In attendance: Linda, Carol, Chris, Ray, Bill, Linda, Karen, Rick, Claudia, Harriet, Jim, Betty, Amy and new neighbor, Kit Barron; Welcome!!

- Guest speaker - Valerie Zimmer from the Instream Flow Unit at State Water Resources Control Board

  - Presentation on long-term and short-term Mark West Creek streamflow studies: Valerie has been with the state 4 years working on this project. MW creek is one of the first five watersheds to be studied. She is attending a county meeting tomorrow morning about “cannabis & salmon” and would like our feedback. Rather than regulatory approach she would like to know what has worked or not worked for us, post fire, etc.

The California Water Action Plan to date includes: Shasta River, Mill Creek, So Fork Eel River, MW Creek and the Ventura River, all with different water flow issues. MW Creek issues: critical anadromous fish habitat, priority action coho team, largest run of CCC steelhead. Our longstanding and substantial positive local efforts bodes well with the state and virtually ensures their continuing support and involvement with us.
Her agency/study primarily looks at what fish need for survival (e.g., flow criteria...different flow at different times of the year). Currently, it appears that the Russian River may have too much water at the mouth for salmon because of human interference. Fish are historically adaptable to climate on river flow variances and continued investigation and research of human interference needs ongoing observation. On the other hand, what do people need: demand? authorized and unauthorized use?

***7pm meeting interrupted due to fire reported on 6500 block of St. Helena road, Jim, Betty, Karen left. Meeting resumed 7:10pm

Model studies: USGS old model, too much water release estimated, done only on Santa Rosa plain. Matt O’Conner’s 3 year old model needs continued study as updates are added. Much auditing and quality control of these models to effectively determine effect of groundwater usage on watershed environment. Complicated process due to variables of watershed environment.

MW will be third creek to be regulated based on these various studies. To see how this might play out see Redwood Creek, Mendocino County study. MW has pretty good perennial flows. In July one cfs used, but can dramatically change the needs of fish. How our ponds are tapped is also critical.
If this gets regulated the state doesn’t want to “pay” people to comply, would rather people want this on their own. What are we as land-owners willing to do because it is the “right thing” to do in support of water quality, fish, the environment and our own needs.

- Questions about Mark West Creek Impaired Watershed status and how this can impact County policy re: Cannabis, Hemp, Vineyard. Water systems can leak. Can some authority (like Sonoma RCD?) provide a standardized leak detection solution? Like a pump-monitoring system that text alerts landowners if their pump is running well beyond its normal average? Permitting: ...is greater issue than cost of water storage for individuals.

FMWW cannabis issues:

(Dept. of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) is pretty upset about cannabis and surface water use especially. Compliance rate of cannabis growers is very low. DFW is not going to crack down on people who are making the effort to be compliant).

“Critically impaired watershed” declaration by water board would mean that cannabis wouldn’t be permitted in the watershed. How can we influence that status? We currently are having to deal with each individual applicant. If the state would declare the watershed
impaired in terms of cannabis, then the county would have to follow suit and exclude the watershed.

Hemp: County hemp ordinance in draft stages now, coming out at end of the year...How could state help to ensure protections for the watershed are in place and built into the hemp ordinance? Hemp requires as much water at cannabis. Any efforts by the state to make it easier for the county to allow watershed exemptions?

- Approve September meeting minutes - deferred
- Financial Report – deferred
- Fall FUNDRAISER - Gratitude Gathering, Nov. 2 - drinks and snacks, music -

Many invites sent out, need a few more addresses. We have some donations, one for $1000. People are starting to us the Paypal app. Tee-shirts are going to happen locally. Bill wants to send out a solicitation email to garner enough quantity for the supplier.

- Check-in on task assignments - updates on ABC event license, insurance (see last month’s minutes). Carol has sent email for desserts and coordinate the food, expect 50 to 100 people. Harriet will get beer that needs cold storage. Will use Ray’s. Harriet and Ray will do a short slide show.
- We need a bartender (sober!) Claudia and Ray
- Special guests: Who have we invited so far, who to add?
- Upper Mark West Watershed Fire Safe Council - Karen/Lynn
- October 5 event at Monan’s Rill- Partnered with Forest Working Group, ACR and UCEE - Presentation about prescribed burns, along with tours of the two burn sites on the land.
CalFire Fire Prevention Grant Application - Karen/Lynn/Carol - moving forward with application for Calistoga Rd./Saint Helena Rd shaded fuel break grant. Neighborhood meeting #1 notes are as follows:

CWPP Neighborhood Meeting:  October 17, 2019  at FMWW

Landowners were invited to attend a CWPP meeting prior to the FMWW meeting.

