

Forest Planning, Emergency Planning at Ashe Commission Meeting

Written by Gary Childers

Ashe County Forest Ranger, Tim Lewis, was first on the Ashe County Commission agenda Monday night, presenting the Forest Service annual report. The report highlighted a busy, successful year of wildfire management, development of forest management plans, tree pest management, and educational programs. He highlighted a program which the Forest Service coordinated with the Stone Ridge community called "Fire Wise". Ranger Lewis concluded by informing the Commissioners that the Forest Service hopes to complete Ashe County's fire mitigation program before funding runs out in 2016.

In other business the Commissioners approved the Ashe County Emergency Operations Plan submitted by Patty Gambill, Ashe's Emergency Management Coordinator. They also approved an allocation of \$15,000 to the Town of West Jefferson for its Centennial Celebration in 2015. The approval passed by a 4 to 1 vote with Commissioner Gerald Price expressing support for a \$7500 allocation until more specific uses for the money were brought forward. Commissioner's Chair, Larry Rhodes, explained that they were willing to consider allocating money for this event.