

Cold Springs Fire - Recovery Meeting Notes
August 15, 2016

Boulder County Contact Information: Garry Sanfaçon, Cold Springs Fire Recovery Manager
gsanfacon@bouldercounty.org
720-564-2642

Questions and Responses:

1. Egress for Hummer and Sherwood

- Transportation Department has scheduled a meeting to discuss Sherwood which is a county non-maintained road. Garry Sanfaçon will provide an update after the meeting.
- Hummer is a private road and therefore would need to be addressed with the adjacent property owner.
- How to determine whether or not the road is public or private.
- Would be helpful to label street signs private or public

2. Tree Survival

- How to determine if ponderosa or Lodgepole will survive post fire:
<http://static.colostate.edu/client-files/csfs/documents/How-to-Ponderosa-and-lodgepole.pdf>
- More good resources here under “Wildfire Mitigation & Education” section. <http://csfs.colostate.edu/csfspublications/#wildfire>
- It is hard to know right now about which trees will survive and which trees will not.
 - It can take 3-5 years to know for sure about whether trees will have survived or not.
- A forester should visit your property to assess if there are trees you are concerned about.
- There is no magic number for how long it might take to know if trees have survived or not.
- By spring you should be able to tell more about what is alive or not.

Boulder District of the Colorado State Forest Service

5625 Ute Highway

Longmont, CO 80503 (303) 823-5774

CSFS_Boulder@mail.colostate.edu

<http://csfs.colostate.edu/districts/boulder-district/>

3. Tree liability

- It is unknown what the property owner liability for dead trees are. Mike Chard at OEM will work on an answer. Contact Mike Chard: mchard@bouldercounty.org.

4. Best Practices for Burned Trees

- Hire someone professional to get rid of the burned trees; this is the best and safest choice.
 - Burned trees are really dangerous. You do not know how they will act. They do not act like regular trees.
- At least get advice from someone experienced.
- Get a few estimates from several contractors.
- You should likely clear two lengths around the perimeter of your home.
 - To figure out what is dangerous, get a professional to assess.
- Wildfire Partners have an approved contractors list. www.wildfirepartners.org
- If you have Ponderosa Pine on your property, they are fire dependent and will do well with fire recovery.
- Team Rubicon is trained to cut down dead trees, part of BoCo VOAD (volunteer organizations aiding in disaster). Best way to get connected with Team Rubicon is calling 211.
 - VOAD needs to know the scope of the needs before getting more resources.
 - Team Rubicon is waiting to assess the amount of need. They may only do burned trees on the egresses

5. Adjacent Property has Hazardous Trees

- Best way to deal with your neighbor's property is to try to talk directly to your neighbor.
- Boulder County can help you figure out who your neighbor is, if you don't know.

6. Beetles attacking trees

- After fire many insects come in after to eat the dead trees and help with decomposition.
- The insects making noise are just doing that because they are actively attacking the trees, they are likely not Ips beetles.

7. Mine Security

- Erica Crosby with the State has information to help with this.

Erica Crosby

Senior Environmental Protection Specialist



COLORADO
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erica.crosby@state.co.us | <http://mining.state.co.us>

8. Well Testing

- Boulder County Public Health – free well testing inside the burn area and a few outside neighborhoods.
 - The well testing is for the 2016 fiscal year.
- You should always test your well when you lose power.
- There is usually a low risk of contamination after fires.
- If there are issues, BCPH will monitor.
- It would be helpful to replace your filters in your well more often than you normally do in the year following the fire.
- Public Health will publish the results from the testing if any contamination is discovered.

9. Fire Retardant

- Phos-chek is the fire retardant that was dropped by the planes and helicopters. It is made up of mainly of salt and should not cause issues.
- Here is the link to Phos-chek <https://phoschek.com/product-class/fire-retardant-for-wildland/>

The following information was obtained from the Santa Barbara County Fire Department Facebook Page: Phos-Chek fire retardants are manufactured as dry powders or as concentrated liquids and diluted with water prior to use. The retardant is applied ahead of wildfires to homes and vegetation by ground crews and aerial firefighting units, either fixed-wing or rotary-wing aircraft.

