

Amador Fire Safe Council

PO Box 1055, Pine Grove, CA 95665 www.AmadorFireSafe.org



February 19th, 2025 3:00-5:00 Virtual & In-Person Meeting

Attend In-Person	Attend Virtually
	Join Zoom Meeting
19888 Church Street, Pine Grove	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2674846542?pwd=VjIrL25rMGkwY2paMmxhckhKbnJSZz09
(Behind Pine Grove Park)	Meeting ID: 267 484 6542
Volcano Communications Tech	Call-In Number: 1(669)900-6833
Center	Code: 2674846542#
	Passcode: 1055

AGENDA

- 1. Approve/Modify Agenda*
- 2. Approve January Minutes*
- 3. Introductions
- 4. Treasurers Report (John)*
- 5. Coordinator Report (Amanda)
 - a. Coordinator Grant Update
- 6. FireWise Community Program Update (Amanda)
- 7. Partner Updates
 - a. Cal Fire
 - b. Amador Fire Protection District
 - c. Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
- 8. Public Comment
- 9. Other items/adjourn





Board Present: Frank Leschinsky (FL), John Heissenbuttel (JH), Connie Gonsalves (CG), Richard Yarnell (RY)

Staff Present: Amanda Watson (AW), Dana Simpson (DS)

- **1.** PM called to order 3:00
- **2.** Approve/Modify Agenda *FL motioned for approval; JH seconded, all in favor, motion carried.*
- **3.** Approval of November Minutes *JH motioned for approval; FL seconded, all in favor, motion carried.*
- 4. Introductions
- 5. Treasurer Report: As of December 31, 2024 we have a bank balance of \$585,349.98.
 - AFSC is over budget on Coordinator Assistant (306), this reflects the facts that with more grants we have more quarterly reporting and that we received unbudgeted grant funding to upgrade our financial system.
 - AFSC spent less than was budgeted on Groundwork Contracted Labor (320), \$1.7 million vs. \$2.3 million as one of our prime contractors was working on very high priority projects for the Amador and Calaveras RCDs.
 - AFSC Reserve Account now stands at \$150k. We had to borrow \$50K from the account to pay contractors. The account will be restored to \$200K once we receive reimbursements from the state.
- 6. Coordinators Report:

AW reported on the progress of the AFSC/ARCD internal mapping system.

Five AFSC grants ended at the end of 2024 or will end in Q1 of 2025, see project calendar in Board Packet. The AFSC is working on quarterly reporting that is due at the end of January for all grants and final reporting which will be due at the close of each grant.

- See Board Packet for project updates
- 7. Firewise Update: No Update.
- 8. Partner Update:
 - CAL FIRE: none
 - AFPD: none
 - BLM: none
- 9. Public Comment

