

# Council Business Meeting

April 2, 2019

<b>Agenda Item</b>	Appointment of Charisse Sydoriak to the Wildfire Mitigation Commission	
<b>From</b>	Melissa Huhtala	City Recorder
<b>Contact</b>	<a href="mailto:Melissa.huhtala@ashland.or.us">Melissa.huhtala@ashland.or.us</a> 541-488-5703	

## **SUMMARY**

Confirm Mayor's appointment of Charisse Sydoriak to the Wildfire Mitigation Commission.

## **POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED**

Ashland Municipal Code (AMC) Chapter 2.19.

## **PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION**

N/A

## **BACKGROUND AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

This is confirmation by the City Council of the Mayor's appointment to the Wildfire Mitigation Commission.

## **FISCAL IMPACTS**

N/A

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

N/A

## **ACTIONS, OPTIONS & POTENTIAL MOTIONS**

I move to approve the appointment of Charisse Sydoriak to the Wildfire Mitigation Commission with a term expiring April 30, 2021.

## **REFERENCES & ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1: Application

**CITY OF ASHLAND  
APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO CITY COMMISSION/COMMITTEE**

**Name:** Charisse Sydoriak

**Requesting to serve on:** Wildfire Mitigation Committee

**Address:** 622 Holly St

**Occupation:** Retired Chief Resources Management and Science (National Park Service and BLM)

**Phone:** 505-309-8011 (cell)

**1. Education Background**

**What schools have you attended?** University of California, Santa Cruz

**What degrees do you hold?** Two undergraduate degrees (Biology & Natural History - Environmental Studies).

**What additional training or education have you had that would apply to this position?**

Hundreds of hours of training in fire related courses required to be a federally certified prescribed natural fire specialist, RX fire burn boss, fire weather and effects monitor, fire fighter, crew boss, resource advisor, and situation unit leader on incident management teams. I was an instructor and course/curriculum developer in several of these courses.

**2. Related Experience**

**What prior work experience have you had that would help you if you were appointed to this position?**

**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

I have professional experience in an array of natural and cultural resources management and science disciplines that enabled me to apply fire as a management tool to meet a range of management objectives. I list professional experience directly related to fire here.

**Management Coordinator (GS-14) Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks (SEKI) June- Dec 2015.** On special assignment to create a climate-smart Resources Stewardship Strategy which included a fire risk assessment and prioritization of areas to be treated with fire based on resource and socioeconomic values, and a range of plausible future conditions generated by 13 climatic change models.

**Chief, Division of Resources Management and Science (GS-14) SEKI June 2008 –May 2015**

- Member of the parks' leadership team. Collaboratively established direction for parks' operations and stewardship of natural, cultural, and wilderness resources using fire as a management tool. Lead a staff of ~80 technicians and professionals, including the fire ecology and fire planning staff.
- Led interagency, state, and NGO efforts to leverage science and scholarly information necessary to carry out fire and resources management programs.
- Chaired the parks' Fire Management Committee. Developed the Resource Advisors Program to evaluate potential environmental and socioeconomic impacts of every lightning caused fire before a decision was made to take management action.

**Chief, Division of Science Integration (GS-14) BLM National Science and Technology Center, Denver, CO July 2001 – May 2008**

Responsible for coordinating and leveraging interdisciplinary information, policy, science, and technology for decision makers across the Bureau. Supervised the Bureau's Geospatial Fire Management

Specialist who developed and managed the GIS program (GeoMac) that is now used by the public to access real-time maps and information on wildfires.

**Natural Resource Specialist (GS-13) Intermountain Regional Office, National Park Service, Denver, CO** Oct 2000-July 2001

Advised on Burned Area Emergency Rehab procedures to protect natural and cultural resources from primary and secondary wildfire impacts.

**Chief, Division of Natural and Cultural Resource Management (GS-13) Bandelier National Monument, Los Alamos, NM** Oct 1991-Oct 2000

- Principle advisor to the park superintendent on cultural and natural resource and wildland fire management. Supervised the park's fire management program. Conducted prescribed burns.
- Established a permanent regional fire effects monitoring program that served southwest NPS units.

**Regional Fire Management Officer (GS-12) North Atlantic Region, Nat'l Park Service** April 1990-Oct 1991

First female Regional Fire Management Officer in the National Park Service. Was the principle fire and natural resource management advisor to 37 parks in 7 states. Provided program oversight and allocated regional fire management project dollars. Taught fire behavior courses, certified trainee burn bosses, and mobilized type 2 crews for dispatch to major western fires.

