

Fitch Mountain Association's
Annual Members' Meeting
On Zoom, Hosted by Pat Abercrombie, FMA President
Sunday July 12, 2020
1-1:30pm

Meeting Started at 1:04 PM

Attendance: 50 FMA members' computers, with 1-2 people per computer, connected to the Zoom meeting.

Pat introduced the 2019-2020 Trustees and Officers: Ken Hite, Trustee; Dana Eaton, Secretary; Pat Abercrombie, President; Donita Proctor, Trustee; Marty Silge, Treasurer; Becky Simons, Trustee; Al Pucci, Trustee; Kate Symonds, Trustee.

Treasurer's Report, Marty Silge: FMA 2020 Review of Financials

<u>Summary</u>	<u>2019 – 2020</u>	<u>2020 – 2021</u>	
Income	\$3281	\$5281	61% increase

<u>Details</u>			
Dues	\$2459	\$3412	39% increase
Donations	\$822	\$1869	127% increase
Total	\$3281	\$5281	61% increase

2019 – 2020 Fiscal Year Expense

COPE	\$1484	2%
Charitable Gifts	\$1000	8% Fitch Mtn Fund, Russian River Keeper, LandPaths
Venue Rental	\$650	18% Pat notes the Villa gave us free space for the Kincade Fire Debriefing Meeting and a few daytime meetings
Fun & Appreciation	\$273	8% Food and Prizes for Fun Nites and Del Rio Mixer
General Administration	\$106	3%
Government Fees	\$30	1% Latest Update – Articles of Incorporation

<u>Accts Year End Totals</u>	<u>2019 – 2020</u>	<u>2020 – 2021</u>	
Restricted Funds	\$4500	\$4325	
Unrestricted Funds	\$4500	\$9817	
Total	\$9020	\$14142	57% increase

<u>FMA Membership</u>	<u>2019 – 2020</u>	<u>2020 – 2021</u>
	131	179

**FMA Committee Reports by Pat Abercrombie, Donita Proctor and Ellen Silge
COPE Report by Priscilla Abercrombie**

Del Rio – Pat: Del Rio neighbors Tom Goodman and Tim Pile volunteer to unlock the Del Rio parking lot gate in the mornings to relieve the Park Ranger from having to make an early morning run to FM. This saves the Regional Parks staff a 40-minute round-trip every day.

ADA-compliant pathway and stairway are on hold. Assessments and parking fees will need to re-accumulate to pay for these projects..

The interpretive signs project Kathryn Henderson designed is also slowed down due to review from a new county sign committee.

FM Preserve – Pat: Parks Improvements are on hold due to the evaporation of Transient Occupancy Tax funds after the October 2019 wildfires and the 2020 COVID 19 shutdown. However, Jaime Licea and crew will respond to notification for things such as clearing downed trees.

Healdsburg has not yet renewed their contract with LandPaths for their work on the FM Preserve and Healdsburg Ridge. A new contract is currently under review.

Roads – Pat: Vegetation removal and drainage issues and improvement will be the county's focus this year on N and S Fitch Mtn Rd. This work is essential before resurfacing can be addressed. N Fitch Mtn Rd Slump and Slide: Federal Highway Administration funds have been locked in for 2021 implementation.

FM was awarded a PGE grant of \$75,000 for fire fuel reduction along the Fitch Mountain Rd right-of-way. Road closures will allow this project to proceed quickly.

Clearing of vegetation on easements up to and around the three water tanks is scheduled to begin August 2020. This project will be funded by water system reserves.

Septic – Pat: The State Water Board will vote in October whether to include our stretch of the Russian River in the Federal EPA 303(d) list of impaired waterways. If they vote to include it, the way will be paved for the Regional water Board to implement their proposed TMDL. This will result in proactive replacement of cesspools and upgrades of systems nearest the river. We will have 10-15 years to install these upgrades. If they vote to exclude our stretch from the 303(d) list, septic upgrades will only be required if the property owner applies for a significant building permit.

Water Committee – Donita: Water committee members Pat Abercrombie and Donita Proctor welcomed a new member to the committee, Dana McKnight, a new S Fitch Mtn resident who moved to FM October 2019 just before the Kincadee wildfire. The committee continues to meet with the county as a committee on zoom. They currently reviewed the year-end actuals and

proposed budget for CSA 41–Fitch Mountain in a private zoom conference. The year-end actuals have not yet been published.