Meeting Adjourned

Amador Fire Safe Council Grant Snapshot as of January 31, 2025

								<u>(</u>	Grant Funds					
	AFSC	Grant Period	<u>Am</u>	ount Awarded	Direct Cost	lr	ndirect Cost	<u>S</u>	pent to Date	<u>Rem</u>	aining Advance	Invoiced	<u>Am</u>	ount remaining
1	Coordinator (CAFSC) - Round 2 - COMPLETE	4/15/2024 - 12/31/2024	\$	173,217.00	\$ 157,470.00	\$	15,747.00	\$	159,644.44	\$	-	\$ 11,436.44	\$	-
2	Tiger Creek Implementation 1200 (SNC)	7/28/2020 - 1/1/2026	\$	834,126.00	\$ 744,756.00	\$	89,370.00	\$	807,877.93	\$	-	\$ 57,105.74	\$	26,248.07
3	Tiger Creek Enhancement 1330 (SNC)	9/13/2021 - 1/1/2027	\$	220,200.00	\$ 200,200.00	\$	20,000.00	\$	220,200.00	\$	-	\$ 22,112.52	\$	-
4	Ingress/Egress (CalFire) 5GG19102	5/13/2020 - 3/1/2025	\$	1,044,296.00	\$ 949,360.00	\$	94,936.00	\$	936,908.03	\$	-	\$ 137,619.00	\$	107,387.97
5	Ingress/Egress Phase 2 (CalFIre) 5GA21119	6/2/2022 - 03/15/2025	\$	600,000.00	\$ 545,455.00	\$	54,545.00	\$	545,681.95	\$	-	\$ 55,153.52	\$	54,318.05
6	Pine Acres (CalFire) 5GG20101	approval - 3/15/2025	\$	515,405.00	\$ 468,550.00	\$	46,855.00	\$	88,270.45	\$	40,599.55		\$	427,134.55
7	Upper Rancheria Community Fuel Break 5GA21149	10/17/2023 - 5/31/2025	\$	950,010.00	\$ 863,645.00	\$	86,365.00	\$	649,900.55			\$ 20,561.21	\$	300,109.45
8	Amador Community Fuel Break Develop Proj (CalFire) 5GG21201	8/4/2022 - 3/15/2026	\$	726,000.00	\$ 660,000.00	\$	66,000.00	\$	456,870.50	\$	-	\$ 31,998.77	\$	269,129.50
9	Volcano Hills Community Fuel Break - 5TR23100	- 3/15/2027	\$	1,018,204.00	\$ 925,640.00	\$	92,564.00	\$	1,400.03	\$	-	\$ 1,400.03	\$	1,016,803.97
10	RFFCP 1705 (SNC)	6/17/2024 - 5/31/2027	\$	213,290.00	\$ 193,900.00	\$	19,390.00	\$	15,545.41	\$	-	\$ 12,463.00	\$	197,744.59
11	AmCo Implementation 1370 (SNC)	8/23/2022 - 1/1/2028	\$	1,288,444.00	\$ 1,171,313.00	\$	117,131.00	\$	476,608.49	\$	296,866.86	\$ -	\$	811,835.51
12	Rancheria Thompson Ridge - BLM	9/1/24 - 8/31/28	\$	778,280.00	\$ 753,320.00	\$	24,960.00	\$	1,797.84	\$	-	\$ 1,797.84	\$	776,482.16
13	County Wide CWPP 5GG23119	- 3/15/2030	\$	167,860.00	 152,600.00		15,260.00		_	\$	-	\$	\$	167,860.00
			\$	8,529,332.00	\$ 7,786,209.00	\$	743,123.00	\$	4,360,705.62	\$	337,466.41	\$ 351,648.07	\$	4,155,053.82

*matches Unearned Revenue *Matches Accounts

Receivable

AMADOR FIRE SAFE COUNCIL

	2025 Budget	As of Jan 31, 2025
Expenses		
Grants Expenses		
305 AFSC Coordinator	50,070.00	₁ 5,439.24
306 Finance Manager	16,700.00	² 1,148.24
307 Outreach Coordinator	20,600.00	³ 1,935.22
308 Technical Assistance	2,250.00	⁴ 1,032.70
309 Project Management	80,800.00	⁵ 9,254.27
310 RPF Professional Forester	154,625.00	7,430.00
320 Groundwork Contracted Labor	1,302,520.00	66,057.76
325 Consulting Services	41,000.00	0.00
350 Outreach/Materials/Supplies	37,575.00	54.31
Total Grant Expenses	1,706,140.00	92,351.74
Operating Expenses		
311 Bookkeeper (Finance Manager)	15,310.00	⁶ 1,690.44
305-1 AFSC Coordinator	8,940.00	⁷ 0.00
321 State Filing Fees	350.00	0.00
325-1 Consultant	5,000.00	8 0.00
330 Insurance, D&O	3,000.00	0.00
343 Bank Charges	50.00	8.00
345 Office Supplies	1,500.00	21.44
346 Postage	400.00	0.00
350 General Outreach	10,000.00	9 0.00
365 Professional Fees	600.00	10 0.00
365 Telephone	300.00	0.00
370 Mileage	4,000.00	167.50
Other	0.00	0.00
Total Operating Expenses	49,450.00	1,887.38
Unrestricted Reserves	100,000.00	0.00
Total Expenses	1,855,590.00	94,239.12

