



TRINITY COUNTY

Board of Supervisors

P.O. BOX 1613, WEAVERVILLE, CALIFORNIA 96093-1613
PHONE (530) 623-1217 FAX (530) 623-8365

July 22, 2014

Dave Meyers, Forest Supervisor
United States Forest Service
3644 Avtech Parkway
Redding, CA 96002

Dear Dave,

RE: Sims Fire Restoration Strategy Project

The Trinity County Board of Supervisors would like to officially recognize and support those issues raised by the Trinity County Collaborative Group (TCCG) and the Hyampom Fire Safe Council regarding the Sims Fire Restoration Strategy Project. Please see attached for details on the concerns.

Lastly, thank you for your engagement with the TCCG and the Hyampom Community on this project and your agency's continued overall participation in the collaborative process.

Sincerely,



Judith N. Pflueger, Chairman
Trinity County Board of Supervisors



July 1, 2014

Trinity County Board of Supervisors
11 Court Street, Room 230
P.O. Box 1613
Weaverville, CA 96093

Trinity County Collaborative Group
1 Horseshoe Lane
P.O. Box 1450
Weaverville, CA 96093

RE: Sims Fire Restoration Concerns

Dear Trinity County Board of Supervisors,

The Trinity County Collaborative Group would like to ask the Board of Supervisors to support issues brought forth at the June 20th, 2014 meeting, regarding the Sims Fire Restoration Strategy Project. The issues brought forth originated from a letter of concern by the Hyampom Fire Safe Council after reviewing progress and plans for the project (included for reference).

On June 12, 2014, at a public collaborative meeting, after discussion and review of the project and the concerns brought forth by the Hyampom Fire Safe Council, as well as concerns from the Collaborative group, the collaborative formally approved this request for support from the Trinity County Board of Supervisors.

Following discussion, the group would request that the Board review the following issues and forward these concerns to the appropriate agencies.

1. Ask the USFS to halt project progress on the roads outside the Sims fire footprint, pending community review and input on the Project.
2. Ask the USFS to work collaboratively with the Hyampom community and fire department via the Fire Safe Council, to create a plan which will take a longer view of proper rehabilitation of the Sims fire footprint in order to create a safe environment for the residents of the area and the Hyampom community.
3. Ask the USFS to follow the ecological restoration directive given by the regional forester, Randy Moore.
4. Ask the USFS to remove the arbitrary time limit on the expenditure of the settlement monies.
5. Ask the USFS that the Sims fire settlement monies be protected from fire borrowing.



In addition to the specific items listed above, the Collaborative believes that

- 1) the USFS would benefit from additional community input on the Project activities,
- 2) it is necessary that the restoration activities be provided an adequate time-line to accomplish the restoration objectives, and
- 3) the settlement monies should be protected so the restoration activities can be accomplished.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alex Cousins". The signature is fluid and includes a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.

Alex Cousins, on behalf of
The Trinity County Collaborative Group

Hyampom Fire Safe Council
Hyampom Volunteer Fire Department
PO Box 10
Hyampom, CA. 96046
(530) 628-5755
Hyampomfire@gmail.com

June 10, 2014

USFS Supervisor David Myers
3644 Avtech Parkway
Redding, CA. 96002

Trinity County Collaborative
letter hand delivered

Dear David Myers, USFS Supervisor, and the Trinity County Collaborative,

This letter is in regards to the SIMS Fire Settlement from PG&E for the 2004 SIMS Fire and the current USFS plan(s) regarding allocation of the settlement. Our understanding, and the expectation of the community, is that this settlement monies was awarded to the USFS by the courts for the purposes of rehabilitation of the areas on USFS properties that were so severely impacted by the SIMS fire of 10 years ago.

The USFS held a meeting with the Hyampom Community on May 13th 2014 to present information on the SIMS Fire Settlement funds and how they were to be used; attached is a copy of the criteria presented by Lois Shoemaker, the USFS SIMS Fire Project Lead. Also present in the meeting from the USFS was our District Ranger Tom Hall and a USFS representative from the Six Rivers National Forest. In that meeting, we learned that the USFS departments responsible for creating and implementing the plan for rehabilitation of the SIMS fire footprint have been directed by their USFS management to define projects that ensure the settlement money is committed within a 3 year time window.

