



Dear Fitch Mountain Road Property Owner:

By now you should be familiar with the **Ready-Set-Go** fire safety and emergency preparedness program. **Fire Safe Sonoma** was instrumental in bringing it to our area. Fire Safe Sonoma was also instrumental in helping our residents develop the **Fitch Mountain Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP)**. Vegetation management along the Fitch Mountain Road was identified in the CWPP as one of the top fire safety concerns in our community. In the spirit of being **READY to GO**, the Fitch Mountain Association (FMA) and the **Fitch Mountain Citizens Organized to Prepare for Emergencies (COPE)** are working with Fire Safe Sonoma to submit a grant to CalFire to complete a shaded fuel break along Fitch Mountain Road.

Places along this road where vegetation is overgrown create difficult ingress and egress for both emergency vehicles and residents of the community. Unimproved parcels along the road, where vegetation has been allowed to grow untended, have also become a potential fire hazard. In the event of a wildfire in the area, residents need to be able to evacuate safely, and emergency responders need to gain entry without excessive risk to crews.

A "shaded fuel break" maintains a green canopy of foliage that is a safe distance above the ground and the road. The effectiveness of shaded fuel breaks is greatly influenced by their width. Wider fuel breaks increase the likelihood that crews will be able to extinguish a fire before it can spread to the upper tree canopy and become a large, damaging fire.

The project we are seeking grant funding for will involve two types of treatment:

- 1) On parcels with homes or landscaping near the road, treatment will be limited to 7' from the road edge carefully trimming ground covers to 6" above the ground, removing vines growing into trees and removing lower tree limbs and those overhanging the roadway closer than 15' vertically.
- 2) On parcels where no structures exist or the buildings and landscaping are over 30' from the road, the fuel break would be extended to 30' from the roadway and involve removing brush, trimming ground vegetation to 6", limbing up trees to 10' above the ground or 15' above the roadway, removing fir and bay trees that are under 4" in diameter at chest height and removing vines growing into trees.

As a property owner along Fitch Mountain Road, we are seeking your permission to continue the shaded fuel break onto your property. Your willingness to participate in this project will increase the effectiveness of the fuel break by creating a continuous band of treated areas along both sides of Fitch Mountain Road. The treatment work on your property will be provided **free of charge** to you and will be done with oversight by a forester who will be available to discuss how the work is to be done on your property. This work may also support your efforts to comply with your homeowner's insurance company standards for maintaining your coverage.

If you know categorically that you do NOT want your property included in the shaded fuel break, contact us right away (by November 30th) at patabercrombie@comcast.net .

If you agree to participate in this project, please complete and sign the enclosed form and return it to us. This form will serve as your permission for work to occur on your property, once the grant has been approved. We would like to submit the grant to CAL FIRE as soon as possible and would greatly appreciate receiving the forms by November 30th. We will keep you informed regarding the grant process. **Please contact us if you have any questions about this project.**

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