Revenue

Grants			
PG&E CEMA Program	35,000.00	11	0.00
SNC Tiger Creek Implementation	18,478.00		345.76

CAL FIRE Ingress/Egress 1	161,778.00	67,701.97
CAL FIRE Ingress/Egress 2	68,994.00	9,274.06
SNC County Steward Implementation	516,980.00	0.00
Community Fuel Break	245,345.00	757.69
CAL FIRE Pine Acres Maintenance	209,100.00	5,284.12
CAL FIRE Upper Rancheria	132,250.00	1,663.86
SNC RFFCP	70,800.00	6,035.67
BLM Rancheria/Thompson Ridge	205,965.00	95.69
CAL FIRE Volcano Hills	33,750.00	1,272.75
CAL FIRE CWPP	8,000.00	0.00
Misc Income	0.00	0.00
Contributions	500.00	0.00
Indirect/Admin Revenue	177,385.00	9,250.09
Interest Income	100.00	12.85
Total Revenue	1,884,425.00	101,694.51

- 1. Assumes 676 hours/year
- 2. Assumes 262 hours/year
- 3. Assumes 490 hours/year
- 4. Assumes 50 hours/year
- 5. Assumes 1433 hours/year
- 6. Assumes 240 hours/year (not billable to grants)
- 7. Assumes 120 hours/year (not billable to grants)
- 8. Consulting expense not billable to grants
- 9. Outreach that is not directly billable to a specific grant
- 10. Tax preparation
- 11. Assumes we receive grant.

Amador Fire Safe Council Fund Balances

	As of Dec 31, 2024	As of Jan 31, 2025
5591 General Fund	88,290.57	94,367.08
Savings/Reserve Account	150,087.62	150,100.37
4255 PG&E/CWPP	100.00	100.07
4412 Tiger Creek Enhance	100.18	100.18
4420 CFSC Coordinator	100.13	100.13
4222 Tiger Creek Implementation	100.03	100.03
4651 Ingress/Egress	632.95	632.98
4834 AmCo Stewardship	299,313.50	299,326.21
4842 Community Fuel Break	199.25	199.25
4842 Pine Acres Fuel Break	46,435.75	46,437.88
Total	585,359.98	591,464.18

Ongoing Projects

Project	
Upper Rancheria Fuel Break	The majority of the fuel break is completed. Work will start in late February on UR1. Expected to complete 270 acres my May 2025.
Pine Acres Fuel Break – <i>Q1 close-out</i>	Handwork is being conducted on this project. The project will meet the goal of maintaining the Pine Acres fuel break, but not all grant funds will be expended.
Ingress/Egress (Phase1 & Phase 2) – Q1 close-out	One remaining roadway to completed. The final reporting for this project will be completed prior to the end of March 2025.
Tiger Creek/Crestview Forest Health	The PCA conducted an initial site visit, and staff is in the process of developing a contract for herbicide application on the parcel. Application is anticipated to be conducted in August 2025.
AmCo Stewardship Forest Health	Shakeridge parcel will be treated in tandem with UR-1. AFSC has a contract with a wildlife biologist if bird surveys are needed. Staff is working on finalizing the forest health thinning RFP which is planned to be released by the end of February.
River Pines Fuel Break	River Pine Fuel Break is complete, staff will be evaluating additional projects for remaining funds in Q2 2025.
Community Fuel Break Program	Funded under 2 CalFire grant. Staff is working to take 2 community fuel breaks through the CEQA process. Projects will be finalized in March.

2025 AFSC Projects in in initiation phase (funded)

Project	Project Lead
Volcano Hills Fuel Break: Lead	Todd Bertwell
Rancheria/Thompson Ridge Fuel Break	Gordon Long
County-wide Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) development	Todd Bertwell/Amanda Watson
Internal Project Mapping system/Community facing map web apps	Todd Bertwell/Amanda Watson
County-wide Collaboration	Amanda Watson
Countywide mapping system	Todd Bertwell/Amanda Watson
County-wide monitoring protocol and maintenance intervals	Amanda Watson/Gordon Long

Projects in-development (unfunded)