It is currently produced as several colors, including an off-white color, red iron oxide, and a fugitive mixture that is colored red when dispersed but gradually fades to an earth-tone when exposed to sunlight. The red color aids aircrews in targeting drops of retardant.

Some of the main components of Phos-Chek retardants include ammonium polyphosphate, diammonium phosphate, diammonium sulfate, monoammonium phosphate, attapulugus clay, guar gum (or a derivative of guar gum), and trade secret performance additives. Fire retardants are manufactured as several different formulations with varying proportions of the above components.

The phosphate and sulfate salts act as fire retardants and prevent combustion of cellulosic materials. They also act as a fertilizer once the fire danger has passed. Guar gum and clay are thickening agents to prevent dispersal of the retardant after it is dropped from the plane. Other ingredients include corrosion inhibitors and flow conditioners.

Phos-Chek is an environmentally safe, colorless fire retardant. It has been used for 40 years to successfully mitigate wildfire activity. It has saved thousands of homes and millions of acres of land.

How long will Phos-Chek remain effective?

Unlike other retardants, once applied, Phos-Chek is a long-term treatment that remains effective until washed off by strong hosing or substantial rainfall. It should last through peak wildfire season, as long as there is no significant rainfall.

Is Phos-Chek Safe?

Yes, it has been approved by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

Effects on Land Animals.

There are no known adverse effects to domestic or farm animals that eat small amounts of foliage coated with Phos-Chek retardant. However, a veterinarian should be consulted if your pet ingests a significant amount of treated vegetation. Studies conducted by Astaris and federal government agencies on potential toxicity effects on small wildlife (birds, rodents, earthworms) indicate that Phos-Chek exhibits a low order of acute toxicity.

Effects on Plants and Foliage.

Like fertilizer, retardant that is not removed from green vegetation after a fire has passed may cause its leaves to turn brown and wither. After heavy watering or substantial rain, the plants should return to normal and, much like fertilizer, growth should be enhanced by the added plant nutrients.

Effects on Fish and Other Water-Dwelling Organisms.

Studies conducted by Astaris indicate a low order of toxicity to fish and other water-dwelling organisms. However, if directly applied, the free ammonia present in the fire retardant can be toxic to aquatic life. Our trained specialists follow strict guidelines to minimize the amount of runoff into streams and ponds. Minimal runoff of Phos-Chek poses little serious threat to aquatic life.

10. Can we burn wood with fire retardant on it?

- Although fire retardant is relatively non hazardous, we do not suggest burning it indoors. The salt based material may be an irritant to some folks.

11. Future of Slash Piles

- In the winter the USFS plans on burning all the slash piles. In order to burn the piles the weather has to cooperate. Need to have the right conditions.

- Some chipping will also occur, but mostly burning.
- Send Sylvia Clark, Boulder District Ranger an e-mail if you want to be notified when slash piles are being burned. sgclark@fs.fed.us
- Better for the ecosystem to burn the piles.
- Work is slow sometimes, there is less USFS money available, and so there is not a lot of money available for project work.
- If your property runs along USFS property and you are worried about trees, contact Sylvia.

12. Hiking in the Burned Forest

- Should be minimal risk in the forests, hiking is ok.
- There are no USFS maintained trails, so there will be no clean-up work on the trails.

13. Article 14 Enforcement by Land Use

- Has to be less than 5 acres for Article 14 to be enforced.
- Land Use wants to approach from a caring standpoint.
- Can be helpful to put a little peer pressure on your neighbors.
- Land Use will review the parcels in question.
- It is not a \$1500 a day fine for violations. The fine can be up to \$1000 with a \$100 a day, but only via a court order. Usually the problem is rectified before fines come.
- There are no plans for enforcing Article 14 on burned properties right away.
- Land Use works on a complaint basis, there are not enough staff members in enforcement to go looking for issues.