The FM water system is thirty-one (31) years old and is in need of changes and upgrades. One recent upgrade was the installation of new water meters for all 340 properties. The new meters can be monitored by downloading an app at www.eyeonwater.com. The app monitors daily water use 24/7 and reports leaks within 24 hours of detection. Eighty-three (83) households are currently using the app. All FM residents and property owners are encouraged to download and use this app. Some insurance companies give a small discount on insurance fees if one uses the Eye-On-Water app.

The three 100,000-gallon redwood tanks on FM are nearly 30 years old. During the Kincade Fire these storage tanks were nearly depleted and water could not be pumped in because of the power outage making them vulnerable to the wildfire. Redwood tanks filled with water don't burn. Empty redwood tank will burn. The County is preparing to pursue funds from Federal stimulus packages for possible replacement with bolted steel tanks.

Priscilla noted the water tanks on FM were depleted because homeowners turned on roof sprinkler system to protect their property depleting the system, leaving us more vulnerable to fire. These sprinklers are powerless against a wildland fire. Fortunately, the fires never reach FM.

Replacement metal vault lids are needed at Del Rio and Redwood Dr. This is not a safety issue, but has caused neighborhood noise complaints when cars drive over them. The cost to replace the lids is estimated to be \$8000 but there is nobody who can do the fabrication of the metal lids at the moment.

A new generator that can still operate when the electricity goes out needs to be installed for the water controls at Latimer Rd. A new generator will cost \$35000, including labor. Improvements are needed for the Scada system at Hilltop tank and Del Rio. Upgrades are needed and solar power needs to be installed to the Del Rio tank.

Improvements or replacement of the electronic monitoring system, (Scada System of telemetry), in each tank system would allow all three pumps to be in constant communication with each other. Estimated cost \$57,000.

COPE – Priscilla Abercrombie

COPE – Citizens Organized to Prepare for Emergencies – was originally developed by Oakmont residents Sue Hattendorf and Al Thomas in cooperation with the Santa Rosa Fire Department. When Priscilla and Ginger Hobart, original co-chairs for FM Fire Preparedness, were introduced the Oakmont COPE community concept and organization they quickly adopted it for FM. There are now over 25 COPE Communities throughout Northern Sonoma County and more neighborhoods and community groups continue to adopt the COPE structure. Various levels of Sonoma County's COPE organization use the Group Me text messaging app for emergency

communications. If you are not part of your neighborhood GroupMe text messaging talk to your neighborhood COPE leader. For more information go to <http://fitchmtn.org/cope.html>

- FM now has 18 Neighborhood COPE Leaders. Check the FM website for your neighborhood leader. <http://fitchmtn.org/cope.html>
- Priscilla encouraged everyone to sign up for emergency notifications from SOCO ALERTS, NIXLE, PGE Alerts, and FMA eblast. It is fire season, have your GO BAG ready to go. Develop your own evacuation plan and share with family or close friends outside the area.
- **Chipper Days:** 56 households participated in the first FM Chipper Day weekend organized by the FMA. Recology waived the dumpster fees and the County waived the disposal fees. Sonoma County provided the chipper and crew at no cost to FMA. Jake Bishop provided his services and truck at a nominal fee for hauling material not suitable for the chipper from individual properties to the large collection bins. It was a very successful event that helped clear defensible spaces on 56 properties around the mountain.
- **Insurance Talk:** The online Zoom Insurance Information Session featuring talks from United Policy Holders and Insurance Information Institute was a very successful event. Videos of these presentation are posted on the FMA website: <http://fitchmtn.org/> Scroll down to Fire Insurance and click on Forum Playback.
- **Weekend and Holiday Parking on FM:** Sonoma County Sheriff and CA Highway Patrol have become more empathic and involved in taking weekend and holiday FM parking issues and problems seriously. This year they have stepped up their monitoring and enforcement on FM due to beaches and beach parking lots closures on the coast due to COVID 19. The influx and impact of people from all over the Bay Area to our public and open neighborhoods river access spots along the FM section of the Russian River has significantly increased for the same reason.
- **Calming Zones:** FMA is actively seeking grant money to fund clearing vegetations along all FM roadways to create fire calming zone. These calming zones would create safer roadway passages for vehicles exiting FM and emergency vehicle entering FM.
- **Radio Communication:** COPE is actively researching ways to develop effective radio communications around FM for use in emergencies when other communication lines are down. Pat has gotten a Ham Radio license and will be connecting with the County's Auxiliary Communication Service and linking this info to the FM community via lower powered GMRS radios in neighborhoods.