Project	Potential Funding Source
Rendic Fuel Break	CalFire WP, BLM, Calfire FH, PG&E
Butte Mountain Fuel Break	PG&E, CalFire WP, BLM
Jackson Gate/Kennedy Mine Fuel Break	PG&E
Pine Grove Central Corridor Fuel Break	CalFire WP, BLM
Mt. Crossman Fuel Break	CalFire WP, BLM, PG&E
Continuation of Ingress/Egress	CalFire WP
Rancheria Fire Scar Forest Health Project	CalFire FH
Community Fuel Break Program - Implementation	BLM, CalFire WP

Upcoming Funding Sources:

CalFire Wildfire Prevention Grant (CalFire WP): Solicitation not announced, expected Spring 2025.

2025 Fire Safe Council Fuel Reduction Grant (PGE): Solicitation is open, grant due March 28th. \$100k for fuels reduction work. All work must be completed by November 2025.

<u>Bureau of Land Management Fuels Reduction Grant (BLM)</u>: Solicitation paused due to federal funding freeze; solicitation timeline unknown.

CalFire Forest Health Grant (CalFire FH): Solicitation not announced, expecting Fall 2025

<u>California Fire Safe Council County Coordinator Grant (CaFSC)</u>: recently announced funding was granted to CaFSC from CalFire. Funding Award timeline unknown. It is anticipated this will be a non-competitive grant awarded to AFSC for collaboration, project development, grant writing, and community engagement. Likely there will be a 15-month timeline, ~\$175k budget

Federal Funding Freeze Outlook:

The federal funding freeze and federal restructuring have had a variety of impacts locally. In regard to fuels reduction and fire preparedness work, a top concern is the potential elimination of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) funds. IRA has been the background funding source for many federal and even state level grant programs that fund working lands, fuels reduction, and land management. IRA was also slated to continue to award funds for this work for at least the next three years, this status of current IRA grants and future grants is unknown.

Current Grants: The AFSC has one active federal grant, the Rancheria/Thompson Ridge/CWPP Development Project. It has been confirmed that although this is a federal grant it is not funded under IRA which bodes well for this funding to be continued.

Future Grants: Bureau of Land Management Fuels Reduction Grant that we hope to apply was at least partially funded under IRA, but there is a portion of this funding that must be spend locally and is not funded from IRA. It is likely this funding will be made available at some point, although the timeline is unknown.

My current assessment is that the federal grant freeze will not directly impact the AFSC in the immediate future.

Below I will summarize the impacts to partners. The situation is evolving rapidly and there is a lot of information coming across my desk daily, please excuse if things have changed in the couple of days from drafting this report.

Partners

<u>ARCD</u>: A total of \$187k of federal funds and an additional 93k under threat to be revoked. ARCD is no longer able to offer direct technical assistance site visits and assistance to landowners to develop applications to the NRCS EQIP program.

<u>NRCS</u>: The local NRCS office Soil Conservationist, (was on probation) was let out 2/13 with the mass firing of federal employees on probation. The current staff have limited capacity to plan and execute new contracts. EQIP contracts funded under IRA, directly to landowners for land management practices, are currently on hold.

<u>Other Federal Partners:</u> We are seeing many probationary employees let go throughout federal offices as of 2/13-2/14. I have not yet been able to quantify specific impacts to our region. This could cause further delays with already understaffed federal offices.



Mapping Update 12/31/2024 Page 1 of 4

Update:

The public facing mapping applications are still in draft form. The AFSC made a good deal of progress during this grant term. Below are screenshots from the in-progress web applications. In the near future these will be published to the AFSC and ARCD websites.

AFSC and ARCD GIS Hub

ArcGIS Hub is a cloud-based platform for sharing data, maps, and apps to promote transparency and collaboration. It helps organizations engage communities with customizable websites, dashboards, and tools for initiatives, events, and open data sharing. For this project, a hub was developed so that Staff and the public can easily access AFSC/ARCD data, maps, and apps.

