



Yosemite West Property & Homeowners, Inc.

Minutes of **YWPHI Annual Meeting** September 5, 2021

President Ted Williams called the meeting to order at 1:10 pm.

There were 29 attendees present at the in-person YWPHI meeting, masks required for pandemic precaution.

I. Election of YWPHI directors.

- The 2 candidates for the 2 open YWPHI board positions are:
 - Scott Renfro
 - Ted Williams

Motion by YWPHI member Ringrose (seconded by Chapin) to elect the 2 candidates.

Voice vote of ayes carried, together with votes sent “for all” in advance of the meeting. No registered dissent or other votes.

The 2 candidates are elected to serve on the YWPHI Board-of-Directors for 3 year terms.

The 7 serving YWPHI directors are now:

- Gary Mazzone, Hilary Bagshaw, Pamela Schulz, Scott Renfro, Katrin Kuttner, Neil Pack, Ted Williams

YWPHI Board of Directors meeting minutes from all past meetings are posted at:

<http://yosemitewest.org/board.htm#minutes>

II. Fire-Safe Grant Update, presented by YWPHI member **Katie Weber**

- Yosemite West is included in a new \$4.4M “Forest Health Grant” awarded 8/12/2021 through the Mariposa County Resource Conservation District (MCRCD) and covering Yosemite Valley, Yosemite West, Wawona, and the Bishop Creek and Eleven-Mile Meadow/road area.
- This grant will focus on downed-tree removal rather than tree-felling. Downed trees will be transported to an offsite bio-mass recycling facility, or a bio-energy facility such as the one in Sonora. A goal of the grant is to make use of the wood without adding to net carbon emissions.
- Owners will be requested to sign land-access permission forms, possibly within a few months, though work will likely start in 2022.

III. FireWise Certification for Yosemite West, announced by YWPHI member **Adar Emken**

- Through community efforts, Yosemite West is now the first/only area in Mariposa County certified meeting FireWise requirements.
- FireWise Certificate dated 8/31/2021 posted at:
http://yosemitewest.org/YosemiteWest_FireWise_certificate_2021.pdf

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- Welcome letter posted at: http://yosemitewest.org/YosemiteWest_FireWise_letter.pdf
- Some fire insurance issuers (notably USAA) can provide a discount if notified of FireWise status.
- Thank you to Adar Emken for the work to get FireWise certification.

IV. Presentation from Yosemite National Park's new **Fire Chief, Dan Buckley.**

- **Chief Buckley** has a long history and experience in the Yosemite area, including work in 2004 on an area-wide Fire Management plan
- Introduction of **Mark Ruggiero**, new Yosemite Fire Information officer
- **Bernie Stillman** now responsible for the Yosemite region Fire Management plan.
- **Parker Bevington** has been promoted to Battalion Chief
- **Susan Bates** is now Yosemite Fire Aviation manager
- **Garrett Dickman** has responsibility for managing the fuel reduction activities and controlled burns.
 - Tree-removal activity funded 2022-2023, both 230 acres NPS land and 240 acres surrounding private land.
 - Tree-debris on NPS land surrounding Henness Circle and Azalea Lane likely addressed within that project.
- Question about how to make application to NPS for downed-tree removal on NPS land that is within 100' of existing private structures.
 - Chief Buckley will investigate, and response will be posted.
- Property owners are encouraged to do their own needle-pile self-burning during winter.
 - Tip: Make a pine-needle and debris pile in autumn, cover in waxed butcher paper, and then after snowfall, rip open the paper, and light the pile when surrounding ground is still covered in snow.
- Question about whether burn permits are needed from both CalFire and Mariposa County.
 - Answer: Permits are needed from Mariposa County only for commercial burnpiles larger than 4' x 4' or planned for more than 3 days burn.
 - CalFire burn permits can now be obtained online.
- Presentation of burn history map at: <http://yosemitewest.org/YOSEFireHistory1930-2020.pdf> showing fires throughout “front country” of Yosemite. The higher-elevation backcountry areas did not have fires large enough to illustrate.

V. Letter from **Tim Kroeker, Wildlife biologist**

- Letter is posted at: http://yosemitewest.org/Bear_letter_TimKroeker_20210905.pdf
- Bear break-ins into houses have more than doubled in Yosemite West this year, and are a reminder of vigilance needed against behaviors that tempt bears into associating food with humans.
- Key point: bear policy differs between YNP and Mariposa County land. In county areas such as Yosemite West, property owners experiencing damage from bears may request a “depredation permit” to trap and kill human-habituated bears.
- Never leave trash or unattended food items outside. Don't leave car trunk lids open.
- **Don't leave house windows open if a person is not directly inside**, especially near kitchen or food

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- storage smells. Remove outdoor bird feeders or pet food bowls. In short, don't feed bears!
- Renters need to be reminded too, since many incidents have occurred recently due to unaware guests. There are recent reports of tourist renters feeding bears hotdogs to get photos.
- Tell renters how to dispose of trash. Don't allow trash to be left "beside" a dumpster.
- CA dept of Fish and Wildlife bear guidelines: <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Keep-Me-Wild/Bear>
- Please post brochure in homes and rental properties:
<https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=57522&inline>

V. Community issues Q&A

- Additional Mailbox parcel lockers purchased by YWPHI are being installed in the mailbox shed. Thank you to Bert Kroon.
- The NPS continues to seek solutions to bring water to the NESC campus. They are considering several alternatives. Purchasing water from YWMD is still a possible path, but jurisdictional boundaries and required NEPA/CEQA reports make other alternatives more likely.
- Owners are reminded that bright outdoor lighting can disturb neighbors and disrupt nighttime sky viewing.
 - Please reduce lighting wattage and trigger lighting only from motion-sensors.

Previously published other news items:

- There will still be a rate-increase coming for YWMD water+sewer+roads, but the rate-study computation needs corrections and the process lost momentum due to the changes at Mariposa Public Works. We will send notice when a Prop 218 timeline is proposed.
- A [Fire Update newsletter](#) was mailed and lists progress on several items to improve safety and defensible space. Yosemite West has worked with the MCRCD as an applicant for portions of a Forest Health Grant.
- Last summer's [Land update 2020 newsletter](#)
- Previous [YWPHI members' meeting minutes from 9/1/2020](#) posted.
- YWPHI annual 2021-2022 dues notice sent. Dues may be paid either by [Paypal](#), mailing a check with the [Membership paper form](#), or putting a check into the in-person envelope at the 9/5/2021 members' meeting.

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