From this meeting on May 13th 2014, it is our understanding that this 3 year time window is an arbitrary time limit placed upon the departments from within USFS management, and is not imposed by the court settlement ruling. It is our understanding that any remaining monies not committed within this arbitrary 3 year time window will no longer be earmarked for the SIMS fire rehabilitation in the USFS budget process, and thus run the risk of being utilized for other purposes. This understanding was re-iterated by USFS District Ranger Tom Hall and USFS Fuels Planner Jim Gonzalez at our recent June 9th 2014 Hyampom Fire Safe Council meeting. It was also at our June 9th meeting where we voiced our concerns with the USFS SIMS Rehabilitation efforts.

We take issue with this arbitrary window of 3 years. It has resulted in a short term mindset towards projects proposed (and some currently out for bid) that is not necessarily in the best interest of the longer term view of what is needed to properly restore a severely impacted 10 year old burn area and also ensure the area is fire safe for the local residents and the greater Hyampom Community. This burn area has gone 10 years with no rehabilitation and needs to have a long term view for restoration. For example, one of the early proposed projects from the USFS includes a ridge fuel break in the SIMS footprint. The Hyampom Fire Safe Council and Volunteer Fire Department agree this break is what is needed to protect the area and community from future fire events similar to the SIMS fire of 2004. However, we were informed that the project and NEPA requirements would exceed the arbitrary 3 year time window directive from within the USFS, and therefore could not be included.

We take issue with the fact that several of the roads in one of the defined projects are significantly outside and distant from the SIMS fire footprint. Although those roads may be in the watershed of the SIMS fire footprint, and while we agree that the roads defined in the project currently out for bid are in significant need of repair, we assert that there are more important roads within the fire footprint that need repair and directly impact residents in the fire footprint. Our Volunteer Fire Department is unable to protect those residents due to the dangers presented; we cannot take our fire engines into the area. We object to the monies being directed to these roads outside the footprint; it does not meet

the intent of the settlement but instead seems to be driven by the short term planning horizon of the arbitrary 3 year time window.

Finally, we take issue that this first set of projects was planned by the USFS without community participation and input. Although there was a community meeting on May 13, 2014 to review proposed USFS projects for the SIMS fire footprint restoration and gather community input, we subsequently learned that projects were well underway and had been out to bid since May 5, 2014, and includes some roads that are outside the fire footprint. In actual fact, the USFS planning process took place without community input and members of the community were surprised when these road projects became known. This is in direct conflict with the recent progress we have made over the past two years regarding our Collaborative process between the Trinity County community and the USFS.

The Hyampom Fire Safe Council and the Hyampom Volunteer Fire Department request the following:

- The USFS halt project progress on the roads outside the SIMS fire footprint, pending community review and input on the SIMS project(s).
- The USFS remove the arbitrary time limit on the expenditure of the settlement monies.
- The USFS collaboratively with the Hyampom Community and Fire Department via the Hyampom Fire Safe create a plan which will take a longer view of proper rehabilitation of the SIMS Fire Footprint in order to create a safe environment for the residents of the area and the Hyampom Community.

To enable the USFS completing the SIMS Rehabilitation in a timely manner, the Hyampom Fire Safe Council commits to facilitating meetings and providing comments to input sought within 14 days, to allow adequate community discussion.

The money should be spent in the spirit in which the settlement was awarded.

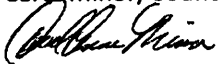
Thank you for your consideration to this matter.

Regards,

Hyampom Fire Safe Council

Hyampom Volunteer Fire Department

Carol Minor, Council Chair



Joe Watkins, Fire Chief



CC: Tom Hall – District Ranger, SFMU

Dan Dill – Deputy District Ranger, Six Rivers National Forest

Trinity County Board of Supervisors

Trinity County Fire Safe Council

*Settlement Funds Spent Must Meet
Three Criteria:*

- US Code 16 USC 579c
 1. To conduct improvement, protection, or rehabilitation work,
 2. On lands administered by the Forest Service,
 3. For purposes rendered necessary by the Sims Fire.