There is a lot of publicity about the Camp Fire in Paradise and the Carr Fire in Redding. We also experienced many devastating fires in Siskiyou County. Above are pictures of two of them: the Boles Fire in Weed and the Klamathon Fire in Hornbrook. From left: 1) Boles Fire takes off, 2) Weed houses destroyed, 3) Klamathon fire rages, and 4) Firefighters hit hotspots in Hornbrook.

The Boles Fire Changed the Way I Think
By Katherine Shelton

The flames were right across the street by the time we realized what was happening. I was drinking coffee and lounging before work when my brother knocked on my bedroom door and told me I should probably put some pants on. Our whole neighborhood seemed to be running for their lives. I thought, our house is going to burn down. The checklist of essential items is pretty easy when you think your life is in danger. Dog, brother, phone, water, keys, wallet, and at the last minute, my work apron - because we’re all a little irrational in a crisis. We piled into my car and drove around to find an escape route, but with fire trucks and explosions from kerosene tanks obstructing both of the roads out, we could only wait next to the High School until someone opened up a logging road behind the lumber mill. We got out, and the house somehow didn’t burn.

Now there are daily reminders: lingering residue from the pink flame retardant dumped on my house five years ago; many empty lots that used to belong to neighbors. And some anxiety about the next one. I think about the two huge trees towering right next to our roof, the jungle of plants in our yard, the most efficient way to evacuate all the pets we’ve accumulated since 2014. When I think about moving, I look at how many access routes there are. I see my home in different light.

Key Issues For Many CD-1 Constituents

Audrey Denney’s campaign conducted a survey of her supporters to determine their key issues. About 500 individuals responded—see below for the results. As you see, the environment was the top issue, followed by health care and campaign finance reform. Although not a statistically valid survey, it does give us an idea of what our fellow residents consider high priorities.

As a result, the Siskiyou Democratic Grassroots News will devote the next three editions to the environment, beginning with forest management and climate change.

What’s Happening

DCCSC Grassroots Committee Meetings
Tuesday, May 7, 2019: Yreka YMCA or Tuesday, May 14, 2019: Mt. Shasta Library
Meetings begin at 6:00pm, with the same agenda for both meetings. Everyone is welcome! Join us and get involved.

Democratic Central Committee Meeting
Wednesday, May 8, 2019 6:00pm to 7:30pm
YMCA, Yreka
All DCCSC meetings are open to the public, and you are encouraged to attend. We meet on the second Wednesday of each month from 6:00pm to 7:30pm, alternating between Mt. Shasta and Yreka.
Let’s start with Doug LaMalfa’s Congressional voting record on the environment. The League of Conservation Voters (https://www.lcv.org), a non-partisan watchdog group focused on environmental issues, gives LaMalfa a lifetime 1% rating on their legislative scorecard. On forest management, his record suggests that he opposes any practices other than personal home defense* and reducing fuel density through extensive logging. In alignment with his ranking as the 8th most conservative member of Congress, his record suggests that he opposes any federal environmental protection from commercial interests. As for the human production of CO2 and its impacts on climate, he recently said (at a Carr Fire event in Redding), “I don’t buy it…maybe it’s magma…”

Over against this record, Audrey Denney believes that government has a vital role in fire prevention on public lands, and in supporting private initiatives to address fuel density in national parks and forests, the most critical issue in effective forest management. Here’s an excerpt from an interview published on March 27, 2019 in the Siskiyou Daily News:

“I want to get to work on policy fixes that will create market incentives to help biomass plants (like Weed Cogen) be more economically viable. Right now, sustainably collected woody biomass off public lands doesn’t qualify for RINs** under the Renewable Fuel Standard – so Siskiyou County does not benefit from the positive economic impacts of the RFS that is currently being enjoyed by mid-western corn growers. If these economic incentives were in place – we could be doing selective logging, clearing burn piles, limbing trees, doing the critical fuels reduction work on our federal lands and using that biomass to create energy with a low-carbon footprint. That means good jobs, more dollars in our economy, and protection from wildfires - as well as environmental and ecosystem services benefits. Advanced technology to create clean fuels from woody biomass is being installed at a plant in Lakeview, Oregon - Siskiyou County should be benefiting from this as well.”


*No one disagrees about the importance of home defense. See below for some guidelines for protecting not only your own home but your community from devastating fire.

From the Siskiyou County Community Wildfire Protection Plan, at a minimum:

- Make sure the roof and gutters of your home and garage are clear of dry leaves, pine needles, and other flammable materials.
- Trim trees from within 10 feet of your roof.
- Remove dead, dry vegetation within a 30-foot radius of your home and keep plants closer to your home well-watered.
- Consider creating a 10-foot space between trees and shrubs to create a firebreak.

Advice from fire survivors: If possible, replace all roofs and siding with non-flammable material. Keep your property free of debris like old lumber, plastics and gas cans. Maintain power tools used outside to prevent sparking. Do not ignite burn piles in or near dry grass, or on windy days. Cut nearby grasses to 4 inches. Never toss a lighted cigarette.

For more tips on reducing the threat to your home from wildfires, see: http://www.readyforwildfire.org/