- **FM Signage:** FM is in negotiations with the City of Healdsburg for permits for install permanent signs at the entrance to North and South Fitch Mountain. Similar signs went up in Mill Creek earlier this summer.

Fun & Appreciation – Ellen: FM Fun and Appreciation is organized by Ellen Silge. Whenever there is an event Ellen gathers volunteers from the FM Community to help organize, setup, and clean up FMA community events including: January Fun Nite, Del Rio Summer Mixer, and the July Annual Picnic and Members Meeting at Villa Chanticleer. If you want to be part of Ellen’s call list of helpers please contact her: ellensilge@yahoo.com. Many hands make light work.

The Villa’s Annex has been reserved for FM Fun Nite, Saturday, January 30, 2021 – COVID 19 permitting.

FMA Recognitions

Ellen Silge announced recognitions for four members of the FMA community.

- Kate Symonds was recognized for her years as FMA Secretary, FMA’s representative to FM Preserve Development Committee, and most recently as FMA Trustee. Kate has moved off the mountain and now lives in Santa Barbara. She will be missed.
- Dana Eaton was recognized for her four years serving as FMA Secretary
- Al Pucci was recognized for his twenty-one years serving on the FMA Board as a trustee. His service, passion, and commitment to FM has been invaluable. Al announced his retirement from the FMA Board at their May 2020 meeting. His steady, professional, and thoughtful contributions to the Board will be missed.
- Chuck Eaton was recognized as the 2020 FMA Volunteer of Year for his volunteer work as FMA webmaster. Chuck took over the FMA website in 2017, redesigned it, giving FMA a professional online identity, made it a user-friendly and advertisement free site. Chuck will be staying on as FMA web master. Chuck also received a \$100 gift certificate to Valette as a thank you for volunteering to be FMA webmaster.

Election Results: Al Pucci in his final act as FMA Trustee announced the results of the 2020 -2021 FMA Trustees and Officers election:

FMA Officers: All positions were uncontested and received 100% of the votes cast.

- President: Pat Abercrombie; two-term, 2020–2022
- Treasurer: Martin Silge; two-year term, 2020-2022
- Secretary: Dana McKnight, two-year term, 2020-2022

FMA Trustees: Two people ran for the one-year seat. Three people ran for the two three-year seats.

- Trustee Seat, one-year term, 2020-2021: Rhonda Bellmer
- Trustee Seat, three-year term, 2020–2023: Heather Pilatic
- Trustee Seat, three-year term, 2020–2023: Cathy Hodgson

Before announcing the results Al noted how impressed he was in the interest in serving on the FMA Board and how many well qualified candidates stepped up to run for offices and trustees. Voting was also active.

One hundred fourteen (114) online Survey Monkey ballots and four (4) mail-in ballots were cast. Chuck Eaton designed and monitored the online and mail-in FMA Ballots. Ellen Silge mailed or distributed the mail-in ballots to members with problems with or without internet connections. Paper ballots were returned to Chuck Eaton in self-addressed, stamped envelopes.

Speaker: Don McEnhill, Russian Riverkeeper

After the annual FMA Members Meeting Don McEnhill, Russian Riverkeeper, spoke about the Potter Valley Project and how the removal of Scotts Dam will affect the Eel River, Russian River, Lake Mendocino in the coming years. Don also mentioned the ad hoc committee US Rep. Jared Huffman formed that created a two-basin solution. The negotiated agreements by the ad hoc committee ensures sensitivity and respect these changes will have for the rights of the Native Indian who rely on the Eel River for salmon and their cultural traditions, protection of salmon runs, water for irrigation, and water for the communities along the Eel River and Russian River who rely on the water for their populations' use and recreation.

For more information about the Potter Valley Project and Rep. Jared Huffman's ad hoc committee check out these websites:

<https://eelriver.org/about-us/potter-valley-project/>

<http://pottervalleyproject.org/overview/>

The meeting ended at 2:09 pm