

November 4, 2009

Community Wildfire Protection Plan Meeting
Chippewa County OES Training Room

Present:

Tim McKee – Chippewa County Emergency Management / 911
Jeff Hagan – Eastern Upper Peninsula Regional Planning and Development
Ellen Benoit – Eastern Upper Peninsula Regional Planning and Development
Stephanie Ostafin – Whitefish Twp. Fire Department
Dale Graham – Whitefish Twp. Fire Department
Gary Huttenstine – Whitefish Twp. Supervisor
Paul E. Gaberdiel – Michigan Department of Natural Resources – Newberry Office

The initial meeting was called to order at 10:00 AM to discuss the award of a grant for the development of a Community Wildfire protection Plan for Whitefish Township. Attendees introduced themselves.

Tim McKee explained that a grant through the State of Michigan had been applied for seeking financial support for the development of a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). A grant award of \$17,500 to Chippewa County with a match provided by Chippewa County Emergency Services in the amount of \$3,250 provides \$20,750 for the plan development. A specific budget had been developed and approved by the grant authorizing agency (DNR) for the plan development. The majority of the funds, \$12,250 will be devoted to the actual development of the plan through the Eastern Upper Peninsula Regional Planning and Development office with the remaining funds used for educational materials, brochures, posters, mailings and advertising, meetings, plan copies, and homeowner inspections.

Paul Gaberdiel explained that Luce County has developed a Committee that is working toward the same goal of plan development and education regarding wildfires. Paul explained some of the challenges that have been experienced in Luce County and advised that initial steps are important to establish the program at the ground level. Paul explained that the CWPP seeks to ensure that Firewise principles are adopted and implemented.

The group determined that an initial training will be conducted for the Whitefish Township Volunteer Fire Department to provide information regarding Firewise and that the Township Board members would be invited. The goal being to spark interest in the program and get fire department personnel trained to be able to answer any questions that may be posed to them by the public. The next step will be for the EUPRPD office staff to present a brief overview at a Township Board meeting and to then set a date for a community wide meeting to illicit support for the establishment of a community committee. The initial meeting with the Fire Department will be scheduled for sometime in February 2010 with a presentation at the March 2010 township board meeting and a community meeting in late March or early April 2010.

Participants were encouraged to go online to www.firewise.org and review some of the resources on-line as well as begin some of the educational training that is available through that website.

The following emails were shared:

Tim McKee - tmckee@chippewacountymi.gov

Jeff Hagan - jshagan@att.net

Ellen Benoit - benoitej@att.net

Stephanie Ostafin - Whitefishfire@yahoo.com

Dale Graham - Whitefishfire@yahoo.com

Gary Huttenstine - whitefishtwp_supervisor@jamadots.com

Paul Gaberdiel- gaberdielp@michigan.gov

The meeting was concluded at 11:30 AM.