



County Administrator's Office

Tracie Riggs
County Administrator

2 South Green Street, Sonora, California 95370
Telephone (209) 533-5511 - Fax (209) 533-5510
www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov

Eric Erhardt
Assistant County Administrator

Maureen Frank
Deputy County Administrator

February 8, 2021

TO: Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors

FROM: Dore Bietz, OES Coordinator
Liz Peterson, Senior Administrative Analyst

SUBJECT: Reorganization of Fire Safety and Community Resilience Citizens
Advisory Committee and Task Force

Fire Safety Task Force

In February 2019, the Board of Supervisors created a Fire Safety and Community Resilience Task Force to work toward the Board's goal of fire safety and preparedness. This Task Force was comprised of the following internal County departments and external partners:

- Tuolumne County Fire Department
- Tuolumne County Sheriff's Office
- Tuolumne County Office of Emergency Services
- Tuolumne County Roads Department
- Tuolumne County Animal Control
- Tuolumne County Human Services Agency
- Tuolumne County Agricultural Commissioner / Air Pollution Control Director
- CAL FIRE-Tuolumne-Calaveras Unit
- City of Sonora
- Sonora City Fire
- Sonora Police Department
- California Highway Patrol
- CalOES
- US Forest Service—Stanislaus National Forest
- Bureau of Land Management
- Tuolumne Utilities District
- Tuolumne County Transportation Council
- City and County of San Francisco—Hetch Hetchy Water and Power
- Twain Harte Community Services District/Fire Department
- Groveland Community Services District/Fire Department
- Lake Don Pedro Community Services District

We support the Board of Supervisors in achieving their goals through service and collaboration with County Departments and the Community.

- Southwest Interface Team (SWIFT)
- Tuolumne Band of Me-Wuk Indians
- Chicken Ranch Rancheria of Me-Wuk Indians of California
- Highway 108 Fire Safe Council
- Yosemite Foothills Fire Safe Council
- Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District
- Pine Mountain Lake Homeowners Association
- Sierra Pacific Industries
- Pacific Ultrapower Chinese Camp
- Area 12 Agency on Aging
- Amador Tuolumne Community Action Agency
- Columbia College
- Sonora Area Foundation
- Tuolumne County Office of Education
- Cal Trans
- PG&E

This Task Force met monthly and developed a mission and vision statement which were:

Vision: *We envision a resilient landscape that is less susceptible to catastrophic fire effects with reduced risk to public health and safety, proactive communication with a clear, unified message, safe and orderly evacuations with no loss of life and public who are educated, prepared and practicing.*

Mission: *We exist to build fire safety and resilience through community collaboration, education and participation.*

This Task Force also worked collaboratively to develop and achieve goals focused on improving the safety and resilience of our landscape and community. A Supervisor was appointed to participate with the other agencies and partners but this meeting was not open to the public at large.

Citizen Advisory Committee

In July 2019, the Board of Supervisors then created a Fire Safety and Community Resilience Citizens Advisory Committee as a way to involve and engage the public in this important topic. The purpose of this committee was to:

- engage the public on the topic of Fire Safety and Community Resilience
- coordinate resources to assist vulnerable individuals and those with access and functional needs in mitigating fire danger
- enhance volunteer capacity for Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT), Firesafe Councils and other volunteer-dependent groups

The Citizen Advisory Committee also met monthly and was comprised of 5 members of the public, one from each supervisorial district. The public were invited and

encouraged to attend and participate. This Committee also developed goals that were particularly focused on assisting the public with fire preparedness.

Current Status and Reorganization

Once the Stay-At-Home order related to COVID-19 was issued by the Governor, both groups stopped meeting. Work toward some of the identified goals has continued, particularly outreach on Firewise Communities and some fuel reduction projects, but we have been missing the important collaboration and public participation.

As your Board works toward your newly identified top priority of preventing loss of life and reducing property damage due to catastrophic fire, staff is recommending a reorganization of both committees to form only one committee. This committee would advise the Board on how to further achieve your Board's goal, allow for substantial public involvement, and create an opportunity for collaboration with our partner agencies. Staff recommend this new Board be comprised of the following 13 members:

- (2) members of the Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors
- (5) members of the public, one from each Supervisorial District
- (1) representative from Tuolumne County Fire
- (1) representative from the Tuolumne County Sheriff's Office
- (1) representative from the City of Sonora
- (1) representative from the Fire Chiefs Association
- (1) representative from the Chicken Ranch Rancheria of Me-Wuk Indians
- (1) representative from the Tuolumne Band of Me-Wuk Indians

Tuolumne County Office of Emergency Services will provide staff support to the committee. All meetings will be held according to the Brown Act. Meeting agendas will be posted for the public's awareness and public participation will be encouraged.

Recommendation:

It is recommended your Board create the Fire Safety Advisory Committee and direct the Board Clerk to post a notice of vacancies to fill the public positions.