile below Crestline Rd, the only Crestline/Birch Hill area escape route westward to evacuation routes S6 & S7 at the Summit junction. A power line fire below Crestline/Birch Hill would immediately threaten the most densely populated Palomar community and, reaching Crestline Rd, would block residents’ only access to evacuation routes off the mountain.
- In the event of wildfire along the East Grade or State Park power line, esp. during year-round Santa Ana conditions, it is unlikely there would be sufficient time for resident notification and evacuation before their evacuation route(s) was /were blocked by fire.
- A power line wildfire would be devastating to the Palomar community as well as to the ecology of Palomar Mountain and very costly to SD County and the power line operator.
- The CAMP FIRE that destroyed the town of Paradise in Northern California and caused 85 residents deaths, 70 of whom were sheltering in place, is an object lesson in the unpredictability of wildfire, speed of wildfire spread, difficulty of timely & accurate evacuation notification-especially in rural areas, and limitation of having only two evacuation routes easily obscured by smoke and/or blocked by cars, debris and fire, especially during high wind, Santa Ana conditions.

Reading the Wikipedia Sunrise PowerLink entry is instructive. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sunrise\\_Powerlink](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sunrise_Powerlink)