



Local Emergency Planning Committee

Gem County LEPC
May 17th, 2022
Meeting Minutes

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Gem County Local Emergency Planning Committee is an organized gathering of community members, response agencies, organizations, and public officials, sanctioned by Congress to work together prior to any emergency, natural or man-made disaster, or hazardous material incident, in an attempt to improve planning, response, and coordination as well as the mutual understanding of capabilities and resources to the situation.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Gem County Local Emergency Planning Committee is to enhance capabilities in order to successfully mitigate, respond to, and recover from emergency situations in Gem Co community.

In Attendance:

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| Laurie Boston, Gem Co. EM | Bill Butticci, Gem Co. Commissioner |
| Curt Christensen, Emmett Fire Dist. | Quincy Chung, US Forest Service |
| Bryan Elliott, Gem Co. Commissioner | Liz Gochmour, LEPC Secretary |
| Ryan Hale, Emmett Stake Church of
Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints | Tahja Jensen, Gem Co. Prosecutor |
| Bev Martin, Gem Co. Sheriff's Posse/
Fire Dist. #2 | Steve Kunka, Emmett Police Dept. |
| Dena McFarlin, Idaho Power | Joe Mayer, Member of the Public |
| Janet Monti, Friendship Coalition | Len McCaulou, Gem Co. EMS |
| Mark Rekow, Gem Co. Commissioner | Dale Mock, Gem Co. Sheriff's Posse |
| Stacey Rosecrans, Gem Co. Recovery
Center | Gordon Petrie, Emmett City Mayor |
| TJ Wilson, Southwest Dist. Health | Margaret Romiti, Valor Health |
| | Dave Timony, Gem Co. Sheriff |
| | Jeff Ulmer, Emmett School Dist. |

Meeting called to order by Curt Christensen at 8:30a.m.

Approval of April 19th, 2022 Minutes:

- Motion to approve April 19th, 2022 minutes as written by TJ Wilson. 2nd by Mayor Petrie. Motion passes.

Wildfire Mitigation – Dena McFarlin, Idaho Power Regional Customer Relations Manager:

- Dena has been with Idaho Power for 32 years, most of her time has been in distribution design, the last 10 years in various leadership roles and the last 4 years in her current role. She covers the Canyon and Western Region. Idaho Power's service territory covers more than 600,000 customers and mostly follows along the Snake River.
- Background: The Western United States has experienced an increase in frequency and intensity of wildland fires. Climate change, increased human encroachment in wildland areas, and other factors have led to an increase in wildfire activity in Idaho in the last 30-years. In 2021, Idaho Power Implemented a Wildfire Mitigation Plan that aims to: Reduce wildfire risk associated with transmission and distribution (T&D) facilities and associated field operations. Improve the resiliency of the T&D system. Ensure compliance with wildfire mitigation requirements established by regulators.
- Components of Idaho Power's Wildfire Plan: Goal: Prevent wildfire ignition due to Idaho Power facilities and work performed. Engagement Efforts – Government agencies, public safety partners, critical facilities, and other stakeholders. Risk Analysis – Quantify areas of elevated wildfire risk within our service territory. (Zones) Mitigation Strategies – Field personnel and operational practices. Situational Awareness – Incorporate current and forecasted weather and field conditions into operational practices. (FPI) Proactive De-Energizing – Public safety power shutoff (PSPS) protocols. Communication – Help customers prepare for and respond to wildfire, other natural emergencies, and prolonged outages.

