

Sand Ridge Fire Safe Council *Newsletter*

Spring 2025

Issue 8

Sand Ridge



Fire Safe Council

Green Waste Day a Success!

The 2nd Annual Sand Ridge Fire Safe Council Green Waste Days were a success! On May 16th and 17th the Cosumnes River CSD hosted us at their park for this free event that allowed Sand Ridge FSC residents to dispose of excess green waste. Items collected included logs up to 18" in diameter, brush, limbs, grass, and leaves in paper bags. Neighbors brought loads of material from across Sand Ridge to take advantage of this ability to get rid of excess vegetation before the height of fire season arrives. In total we disposed of almost 82 cubic yards of material! Once chipped, it packed down to just under 40 cubic yards of material. We filled both dumpsters! We want to thank the Cosumnes River CSD for hosting us, many volunteers for helping at the event and Watkins Forestry for providing great chipping services on Saturday.



Fire Weather

At the May general meeting of the County Fire Safe Council, we received a great presentation from Cal Fire and the Forest Service outlining their Fire Forecast for 2025. It will not surprise anyone who has been out weed eating, that we have an abundance of grass this year. After two wet winters, the grasses have flourished and are now drying out (curing in fire speak). They predict that larger vegetation (fuels) will be drying out a few weeks ahead of average and that much of the snow pack in the Sierras has already melted, leading them to anticipate dryer than average fuels in the mountains as summer progresses. In addition to the fuel conditions, they are expecting the possibility of dry lightning activity this summer. The natural oscillation between La Nina and El Nino will allow monsoon flows to penetrate further north this year increasing our chances for dry lightning.

What does this mean for you? **Now** is the time to get your property ready for what mother nature has in store for us. **Finish** your weed eating and do any last-minute brush removal and tree up-limbing. Make sure you **work smart** out there!

- Use mowers and other yard tools before 10 am when the humidity is higher.
- Take advantage of cooler days to get this important work done.
- Avoid work on Red Flag days.

CWPP

The Office of Wildfire Preparedness and Resilience (OWPR) is wrapping up a complete Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) for all of the western slope of El Dorado County. What does this mean for Sand Ridge? This is the first step we need to be able to access grant money for fuels reduction work! This comprehensive plan leaves no one behind and will enable us to submit project requests for the next round of grants. This means that we need to hear from you! We would love to engage in conversations this summer with all of you in your respective neighborhoods to see what projects are most important to you. In order to take advantage of grant moneys, we need private property owners to engage and agree to be part of the process. If you want to see what is possible, take a drive along Mt. Aukum Road towards Amador County, or along Oak Hill Road. Do you see large areas that have recently been cleared? These are likely part of the current grants that are being implemented. Please reach out to find out how too we can get some help!



Oak Hill Before



Oak Hill After

Assessments

We have 3 trained assessors ready and willing to visit you to discuss how you can better prepare your home and property for wildfire. Assessors can provide recommendations and direct you to resources. In addition, for every full assessment completed in our area, the **Sand Ridge FSC gets a \$50 stipend** that we can spend for more projects in our area! It is FREE and easy. Email us at info@sandridgefiresafe.org today!

FireWise Renewal

Record your hours for Fire Wise recertification in September/October. You may send in your FireWise hours/\$\$ spent anytime this summer, if you think you have completed most of your defensible space work for the year. Also remember to include the size of any piles of vegetation that you have burned this year and money spent on any home hardening or fuels reduction projects completed. **See form and examples on the following pages more details.**

Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be **June 18th at 7:00 pm at Pioneer Park** in conjunction with the Mt. Aukum FSC regular meeting. We have invited a representative of El Dorado Disposal to talk to us about the possibility of having curbside green waste service for the summer months in South County areas. Grizzly Flats currently has this service and we have had some interest in our area. This is a fact-finding discussion to better understand cost, minimal participation to make it practical, permissions that might be needed, etc.

Please bring your thoughts and questions! We might even serve dessert!

