

Hello Decatur Island Property Owners,

We hope this note finds you well. We wanted to provide you some significant updates as well as some suggested action items.

Inaugural Training Update:

As mentioned in the first communication, training is a key component. The initial goal was to provide training sessions focused on developing the skills of our full-time island residents, who are the most likely to respond.

Last weekend, 16 full-time Decatur Island Residents went through Wildland Fire Training course that provided firefighting theory and techniques based on industry standards. Combined we achieved 80+ person hours of training, all within the COVID-19 health restrictions. This is a significant step forward in preparation and a key foundation from which to build. In addition, four individuals were trained in Incident Response and Management which is critical in time of emergency response. Photos from training found at end of email.

Thank you to all the Island resident volunteers who attended!

We look forward to taking this momentum and solidifying and building upon this wealth of knowledge. We are currently debriefing with the participants and learnings and next steps will be shared in the next Property Owner Communication.

The training sessions were led by Jordan Pollock and Bruce Hanna, professional wild land firefighters and accredited trainers (bios provided at end of communication).

Mr. Pollock shared his enthusiasm and his vote of confidence that what has currently been executed in terms of equipment and training, is the right thing for our Island community at this time and was impressed with the community engagement, volunteers for training and resources on hand. Mr. Pollock has been identified as an integral partner to help continue the development of this program for our Island; his experience and enthusiasm to support our community is respected and appreciated. His experience with Waldron, similar to our own Island, has provided a great deal of insight and best practices to adopt.

The training had to be adapted due to the COVID epidemic and to ensure state mandates were met. Working in close consultation with SJC officials we were advised that SJC would not enter Phase III that would have allowed for gatherings of up to 50. A roll-back had been issued limiting gatherings to 5 individuals, going into effect July 20th and the training was adapted to meet these requirement and mandates while considering the health and safety of all participants.

Brenden Cowan, SJC Director of Emergency Management, advised that gatherings, even for official agency trainings, are not to occur in excess of 5 people. One of our scheduled lead trainers, Kyle Dodd, SJC Environmental Health Manager, is also the SJC COVID-19 Incident Commander and concurred with the mandate to limit gathering to 5 or fewer individuals.

Details of the of Governor Inslee's order can be found here:

<https://medium.com/wagovernor/inslee-announces-steps-to-address-covid-19-spread-7bf1dbabb52f>

Additional and Future Training

Additional rounds of training, consisting of shorter courses (4 hours), is critically important for defense and we are working on how best to execute leveraging the current trained residents, the use of our professional trainers, while considering well advised restrictions due to COVID. These sessions will be open to a wider cross section of islanders. The intent is to involve a group of individuals who are semi-permanent; often on island and are the next most likely tier to be able to respond.

If you are often on island, especially during high risk times, and are interested in participating, please reply to this email so we may add you to the list.

What YOU can do right now at home:

1. Don't start fires! Camp fires under 3' diameter, including no yard debris, are still allowed by SJC. Burning of yard debris is NOT allowed. "Residential fire" permits for yard debris under 10' in diameter expired May 31, 2020.

2. Fire Extinguishers. Consider purchasing a refillable 2.5 gallon water class A pressurized fire extinguisher. Air Pressurized Water (APW) extinguishers are perhaps the single most versatile piece of equipment for basic fire response. These are highly recommended by fire professionals for most any sort of outdoor fire preparation, if you're having a campfire or have an indoor wood stove - these are essential to have and are frequently used as an important tool in wildland fires. These are preferred for their ease of use (much like an adult version of a squirt gun on steroids) and ability to accurately shoot a stream of water 30'+. They're refillable with water and are pressurized with a standard air compressor.

Below is a link to a recommended version that can be sent directly to the island (unfilled) and we can assist on island with filling and pressurizing. This is the #1 recommendation for equipment preparedness by every firefighter and consultant that we've engaged! It's no wonder you'll find these riding shotgun on even the biggest red firetrucks.

<https://www.amazon.com/Amerex-Gallon-Water-Class-Extinguisher/dp/B00F5CJEZU?th=1>

We can help fill and charge these fire extinguishers, we will organize a filling and charging event. Time and date TBD.

If you purchase and fill on your own:

Our trainers recommend under filling the units with water– providing more portability (lighter) and prolonged pressure (more compressed air). As our trainers underscored throughout this weekend, more water isn't necessarily better. With prudent use one of these extinguishers could be enough to extinguish a 1/10th acre grass fire.