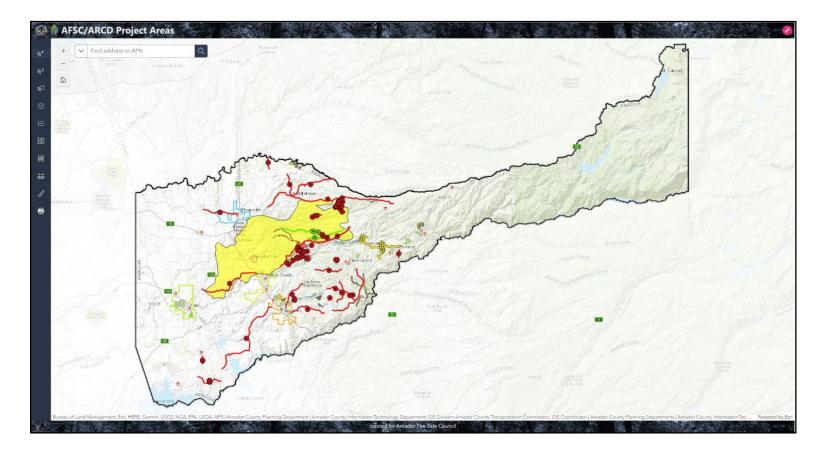




Mapping Update 12/31/2024 Page 2 of 4

AFSC-ARCD.Projects.

This app was developed to display all AFSC/ARCD projects and is currently meant for Staff access only until the project area layers are cleaned up and finalized. Once the project area layers are approved, this app can be used as a framework for a more robust app. Currently, there are filters added so staff can filter out attributes for project layers.

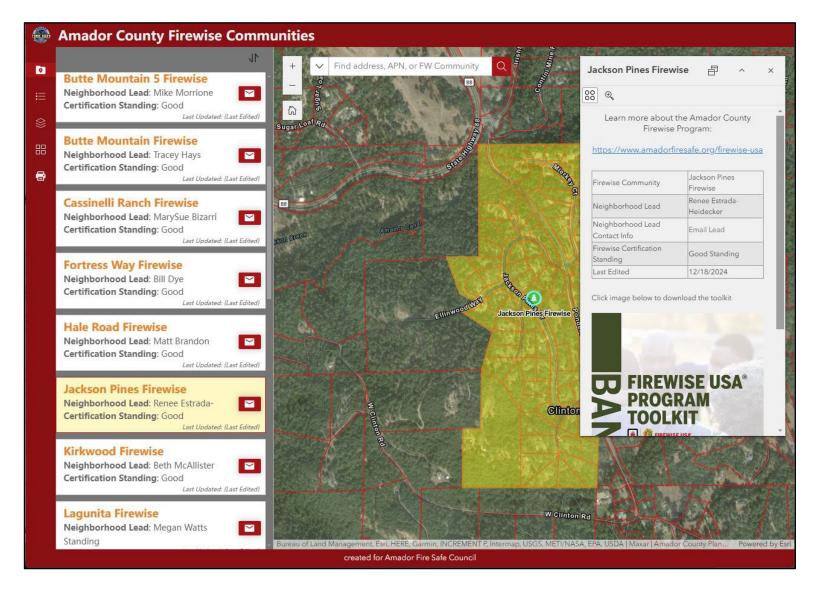




Mapping Update 12/31/2024 Page 3 of 4

Amador.County.Firewise.Communities.

This app was developed for the public to view Firewise communities and easily email Neighborhood Leads.

