



Trustee Report

To: Board of Trustees

From: Trustee Randy Lee

Date: November 8, 2012

On October 19th, I attended a forum on *Climate change and Forest Wildfire* in Golden, sponsored by Boulder and Jefferson Counties as part of their October Wildfire Awareness month activities. Dr. Anthony L. Westerling presented his findings in studying wildfire history and behavior in the greater Yellowstone area in relation to climate variables and his predictions for wildfire in the future, based upon three climate change models.

To very briefly summarize Dr. Westerling's findings:

- While the total yearly number of fires has decreased since 1980, the number of large fires has increased (no similar trend is noticeable in non-forest – i.e. grass and brush – fires)
- Most forest fires are not human caused
- There is no evidence that unnaturally high tree density resulting from fire-suppression efforts is a factor in the increase in fire size (most of the increase has occurred in moist areas where tree density is naturally high)
- Grass and shrub fires are prevalent in wet years, forest fires in dry years
- There is no correlation between hot temperatures and the number of non-forest fires, whereas forest fires do increase as temperature increases; early snow melt leads to more fires
- The trend is towards more fires, larger fires, longer duration of the fire season and larger area burned
- The climate models all predict higher temperatures and lower precipitation
- After 2050, there are no predicted years with no fires
- By 2070 the model breaks down, as there is not enough time for forests to regenerate between predicted fires

Dr. Westerling also presented preliminary (not peer-reviewed) predictions for Colorado, based on his study of data since 1999:

- The models predict large areas burning with a ten-fold increase in the number of fires by mid-century
- The greatest increase in fire activity will occur between 2500 and 3200 meters in elevation (Nederland is at 2510 meters)
- The climate models vary in when they predict a blowup of numbers (fires exceeding regenerative capacity), ranging from 2030 to 2060 – all are conservative, bark beetles and the change in vegetation (that will result from fires) is not factored in
- His model predicts that Colorado will resemble Yellowstone in 1988 almost every year

Boulder County plans to make the meeting notes available, and I will distribute those when I receive them.



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PROST Master Plan Update Process: GreenPlay and Design Concepts have completed drafts of the master plan and gateway park master plan, respectively, and presented them to the project steering committee. A final public meeting to gather feedback on the draft plans is scheduled for the evening of Monday the 12th, and all Town advisory boards have been asked to evaluate the plans from the perspective of their respective areas of concern during the month of November. Consolidated edits and feedback will be submitted to GreenPlay on November 30th, with a goal of placing a final plan on the BOT agenda for December 18th.

PROSAB: The board met October 18th. The public was invited to give input on replacement equipment for the no longer usable teeter totter, and a selection of items was selected for NES students to vote on. Other agenda items included a preliminary discussion of a Chipeta Park management plan, preliminary discussion about standardization of parks and trails fixtures and discussion of a process and schedule for updating the *Town of Nederland Trails Master Plan* (it was decided that PROSAB could undertake this in January). PROSAB next meets November 15th and will devote the meeting to critiquing the master plan draft.

IMA: The IMA met in Lyons on October 24th. Stan Garnett and Jane Walsh from the DA's office attended to acquaint us with the service they provide; they were open to the idea of staffing the office that Boulder County leases in the Community Center a day or two a month (and likewise for other mountain communities). The Mountain Emergency Radio Network (MERN) will hold a meeting of all radio operators on December 1st at the Jamestown Town Hall (9:00 – 12:00) for initial emergency network training, radio distribution and to assemble antennae. The next IMA meeting will be November 28th in Ward.

Big Springs emergency egress proposal: Initial feedback from Boulder County is expected soon.

Economic Development Task Force: I met with Alisha, Teresa and Katrina Harms on October 25th to discuss re-establishing an ED task force; a recommendation will come before the BOT in December.

Shooting: A multi-county task force to address shooting issues met for the first time since last winter on October 18th. Boulder, Clear Creek, Gilpin and Larimer counties were represented, and all indicated that they are supportive of finding a regional solution to shooting issues. District Ranger Clark says she is hopeful the group can move forward with strategy this winter and enter into NEPA planning next summer. We will keep pressing them to move forward.