Contact the Sand Ridge Fire Safe Council

eMail: info@sandridgefiresafe.org

Facebook Group: Sand Ridge Fire Safe Council



Name: _____ Date: _____

Community Name: _____

Preferred Method of Contact: _____

Hours Worked

_____ **Dwelling Unit/Home**

Examples include: Removing pine needles and leaf litter from roof and gutters, replaced vinyl gutters with metal gutters, ignition-resistant exterior improvements, installing screening on vents, flammable items removed from under decks and porches, inspect roof and replace missing shingles, etc.

_____ **Landscaping (0–100 ft from base of dwelling unit)**

Examples include: Installation of hardscaping, replacing combustible mulches with stone/gravel options, tree and shrub removal, raking and removal of pine needles, leaves, ground litter/debris, tree trimming/limbing, moving firewood, lawn and native grass maintenance, etc.

_____ **Common Area**

(HOA or other Homeowner jointly owned property within the site boundary) Activities include: Tree thinning, mastication and brush removal, grass maintenance, fire break construction, etc.

_____ **Miscellaneous**

Meetings, presentations, program administration, home site visits, etc.

Money Spent

\$	Chipper Costs: Purchase/rental, fuel & oil, disposal fees, etc.
\$	Other Equipment Costs: Chain saw purchase/rental, power equip. purchase/rental, hand tools, protective equipment, etc.
\$	Contractor Costs: Arborists, landscapers, professional forestry services, debris removal, etc.
\$	Home Improvement Costs: Roofs, decks, windows, vent screening, retrofits, etc.
\$	Landscaping/DIY
\$	Miscellaneous
	Vehicle mileage

Additional Notes: _____

TIME AND EXPENSE INVESTMENT EXAMPLES

Investing the equivalent of one volunteer hour (valued at \$25.43) per residential dwelling unit within the site's boundary in annual wildfire risk reduction efforts is a requirement of the national recognition program's criteria for maintaining an "In Good Standing" status. Examples of potential actions, activities, and expenses that can be used in meeting the total investment are listed below. These are only examples, it is not a comprehensive list.

COLLABORATION WITH FORESTRY, FIRE, AND RELATED EXPERTS:

- Consultation time with forestry/fire professionals on areas at risk
- Coordination of arborist, landscaping, etc. estimates for vegetation maintenance in common areas
- Regional coordinator's time mentoring/working with residents
- Time spent performing fire risk overviews at individual homes

COORDINATION OF PROJECTS, MEETINGS, ETC.:

- Coordination of wildfire related outreach events
- Coordination of wildfire educational presentations with subject matter experts
- Resident leader's program administration time
- Travel time to risk reduction meetings, orientations, trainings, and workshops

EDUCATION/TRAINING EVENTS AND MEETINGS FOR RESIDENTS:

- Attendance at evacuation/preparedness trainings
- Attendance at wildfire-related education/informational meetings and events
- Home improvements/modifications training
- Fire-resistant plant species workshop
- Safety and personal protective equipment training
- Vegetation management training

IMPROVEMENTS/MAINTENANCE ON THE HOME AND OUTBUILDINGS:

- Chimney spark arrestor installation
- Repairs to retrofit open-eaves style construction to soffited-eaves
- Modifications of deck to increase the gap between boards from 1/8 inch to 1/4 inch
- Inspection of roof; replacement of shingles as needed
- Inspection/repairs of eaves and soffits to ensure construction materials are in good condition
- Removal all flammable materials from under decks and porches
- Removal of debris between deck board gaps/joints
- Removal of debris on the roof and in the gutters as needed
- Replacement of missing deck boards to reduce ember entry to area under decks
- Replacement of vinyl gutters with metal gutters
- Replacement of wood fencing sections where attached to the house with a noncombustible product
- Resident or contractor labor to perform ignition-resistant exterior improvements (e.g., new Class A roofs, mesh screening added to attic and crawl space vents, siding repairs, replacement of wood fencing attached to siding, etc.)
- Installation of weatherstripping along the perimeter of garage doors to help keep embers out
- Use of a sealant (such as caulking) to cover gaps in open-eave areas



