

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-8685

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF PLUMAS,
CALIFORNIA IN SUPPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY TO THE SENECA
HAZARDOUS FUELS ACTION PLAN

WHEREAS, in 2021, the Dixie Fire burned 963,309 acres, the majority of which were in Plumas County; and

WHEREAS, many communities in Plumas County burned down, including the unincorporated town of Seneca, and

WHEREAS, the County of Plumas supports a progressive approach to forest management that collaborates between Federal, State and Local Partners, as well as communities and individuals, and

WHEREAS, Seneca Firewise Council has submitted the Executive Summary of the Seneca Hazardous Fuels Treatment Proposal, attached hereto as Exhibit A, that outlines Proposed Actions and collaborations.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PLUMAS COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS that we hereby express strong support for the Executive Summary of the Seneca Hazardous Fuels Treatment Proposal.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 19th day of April, 2022, by the following vote:

AYES: Supervisor Thrall, Hagwood, Engel, Ceresola, Goss

NOES: None

ABSENT: None



Chair, Board of Supervisors

ATTEST:


Clerk of the Board

Executive Summary **Seneca Hazardous Fuels Treatment Proposal (01/19/22)**

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Preface. The Dixie Fire started July 13, 2021 burning 963,309 acres and was contained October 25, 2021 – the small unincorporated town of Seneca burned on August 5, 2021. Case in point, the Dixie Fire burned nine years after the 2012 Chips Fire having a more than adequate hazardous fuel bed demonstrating extreme fire behavior.

Overriding Objectives Like many who have suffered the fate of catastrophic fire, Seneca non-industrial timberland owners desire to be heard and included by decision-makers at the state and federal level to set the stage for progressive forest management resulting in pro-active fuels management at unprecedented levels. Furthermore:

- Community wildfire protection must be the demonstrated priority for all agencies, stakeholders, and cooperators.
- To collaboratively meet at the “Planning Table” with a broad diversity of state and federal agency leadership, and stakeholders and cooperators and establish hard deadlines for planning and implementation. This is consistent and in alignment with the USDA Forest Service 2009 National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy and 2018 Shared Stewardship Across Landscapes Concept.
- To be clear, it must be stated that desired outcome of this proposal is to prevent the Seneca landscape from reverting to a post-fire vegetation condition capable of carrying extreme fire behavior as exhibited on Aug. 5, 2021.

Forestry Treatment Methods These following treatments are proposed and are widely accepted treatments referred to as the “forester’s tool box”: included, but limited to, pre-commercial thinning, commercial logging, mastication, and essential prescribed fire.

Proposed Actions

- Immediate need: Forest Service & Cal Fire grant the Seneca Firewise Community (including other Firewise Communities and interested groups) access to inclusive and shared planning for post-Dixie Fire fuels management. Timetable: No later than (NLT) May 2022 would be highly desired.
- Seneca Road DFPZ Corridor – designate the Seneca County Road corridor as a Defensible Fuel Profile Zone (DFPZ) or simply put, a “shaded fuel break” from junction of Hwy 89 to Butt Lake. Intensively treat (cut, skid, deck, remove) fire killed timber both merchantable and sub-merchantable timber for 750 ft. each side (1500 ft. total). Timetable: commence planning operations NLT Dec. 2022; commence operations NLT Aug 2023
- Seneca WUI Treatment of High Severity, Moderate, & Low Severity Burn Areas - Treat Seneca strategic areas aggressively with all appropriate forestry methods with prescribed fire being the primary tool. Timetable: commence planning operations no later than (NLT) Dec. 2022; commence operations NLT June, 2023
- National Forest System Lands Fire-killed Tree Mitigation- Removal of dead & fire damaged trees on both federal system roads and lands adjacent to communities in Plumas County. Timetable: commence planning: NLT June 2022; commence ops NLT Dec. 2022
- Kingsbury-Rush DFPZ. Reestablish this DFPZ (HFQLG) as a viable fuel break that will protect the communities of Canyon Dam, Prattville, Seneca, Round Valley, Twain, Rush Creek Road, Hwy 70 corridor, Hwy 89 corridor. Timetable: commence ops NLT April, 2023

Big Picture Moving Forward

- WUI Multi-Agency/Multi-Interest Joint Task Force. Seneca Firewise community strongly asks the Plumas NF, & Cal Fire (Lassen Modoc Unit “LMU”) to create a strong all-inclusive WUI Fuels Treatment Task Force with the express purpose of interfacing and embracing Plumas County Firewise Communities (& other like-minded organizations – Tribal Consortiums, Plumas County Fire Safe Council, Collaboratives, Industrial Timber Companies, etc.) in the joint strategic management of hazardous fuels on private and federal land. Timetable: create a Task Force NLT June 2022.
- Organizational Restructure. The Seneca Firewise Community is a strong advocate in a Forest Service organizational restructuring, no doubt a monumental task but necessary under dire conditions. The primary focus on restructuring, among others, is the critical need to increase fuels management work force size, budget, and capacity to better mirror that of wildland suppression. The aim in restructuring is to foster a pro-active vs. reactive preparedness.
- Agency Geographical Management Unit Restructure. Divide current Forest Service management units into smaller watershed based or a defined WUI management unit. The Seneca Firewise Community advocates a stark increase in stakeholder involvement resulting in shared vision, responsibility, and investment.
- Public Outreach. Progressive forest management to meet current forest fuel management needs comes with a price. A focused public outreach to gain public favor is the price. True change in forest land management policy will not materialize unless broad public sentiment is gained to usher in a supportive culture for aggressive forest fuels treatment. It is proposed that Cal Fire, Forest Service and all stakeholders collaborate on a strategy.
- Three-Tiered Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). The Seneca Firewise Community recognizes the value of a 3-tiered WUI: primary, secondary, and tertiary zones that will be critical in successful planning and implementation.
- Pace and Scale. All cooperators and stakeholders must be exceptional in their dedication for increased pace and scale of forest fuels management. Planning and implementation will reflect a pace that matches the pace of extreme fire.