

April 4, 2022

Fire Marshal Todd LaBerge
Chair, Hills Emergency Forum

Ms. Cheryl Miller
Hills Emergency Forum Staff

Dear Fire Marshal LaBerge and Ms. Miller:

As the Hills Emergency Forum well knows, wildfire is a regional problem that affects all of the jurisdictions and fire districts in the East Bay Hills. With this in mind, the Oakland Firesafe Council (OFSC) and a host of other resident groups have been working for the past three years to enhance the ways that local jurisdictions and fire districts cooperate on regional fire prevention efforts.

Since December 2021, OFSC and a citizens' committee have been convening monthly meetings of elected officials and fire officials from throughout the East Bay Hills to discuss formation of an entity that would coordinate regional fire prevention work. So far, we have held four meetings with attendance by over 40 individuals, and two meetings of a smaller 'working group' consisting of five elected officials and six fire chiefs.

The group recognizes that the Hills Emergency Forum (HEF) was conceived of, operates, and has effectively executed these same objectives since the tragic Tunnel Fire in 1991. At the most recent meeting of the larger group on April 1, all representatives in attendance (see attached list) agreed to propose to the HEF that the HEF be augmented to enhance collaboration and explore potential new wildfire prevention funding opportunities. While this letter is signed by the co-chairs of the citizens' committee, it has been reviewed by representatives of various jurisdictions who were nominated at the April 1 meeting, namely Fire Chiefs Brannigan, Montoya and Winnacker, Supervisor Gioia, and Councilmembers McLaughlin and Wengraf.

The proposal includes three key points:

- HEF membership would be expanded. The Counties of Alameda and Contra Costa, all municipalities and fire districts in the East Bay Hills wildfire risk area extending from Pinole to Fremont, and other entities such as Caltrans and PG&E would be invited to join.
- The HEF's existing meetings of key fire officials discussing operational issues would continue, with participation by the fire officials from the new member agencies.
- The HEF would create a forum, Board, or similar "arm" consisting of elected officials from local agencies and senior officials from other member agencies, which would meet on a regular basis (subject to the Brown Act).

At this time, the representatives who attended the April 1 are not making specific proposals regarding the expanded HEF's scope of work, structure, or financing. If the existing HEF is open to this overall proposal, OFSC would continue to convene the meetings of regional representatives and the smaller working group (both of which include HEF members) to work out the details of an expansion proposal.

We understand that the HEF will conduct its regular monthly meeting on April 12. We request that HEF members discuss this proposal at that meeting, and we are (of course) available to answer any questions prior to or during the meeting. If the HEF is open to proceeding, we propose to continue our discussions and work with the HEF to flesh out the details of how an HEF expansion might work.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Jon Kaufman, Co-chair of the Citizens' Committee and President of the Claremont Canyon Conservancy
Lisa Jacobs, Co-chair of the Citizens' Committee and Secretary of the Oakland Firesafe Council

Attendees of April 1 Meeting

John Gioia	County Supervisor	Contra Costa County, District 1
Robert Rogers	District Coordinator	Contra Costa County, District 1 (Gioia)
James Lyons	District Coordinator	Contra Costa County, District 1 (Gioia)
Jill Ray	Field Representative	Contra Costa County, District 2 (Andersen)
Lewis Broschard	Fire Chief	Contra Costa County FPD
Karen Pinkos	City Manager	City of El Cerrito
Michael Pigoni	Fire Chief	City of El Cerrito
Paul Fadelli	Councilmember	City of El Cerrito
Chris Wynkoop	Fire Chief	City of Pinole
Maureen Toms	Councilmember	City of Pinole
Angel Montoya	Fire Chief	City of Richmond
Gayle McLaughlin	Councilmember	City of Richmond
Bill Hansell	General Manager	Kensington Fire Protection District
Peter Guerrero	Emergency Preparedness Committee	Kensington Fire Protection District
Steve Danziger	Board of Directors	Moraga-Orinda Fire District
Craig Jorgens	Board of Directors	Moraga-Orinda Fire District
David Winnacker	Fire Chief	Moraga-Orinda Fire District
Susan Wengraf	Councilmember	City of Berkeley
Abe Roman	Fire Chief	City of Berkeley
Chris Pinto	Assistant Fire Chief	City of Berkeley
Curtis Jacobson	Fire Chief	City of Fremont
Heather Mozdean	Deputy Fire Chief	City of Oakland
Keara O'Doherty	Policy Advisory & Community Liaison	City of Oakland, District 1 (Kalb)
Brandon Harami	Communications Director	City of Oakland, District 4 (Thao)
Dave Brannigan	Fire Chief	City of Piedmont
Joan Malloy	City Manager	City of Union City
Damian Breen	Deputy Air Pollution Control Officer	Bay Area Air Quality Management District
Ken Kennedy	Engineer	Caltrans
Scott Hill	Manager of Watershed and Recreation	EBMUD
Sarah Yoell	Government Relations Representative	PG&E