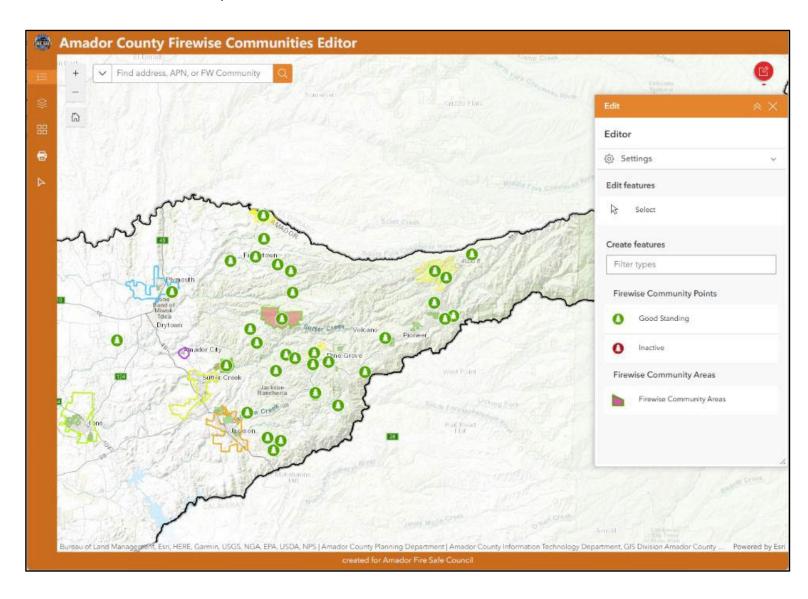




Mapping Update 12/31/2024 Page 4 of 4

Amador.County.Firewise.Communities.Editor.

This app was developed for Staff to be able to easily edit Firewise Community Points and Areas without having to use ArcGIS Pro. This app also enables Staff to select and export site addresses and parcels to a csv file.



Amador County Coordinator 2024 Grant Wrap-Up

Presentation to the CaFSC

December 23rd 2024



8.5 months of Coordination



FIREWISE COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

COUNTY-WIDE PLANNING



CAPACITY BUILDING

Outreach highlights

- 4 Hósted Tiger Creek Forest Health Field Tour
- +Hosted 'Fire Safety Fair' at the Amador County Fair.
- +Purchased and distributed go-bags and partnered with AFPD to develop Evacuation readiness kit.
- +Hosted Upcountry Safety meeting with discussion with AFPD on Tiger Creek Fire response & distributed go-bags.
- +Created and distributed 3 newsletters.
- +Two AFSC projects highlighted in partner video projects.
- +Staff started work on 2024 annual report for ARCD/AFSC.

Firewise Community (FWC) Highlights

+Assisted 34 FWC in annual re-certifications +Assisted 6 communities become FWC

- +Hosted 2 'quarterly' FireWise Forums
- +Reviewed AFSC FWC Strategic Plan
- +Developed FWC interactive web-app (in-progress)

Amador County Firewise 2024 Community Contributions

- Risk Reduction Expense Investment Costs: \$1,627,040.70
- Risk Reduction Work Hours Recorded: 34,655
- Total Risk Reduction Investment: \$2,760,021.73

Project Development highlights

- + Received federal funding for Forestry Technical Assistance Provider
- + Received funding from PG&E to implemented 12 acres of critical fuels reductions in the WUI around the historic Kennedy mine and City of Jackson
- + Received Capacity Building funding from SNC Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program
- + Received federal funding for Rancheria Ridge and CWPP developed from BLM
- + Received funding for Volcano Hills Community Fuel Break
- + Received a CalFire grant to develop county-wide fuel break will be adjusted for another project.

In 2024 \$2,308,864 for implementation and planning was awarded to AFSC and ARCD from grants written by the Coordinator.

County-Wide Planning Highlights

- Staff presented at the Board of Supervisors meeting with annual updated (July 9th).
- +AFSC initiated Amador County Wildfire Mitigation Mapping Committee.
- +AFSC initiated Amador County CWPP Committee and developed draft Scope of Work.
- + Staff worked toward developing internal programmatic strategic planning in addition to the organizational Strategic Plans. AFSC/ARCD Strategic Plans are due to be updated in 2025 and initial draft edits have been developed.
- + Conducted monthly check-ins with county partners: BLM, Cal-fire, NRCS, AFPD, Regional RCDs, CARCD Legislative Committee, CaFSC Coordinators.

Capacity Building Highlights

- +Transition from google drive to Microsoft Suites
- +Conducted internal review of mapping protocols and upgrading the AFSC/ARCD mapping processes.
- +Created draft mapping web apps for staff, partners, and the public.
- +ARCD/AFSC logo gear for board members and staff.
- +Created new invoicing Procedure for implementation projects.