FIREWISE USA®
RESIDENTS REDUCING WILDFIRE RISKS

TIME AND EXPENSE INVESTMENT EXAMPLES (continued)

IMPROVEMENTS/MAINTENANCE WITHIN THE HOME IGNITION ZONES:

- Clearing of debris at the base of combustible fences
- Clearing of vegetation beneath and around large stationary propane tanks
- Creation of a permanent non-flammable footprint under large stationary propane tanks
- Creation of a non-flammable footprint under decks with gravel, stone or concrete
- Creation of small fuel breaks by adding hardscaping (e.g., driveways, walkways/paths, patios, stone walls, etc.)
- Delimbing and removal of lower tree branches
- Relocation of firewood piles to at least 30 feet from the home and other structures
- Mowing lawns and trimming native grasses and weeds as needed
- Raking and removal of pine needles, leaves, and ground debris
- Replacement of combustible mulch material with stone/gravel
- Replacement of highly-flammable vegetation with fire-resistant species
- Reduction of ladder fuels
- Stacking/piling of slash and other debris for chipping or curbside pickup
- Thinning or removal of trees
- Grant writing/oversight for wildfire risk reduction projects
- Mentoring adjacent neighborhoods on the importance of reducing wildfire risks
- Organizing, coordinating, planning, and implementation of the annual education/outreach events/activities
- Participation and attendance at Firewise board meetings, including development and updating of action plans
- Participation in group risk reduction activities for residents physically unable to do the work themselves
- Participation in national Wildfire Community Preparedness Day projects
- Reduction of vegetation/fuels from adjacent ingress and egress routes
- Resident's time attending/participating in annual wildfire education/outreach events
- Participation in risk reduction orientation to new residents
- Writing wildfire educational articles for the neighborhood newsletter or community website

NEIGHBORHOOD/COMMUNITY FOCUSED PROJECTS:

- Debris removal and maintenance of commonly owned areas
- Coordination of rental equipment and contractors for community-wide wildfire risk reduction projects
- Door-to-door canvassing to get new neighbors involved in reducing wildfire risks
- Chipper/power equipment rental/purchases, fuel, oil, and repair costs
- Chipper/power equipment associated costs: fuel and oil
- Chipper/power equipment maintenance/repair costs
- Contractor/labor expenses to perform risk reduction work (e.g., arborists, landscapers, professional forester services, roofers, etc.)
- Costs for community-wide clean up days (e.g., dumpster rental, compostable leaf/lawn bags, etc.)
- Costs to replace flammable mulch materials with stone/gravel

TIME AND EXPENSE INVESTMENT EXAMPLES (continued)

- Costs to replace flammable plant species with fire-resistant options
- Costs to replace wood fencing sections where attached to the house with a noncombustible product
- Food/beverages for risk reduction group/volunteer projects
- Ground litter and debris disposal/hauling fees
- Hardscaping materials and related costs to create fuel separation
- Home improvement expenses to reduce impacts from heat and embers (e.g., roof, deck, fencing, gutters, siding, vents, windows, etc.)
- Mileage at the current IRS rate for attendance at wildfire related meetings, dropping off slash, securing rental equipment, etc.
- Portable toilet rental for volunteers working on clean-up projects
- Production costs for risk reduction flyers, signs, and related mailing expenses
- Spark arrestor installation costs
- Tool purchase/rental (e.g., loppers, pole saws, weed trimmers, rakes, etc.)
- Tree removal and separation/spacing expenses
- Safety equipment for neighborhood workdays (e.g., ear and eye protection, gloves, etc.)
- Value of hourly volunteer labor (e.g., residents, scout groups, CERT members, students, etc.) and the associated services and materials required for them to participate in risk reduction projects