



November 12, 2019

Dear Landowner,

The Coast Ridge Community Forest is proposing a Fire Prevention Project for CAL FIRE grant funding. The project will create shaded fuel breaks along 20 miles of roads in the communities of Blue Jay, Gualala Ranch, Navarro Ranch and Sea View Ranch. Fuels removal for roadside safety is identified as a priority project in the Fort Ross Fire Service Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). When completed the fuel breaks will become part of a network between Muniz Ranches, Jenner Headlands Preserve, and Pole Mountain and Little Black Mountain managed by Sonoma Land Trust.

A shaded fuel break is not the removal of all vegetation in a given area. It is intended to leave the larger trees that shade the road in place while eliminating the understory that is more likely to contribute to the severity of a fire. The benefits of a shaded fuel break include:

- Safe clearance on roadways for egress of residents and ingress to emergency crews
- Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by allowing mature trees to endure a wildland fire
- Improved functioning of forest ecosystems and enhanced plant and wildlife biodiversity
- Enhanced protection of utility lines in proximity to the roadway. Protection of these lines is critical not only in maintaining electrical and phone service but reduces the risk of fire caused by powerline failure.

The threat of a large, uncontrolled wildfire is of significant risk in our community. The 1978 Creighton Ridge Fire burned more than 75% of the project area and has left a legacy of fire-dependent, untreated, decadent vegetation with above-average fuel loading. Sudden Oak Death is epidemic and mortality from bark beetles is increasing.

It takes all of us working together to develop a fire-adapted community. Compared to the Creighton Ridge fire, a high severity wildfire today without the proposed fuel reduction treatments has the potential for a catastrophic wildland fire that is expected to increase significantly due to climate change and other factors such as the buildup of forest fuels that are particularly susceptible to fire.

Thank you for your role that positively contributes to wildfire preparedness and resiliency in our community.

Sincerely,

The Coast Ridge Community Forest Board of Directors
Christopher Fohner, Demetra Markis, Daniel Schoenfeld, Wanda Swenson

Judy Rosales, Director