Honey Lake Valley RCD Director William Johnson, left, and Lassen County Fire Safe Council Chair Lloyd Keefer, right, present Cal Fire Lassen Modoc Unit Chief Scott Packwood with the Thompson Peak Initiative petition Friday, Nov. 8, which had more than 2,300 signatures. Photo submitted

Volunteers acquire 2,300 signatures in support of Thompson Peak Initiative

November 12, 2019  Staff

Thompson Peak Initiative partners presented Cal Fire Lassen Modoc Unit Chief Scott Packwood with petitions Friday, Nov. 8. About 2,300 people signed the petition during the last month in support of fuel treatments the Thompson Peak Initiative is proposing in the communities of Janesville, Milford and the adjacent Plumas National Forest.

The Lassen County Fire Safe Council is hosting a Thompson Peak Initiative meeting at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 14, at the Janesville Fire Department. Discussion will be on the proposed treatments, grant application process and the petition in support of forest health and fuel reduction efforts.

For the petition, Lassen County Fire Safe Council, Inc. board member Phil Good was the lead in the successful petition drive.

The Thompson Peak Initiative was formed in June of this year in an effort to plan and acquire funds for fuel treatments in a project area that is deemed the highest priority in the Lassen County Community Wildfire Protection Plan. The initiative's principal partners include the fire safe council, Cal Fire, Lassen County, Plumas National Forest, Eagle Lake BLM Field Office, the Janesville, Milford and Susan River Fire Protection Districts and the Honey Lake Valley RCD.

Throughout the last five months, the Thompson Peak Initiative has held monthly community meetings attended by up to 70 residents to plan for a comprehensive fuel treatment project that would protect the communities of Janesville and Milford from wildfire.

In addition, the project would restore the watershed, reduce potential greenhouse gas emissions, sequester carbon and thus help mitigate the effects of climate change. It has also been critical for the Thompson Peak Initiative to engage with residents to garner their support and participation in the planned project. The Thompson Peak Initiative is on track to submit a California Climate Initiative/ Fire Prevention grant application in early December.

“This year’s Walker Fire and the ensuing evacuations have shown how critical it is for comprehensive fuel and forest restoration treatments to be implemented in these communities,” said Lloyd Keefer, fire safe council chair. “Janesville and Milford have dodged the bullets of the past Walker, Moonlight and Eagle fires, but time is not on our side. It is not a matter of if a wildfire will flow down the Diamond Mountains escarment, but when.”