- Wildfire Risk Zones (WRZ) Wildfire Risk = Fire Probability x Consequence. Fire Probability Considerations include: Weather (Temp, Wind, Humidity), topography, fuel type, and moisture content. Fire Consequence Considerations include: Structures (Buildings)
- Field Prevention Practices: Daily tailboards must include discussion around fire mitigation planning. Discussion topics include: Weather conditions and terrain, tools that have potential to cause a spark or flash shall be evaluated, vehicle considerations, post job site inspection, and specific tools and PPE required.
- Public Safety Power Shutoff Events - Considerations include: High temperature, low humidity, high winds, dry vegetation, and public safety.
- Public Safety Partners include: Emergency Managers (County/State), Department of Health and Welfare, Public Utility Commission (ESF-12), and others. Idaho Power holds annual meetings to: Review WMP and PSPS plans for feedback, review risk zones, discuss communication protocol for planned emergency de-energization events, ensure methods are accessible for all customers, and review identified critical facilities.
- Critical Facilities include: Hospitals, Fire and Police stations, Wastewater treatment facilities, and telecommunications. Idaho Power will review and update the list annually. Energy Advisors will contact facilities to: Update contact information and communication preferences, discuss communication protocol for planned emergency de-energization events, and provide outage preparedness best practice.
- Public Education and Awareness Campaign Includes: Wildfire prevention tips for customers, Idaho Power fire mitigation efforts, PSPS considerations and customer impacts, emergency and outage preparedness tips and checklists, where to find outage information, and recommendation to update contact information and to sign up for outage alerts.
- Yellow Risk Zones for Gem County include: North of Black Canyon Dam and the base of Squaw Butte, North East of Emmett – Plaza/Frozen Dog area, between Emmett and Pearl, Hwy 52 N through Sweet, the town of Ola, and North of Ola there are two small yellow zones.
- Safety precautions for Electric Generators include: Ensure generators comply with National Electrical Codes. Never plug an electric generator into an outlet, and do not connect a generator to Idaho Power’s electrical system unless through a code-compliant transfer switch installed by a licensed electrician. To temporarily power an appliance, plug it directly into the generator. Make sure the total electric load on your generator won’t exceed the generator’s rating. Use properly sized and grounded extension cords and surge suppressors. Place cords where they don’t present a tripping hazard. Always properly ventilate a portable generator.
- Go to <https://www.idahopower.com/outages-safety/outages/be-prepared/> to download Idaho Power’s mobile app, sign up for alerts, get tips on how to plan ahead for a power outage, check the outage map, etc.
- Questions: Contact Dena McFarlin at phone # 208-465-8604 or email dmcfarlin@idahopower.com

Public Comments:

- No Public Comments

General Reports:

- **Quincy Chung, US Forest Service:** Prescribed fires last week have been postponed due to snow. Burning will continue today out of Idaho City and Cascade and this fall. There has been a large amount of fires in the Southwest area. Four Type 1 and four type 2 teams have been activated, two are transitioning

out and two coming on. They are looking at best practices for and hazard fuels mitigation work will be starting. The Forest Service is having a large hiring effort across the agency around the nation.

- **TJ Wilson, Southwest District Health:** They are quiet for the moment with no high numbers of COVID. SWDH's West Nile campaign is ramping up and they had a tabletop exercise for Vector control.
- **Bill Butticci, Gem County Commissioners:** The UPS systems for Dispatch are back up and everything has been installed. They are waiting for the electrician to switch the power over. The Governor has declared a drought declaration with drought in the forecast. Opioid Committee update: May 22nd is another court date for the settlement.
- **Bev Martin, Fire #2:** Gem #2 is standing ready. They have been working on truck repairs. There have been a couple of significant fires caused by birds falling from power lines.
- **Laurie Boston, Gem Co. Emergency Management:** Chief Christensen was awarded the Outstanding Service award from the Fire Chief's Association. This is only awarded to one individual each year. Laurie is continuing to get plan updated. She attended an Emergency Managers workshop in Fruitland last week and the West Nile/Vector tabletop with SWDH.
- **Tahja Jensen, Gem Co. Prosecutor's Office:** The Board of County Commissioners will hold a public hearing on June 14th at 11:00, scheduled for an hour, to consider some Gem County ordinance amendments and code revisions. The packet of ordinance amendments will be available on the County website or by contacting the Prosecutor's office.
- **Len McCaulou, Gem Co. EMS:** This week is EMS week. Gem County EMS will be more active on their Facebook and website pages so please like and follow them. Run volume is down this month, but they still have 2-3 calls coming in at the same time.
- **Mayor Petrie, City of Emmett:** Road repairs on-going. The City is continuing their budgeting process. There will be a short ceremony on Monday at 10:00am for Memorial Day at the Cemetery. VFW and the American Legion will be in attendance.
- **Chief Kunka, Emmett City Police:** They are working on a traffic plan for the Cherry Festival. The plan and an explanation has been given to the City Clerk and the Chamber of Commerce to be published on their websites.
- **Chief Christensen, Emmett City Fire:** City Fire has been working with local businesses on fire safety training. They have also been working with Emmett Schools and their safety plans.
- **Margaret Romiti, Valor Health:** Valor Health had their Incident Command COVID meeting last week. They had an increase of transmissions above 6%. They have moved into the Yellow category from Gray. Valor Health is breaking-ground on their new facility. Margaret is in the process of developing a table-top exercise for training. She will be reaching out to partners for participation.

Motion to adjourn by Mayor Petrie. 2nd by TJ Wilson. Motion passes.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 am.

Next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 21st at 8:30 am. Direction will be provided at a later date on whether the meeting will be in person or remote.