'From Forest Fires to Flowing Rivers': Spotlight on the Tiger Creek Forest Health Project A short video created by BLM showcasing fuel reduction work conducted by AFSC.











Thank You! Amanda Watson <u>AmadorFireSafe@gmail.com</u> www.AmadorFireSafe.org

AFSC FIREWISE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM UPDATE 2/19/2025

Program Assistance Update: In the last two quarters the AFSC staff has been planning for updates to the FireWise Community (FWC) assistance offerings. These changes align with the goals outlined in the 2023 AFSC FWC strategic plan. The focus will shift to providing comprehensive information on the AFSC website and targeted support for specific outreach events and the FireWise Forum.

Funding: Previously, the AFSC funded FWC assistance through the CaFSC Coordinator grant and support from CalFire Ingress/Egress and Community Fuel Break grants. With these funds expiring, there are now limited resources available for this program.

Staffing: The ARCD Outreach and Education Coordinator has transitioned to a 20-hour workweek, primarily dedicated to general outreach and assisting project managers with project-based outreach.

Ongoing Assistance Provided:

- Website Resources:
 - Develop and maintain an FWC Resource Library on the AFSC website to help communities through the development process.
 - Maintain Firewise USA program information on the AFSC website, webpages, and social media.
 - Develop and maintain an FWC map on the AFSC website with accurate participating parcels and community lead contact information.
- Direct interested parties to the website for further information.
- Direct interested parties to the web map to research other local FWCs and decide whether to create a new neighborhood or expand an existing one.
- Aid in the development of community mapping for the AFSC mapping app.
- Work with established communities to promote and coordinate other applicable programs offered by the ARCD/AFSC.
- Coordinate County Fair Firewise Booth volunteers with current neighborhood leads.
- Provide limited Firewise USA program representation at local community events.
- Represent the Firewise USA program at county Town Halls.
- Provide bi-annual support for the Firewise Forum.
- Attend quarterly Firewise USA Regional Coordinators meetings.
- Stay informed on home fire insurance issues, including legislation, policy on landowner responsibilities, and available resources.
- Represent the Firewise program at monthly AFSC Board meetings.
- Represent AFSC and its programs at annual Firewise neighborhood events (limited).
- Provide Amador County Firewise communities with brochures, printouts, reusable event materials, etc.

Past Assistance Provided:

- Look up initial addresses of interested parties or potential neighborhood leaders.
- Research possible neighborhoods in close proximity.
- Coordinate initial one-on-one meetings with neighborhood leads to discuss first steps.
- Assist neighborhood leads in creating NFPA and Firewise portal accounts.
- Create FW Boundary Maps on Parcel Quest and provide APN and mailing lists to neighborhood leads.
- Assist in coordinating neighborhoods' first events.
- Review initial letters/mailers intended for first community outreach efforts.
- Coordinate communication through Goin Postal regarding initial mailers/contacts.
- Attend initial neighborhood meetings as a Firewise USA Regional Coordinator and AFSC/ARCD Outreach Coordinator to discuss and educate on the program's value.
- Provide templates for Time/Expense Investments, tracking, Risk Assessments, and Action Plans, ensuring they are current and required versions.
- Provide samples of approved Boundary Maps, Risk Assessments, and Action Plans.
- Coordinate with Amador Fire, Kayla, and neighborhood leads to schedule Risk Assessments.
- Review Risk Assessment documents with neighborhood leads, addressing any red flags or potential issues that may result in application rejection.
- Cross-reference Risk Assessment information with community information in the Firewise portal.
- Assist neighborhood leads in creating 3-Year Action Plans, cross-referencing from Risk Assessments and provided samples.
- Assist neighborhood leads in formatting and final review of Action Plans.
- Conduct final reviews of applications in the Firewise portal before submission, ensuring all correct documentation is uploaded and required information is provided.
- Assist communities in participating in the AFSC Firewise Startup Assistance program.
- Assist insurance agents in clarifying participation in a Firewise community on behalf of their clients.
- Assist individual county residents in clarifying participation in a Firewise community regarding fire insurance and obtaining appropriate documentation required by their insurance carriers.