- Use a weight scale when filling with water. Fill to 22lbs.
- Add 1tsp of liquid soap, e.g. dishwashing soap. This acts as a surfactant and allows the water to “stick” to the fuel surface and suffocate the combustion much more efficiently.
- Charge with an air compressor and standard tire chuck (Schrader valve) to 100psi.

3. Have a water source - and considering a fire pump package? Numerous families are investing in their own equipment to be able to pump water directly from cisterns, pools, ponds and the ocean and lay basic fire lines around their homes if needed. We've standardized an equipment specification and are helping those interested get equipped for \$1-2k depending on the scope of equipment desired. All of the equipment is cross compatible with the truck equipment and is building quite a nice cache of resources on island.

4. Training - We've all experienced a shift to virtual/online experience and fire training is no exception. With the ability to conduct live training nearly all fire departments and trainers have implemented some degree of online training. We've gained access to a core class of materials on fire control, the same materials provided to the folks that just went through training and we are glad to be able to share that with you. Please find these at the link below:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/2u03oosssyqvzvf/AABCsSn2Ph85W1IfiKAxeESka?dl=0>

Fundraising

There has been an outpouring of support and enthusiasm for this program- thank you all for that! Many Islanders have asked how they can contribute financially to the efforts.

At this time DICERA holds and has earmarked funds that were raised in the initial community donation event that are being held specifically to fund fire defense, whether it is gear and tools or costs associated with training. That is great- these ear marked funds are significant and helpful to support this project. To sustain, funds will be needed in the future and specific fundraising will occur.

If you are one of those that fall into the "I want to contribute to this project NOW" camp, we would be happy to provide you a list of needed equipment that you are able to purchase directly and send direct to Island. If that is you, please contact this email address and we will point you in the right direction.

Additional Ways you can help

We have been fortunate to have thousands of dollars' worth of equipment donated by a consortium of professional firefighters including Firefighters Crossing Borders. In fact, Decatur Island has just been donated two foam eductor systems and foam agent - worth thousands of dollars! Please consider a tax deductible donation to our friends to continue fostering support for Decatur:

<https://www.firefighterscrossingborders.org/>

Donation link is in lower left hand corner of their home page. Within the PayPal donation page you can "add a note" - please do and mention Decatur Island so that we can receive credit.

A great deal has been accomplished by many; as any good thing, there is still a lot of work to do. The engagement with the community and the enthusiasm for this project is showing how we all can come together to be better prepared and folks want to volunteer. Our core group is currently working on current status and future growth needs, outside of just training and will be sharing in our next communication. If you would like to volunteer your time to build and sustain this project before, please reach out to us.

Best to all of you,
Alan Mizuta
Randy Stricker
Mark Wall
Andy Wood

The Instructors

Jordan D. Pollack / Fire-EMS Training

Mr. Pollack joined the fire service in 1980, working his way upward in the service to training officer and now fire chief since 1998. A fire service instructor since 1983, Jordan coordinates a cadre of instructors delivering fire and medical courses around the Pacific Northwest. As one of the premiere wildland firefighting training cadres, they work with numerous fire departments throughout the spring each year. Since his start in 1978 on the Olympic National Forest, Jordan has worked for both the US Forest Service and National Park Service on hand crews, engines, and helicopters most summer fire seasons. His last years on the west's major fires were spent working as an engine strike team or task force leader for the US Forest Service. He serves as fire chief of the Breitenbush Fire Department in the mountains of central Oregon, and is a regional representative for Firefighters Crossing Borders in Mexico.

Bruce Hanna

An avid outdoor enthusiast, Bruce's wildfire career began while working for Snohomish County Search and Rescue (SCSAR) in the 90s. In 1997 after responding with SCSAR on a wildland fire, Bruce joined WA State Department of Natural Resources as a firefighter and has since held numerous training and management positions with that organization throughout his career. His work with the DNR has taken him not only on fires throughout the Northwest over the years, but also training and supervising crews on fires, teaching chainsaw schools, and facilitating fire academies. Mr. Hanna is the NW Region DNR communications technician as well as an Engine Strike Team Leader, Deputy Fire Marshal for Skagit County, and manages an EMS education business in Skagit Valley with a focus in wilderness medical training.

Morning Session



Afternoon Session



Jordan's Groups



Bruce's Groups