Karen Passafaro gave an overview of the CalFire Grant and a powerpoint presentation that included photographs of the type of fuel treatment we are proposing in the grant application

A Question and Answer session followed.
Q. Will we be allowed to do fuel removal within the riparian corridor due to county restrictions?
A. The Riparian corridor restrictions appear to be primarily pertaining to construction within 200’ of creek. This doesn’t apply to fuels reduction for fire prevention as long as it’s not excessive. The county is working on a definition of excessive. The critical element is to maintain the shade over the creek.

Q. Who will determine the criteria and limitations of the removal of trees and brush? Will the contractors be knowledgeable and careful in their methods?
A. CalFire has given us general guidelines, as outlined in tonight’s powerpoint presentation. A state environmental review is required before work can begin. There will be number of botany and archeological surveys prior to starting work. A forester will be hired in the grant supervise the project.

Q. Will the grant include herbicide treatment to prevent regrowth of sprouts?
A. No, CalFire does not support herbicide treatment as part of the grant. However, given the community’s concern we will try to include hand-pruning of spouts to inhibit multiple stems. We could look at including such treatment in the second year of the scope of work. We can also organize community workdays to do brush removal and thinning maintenance along the road. Individual property owners might want to consider using other methods (herbicide, grazing, etc.)

Q. Will landowners have a voice and veto rights over work that is proposed for their land?
A. Yes, there will be a lot of education and information involved in helping landowners understand the best ways to prevent fires by removal fuel, but, ultimately, landowners can state their demands.
Next steps:
1. Landowners are asked to talk to their neighbors and encourage them to ask questions and come to the next meeting.
2. The next meeting will be held on Sunday, October 27th at 1:00 in the meeting room at Mark West Stables
3. We need letters back by mid-November. Our goal is to get agreements from 50% of the landowners by mid-November. The grant has to be submitted by December 5th.

Holiday Gathering date: Harriet: 12 to 4, December 14th, Rancho Mark West

- Cannabis Ordinance and Penalty Relief Program -
  - FMWW Letters submitted to county for the public record. Will notify members when public hearings are scheduled.
  - Appeals if any CUP allowed where there is impact?
  - Plan moving forward - Phase Two - 2019-2021 - we have repeatedly indicated to County that we would like to be involved with public outreach...will be a countywide CEQA review. FMWW will advocate for exemption

- Hemp ordinance - Nov/Dec hearings - letter from FMWW? We want the same exemption for this pending ordinance. Agriculture interests may need to be contended with. Hopeful about conditions...

- FMWW Public Calendar - Harriet/Penny

- Committee Reports
  - History Committee – Linda and Carol all but one document transcribed. We’ve lost the current transcriber, and need a new one if we want to do more interviews. Can find online or at UC libraries,
  - Emergency Preparedness – Bill
Next Membership Meeting - January 2, 2020

Monan’s Rill HUB

Directions to Monan's Rill ~ 7899 St. Helena Road, Santa Rosa CA 95404. Approx. 4 miles on St. Helena Road from Calistoga Road. At the bottom of a sharp S turn, there are several mailboxes on the left at the base of the main drive onto the land. You will also see a sign for Monan's Rill at the entry on the left side of the road. Go up the gravel drive. Please keep your speed below 15 mph. Monan's Rill community HUB is about a mile up the drive. When the road changes from gravel to pavement, take a left at the “Y.” It will turn back to gravel shortly. Once you get onto the property, keep going straight, curving around to the left until you get to a second “Y”. Take the right fork and make the next left at the mailboxes. The community building is on the left and parking is on the roadway or in the parking lot area on the right of the building. Please leave your pets at home ~ stay clear of the ponds ~ no smoking. Please Note: All attendees at our quarterly meetings are asked to sign a general liability release for the benefit of Monan’s Rill.