**Chief, Natural and Cultural Resource Management (GS-11) Lava Beds National Monument, Tule Lake, CA** Feb 1989-April 1991

- Oversaw the fire management program, prepared burn plans, developed and reviewed NEPA compliance documents. Implemented natural and cultural resource management programs, including the vegetation management program using fire.
- Conducted several prescribed burns and managed prescribed natural (wildland fire use) fires.

**Forestry Technician (GS4&5) and Resource Management Specialist (GS-7&9) Yosemite National Park, Yosemite, CA** Dec 1984-Feb 1989

- Managed 240+ prescribed natural (aka wildland fire use) fires and prescribed burns. Supervised up to 10 seasonal staff and 23 fire overhead per season to monitor and report on fire behavior. Performed as a burn boss on 550+ and 900+ acre prescribed burns in mixed conifer forests.
- Aerially mapped fires, supervised the fire effects data collection program (~400 sample points), developed training materials, coordinated training for all prescribed burn staff, instructed in local, regional and national fire behavior and management courses.
- Chaired the Western Region Fire Monitoring Task Force and was a primary author and the editor of the precedent-setting NPS Fire Monitoring Handbook. This handbook was used to establish the national fire effects monitoring program and justified the hiring of permanent fire ecologists throughout the NPS.

**SELECTED PUBLICATIONS**

- Sydoriak, C. 2007. In search of the science integration keystone. In Proceedings: international conference on transfer of forest science knowledge and technology. General Technical Report PNW-GTR-726. Portland, OR: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Research Station. p. 31-45.
- Sydoriak, C.A., C.D. Allen, and B.F. Jacobs, 2000, Would ecological landscape restoration make the Bandelier Wilderness more or less of a wilderness?: Wild Earth, v. 10, p. 83-90.

- Landres, Peter B.; Brunson, Mark W.; Merigliano, Linda; Sydoriak, Charisse; Morton, Steve. 2000. Naturalness and wildness: the dilemma and irony of managing wilderness. In: Cole, David N.; McCool, Stephen F.; Borrie, William T.; O'Loughlin, Jennifer, comps. 2000. Wilderness science in a time of change conference— Volume 5: Wilderness ecosystems, threats, and management; 2000 May 23–27; Missoula, MT. Proceedings RMRS-P-15-VOL-5. Ogden, UT: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Research Station. 377-381.

**Do you feel it would be advantageous for you to have further training in this field, such as attending conferences or seminars? Why?**

I don't need technical training, but some training would be helpful to facilitate networking with local fire managers and decision makers. Since I did not spend my career in southern Oregon, I would like to spend quality time listening to and shadowing folks who have a range of perspectives about the land, the people, and the issues associated with wildfire in Ashland and the Rogue Basin. I would like to serve on an interagency incident management team sometime in the future, but my qualifications have expired.

**3. Interests**

I am applying for a position on the Wildfire Commission because I miss being involved in the process of dealing with gnarly resources management issues, particularly those associated with fire. I am very impressed with the Ashland Fire Resiliency Project and want to help it grow.

My professional knowledge base and experiences may be of some use to the community that I have chosen to retire in. I spent 35 years pondering, articulating, and responding to wildfire issues and advising decision-makers on alternative courses of action. I have first hand experience dealing with the dilemmas that the City faces relative to fire, smoke, urban wildlife conflicts, and other natural resource issues. I have survived traumatizing events that give me a perspective that may be valuable to the City. For example, my fire staff was responsible for the 2000 Cerro Grande Fire that caused an entire country in New Mexico to be evacuated for 2 weeks. This fire burned 2/3rds of the Los Alamos National Laboratory, and more than 400 families lost their homes. I was one of the principle decision makers on the fire, my home barely escaped the fire as it spread from house to house down my street.

I have been a burn boss and have managed 100s of prescribed natural (wildland fire use) fires. I spent several years responding to smoke impact complaints and have experience working with Air Pollution Control District regulators reacting to federal land managers trying to restore the natural role of fire on public lands. If the City of Ashland thinks I have something to offer, I would like to re-engage in dialog and support the AFR Project work.

Date: January 26, 2019

\_\_\_\_\_ signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Charisse Sydoriak