14. Erosion Risks

- A small sample analysis of the burn area has been done and there does not seem to be a large erosion risk.
- Unless there is a large rain event, there is no high risk potential.
- Engineers are conducting hydrologic studies right now.
 - This will be passed along when available.
- Watch natural drainage on your property through the end of monsoon season and call 911 with concerning issues.
- Check the OEM website for information on risks. www.boulderoem.com

15. Planting/Revegetation

- Lots of seeds and roots in the soil survived the fire.
- If you choose, you may reseed to give the weeds some competition.
- There are lists of available mix, and list of available companies on the website
- Hydroseeding is not a preferred approach in this climate/altitude

- When to seed – mid-October to mid-May, so the seeds do not take before winter
- Cover crops can help the weeds and are cheaper than seeds.
 - Regreen – Wheat/Rye – just a little bit of growth can help.
- USFS will not be reseeding, they may consider planting trees.
 - They would want to get weed free seed, which is almost impossible.

For more information or to schedule a site visit contact:

Sharon Bokan

Small Acreage Coordinator
 CSU Extension, Boulder County
 9595 Nelson Road, Box B
 Longmont, CO 80501
 (303) 678-6176 office
 (303) 678-6281 fax

sbokan@bouldercounty.org

<http://www.extension.colostate.edu/boulder/acreage.shtml>

- Possibility of homeowners exploring group purchase of seeds.
 - Boulder Valley conservation district may be able to get information on group purchase.
 - Contact Sylvia Hickenlooper for more information:

Sylvia Hickenlooper

Soil Conservationist
 Longmont USDA -NRCS Field Office
 9595 Nelson Road Box D
 Longmont, CO 80501

(720) 378-5525 DIRECT

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sylvia.hickenlooper@co.usda.gov

16. Mental Health/Self-care after a traumatic event

- Even though the event may be over, you may now be experiencing or may experience later, some strong emotional or physical reactions. It is very common, in fact quite *normal*, for people to experience emotional aftershocks when they have passed through a horrible and stressful event.
- First Presbyterian Church has \$5,000 to help people do normal things again – dates, plant trees, anything that is needed in small doses to help.
- There are mental health vouchers for those who need it – can be used for therapy, acupuncture, and/or massage.

- First set of vouchers are for those that lost their homes and then those in the burn area.

- Website:
<http://www.bouldercounty.org/safety/fire/pages/firementalhealth.aspx>
- Email mhvouchers@bocovoad.org
- Phone: 720-466-1794
- If not in the burn area and not eligible you may call for support at 720-561-4936 to schedule an appointment.

17. Steep Slope Responsibility

- Probably not a high liability for those who have burned trees on steep slopes.
- Boulder County will look into this and provide more information.

18. Wildfire Partners: www.wildfirepartners.org

- Online application for Wildfire Partners to come out and assess your home.
- Specialist will come and look at vulnerabilities at your home and on your property.
- You will get an assessment detailing everything you need to do to make your home more fire safe.
- Wildfire Partners has a list of approved contractors to help you do the work.
- There are financial awards to help with vegetation component. \$2,500 or 50% of the total cost.
- Some insurance companies may reduce your premiums, and some may require a mitigation certificate.

19. Make sure you are properly insured

- 60% of homeowners after the Fourmile fire were underinsured. Many in the Cold Springs fire were not as well.
- Check your Declarations Page, Coverage A, divide the amount by the square footage of the residence (not garage). That figure is how much you have to rebuild.
- The most accurate way to know your need for your home is to have a contractor provide you with a quote on rebuilding costs. You will likely need \$250-300 a square foot to rebuild.
- Conduct a home inventory – video or take photos of every room, drawer, valuable or create a spreadsheet of important items
- Fire safes do not work in forest fires because of the high heat of the fire. Store important documents offsite or in the cloud.
- For more information visit www.Uphelp.org – an insurance advocacy group for homeowners.

20. Sort Yard

- Can burnt logs be accepted? YES
- Can it be open on Sundays? Longer than October 15? County is looking into expanding beyond October 15. Go to the website for latest information:
<http://www.bouldercounty.org/property/forest/pages/fhsortyards.aspx>

Agency Staff Representatives

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