

APPENDIX F: PAST, ACTIVE AND PLANNED PRE-FIRE PROJECTS

American River Canyon Shaded Fuel Break

The American River Canyon Shaded Fuel Break consists of approximately 300 acres of public and private lands within and adjacent to the City of Auburn. The project area is considered a “very high” risk area because of the proximity of residential, commercial, and recreational development and is within the Wildland Urban Interface and is designated in Very High and High Fire Hazard Severity Zones.

The intent of the Shaded Fuel Break is to provide protection through removal of flammable fuels consumed in a wildfire as so to lessen fire intensity in an attempt to allow fire resources to utilize such a location to increase the probability of success during fire suppression activities. The Shaded Fuel Break is a carefully planned thinning of dense vegetation in an area approximately 300 feet wide where fire does not easily move from the ground into the overhead tree canopy.

The purpose of the Shaded Fuel Break is to minimize destruction to the City of Auburn from wildfire and to protect and enhance natural resources; watershed and habitat of the pristine American River Canyon and Auburn State Recreation Area. The goal is to treat these lands using the prescribed fuels application with the desired outcome of manageable lands for future fire prevention projects.

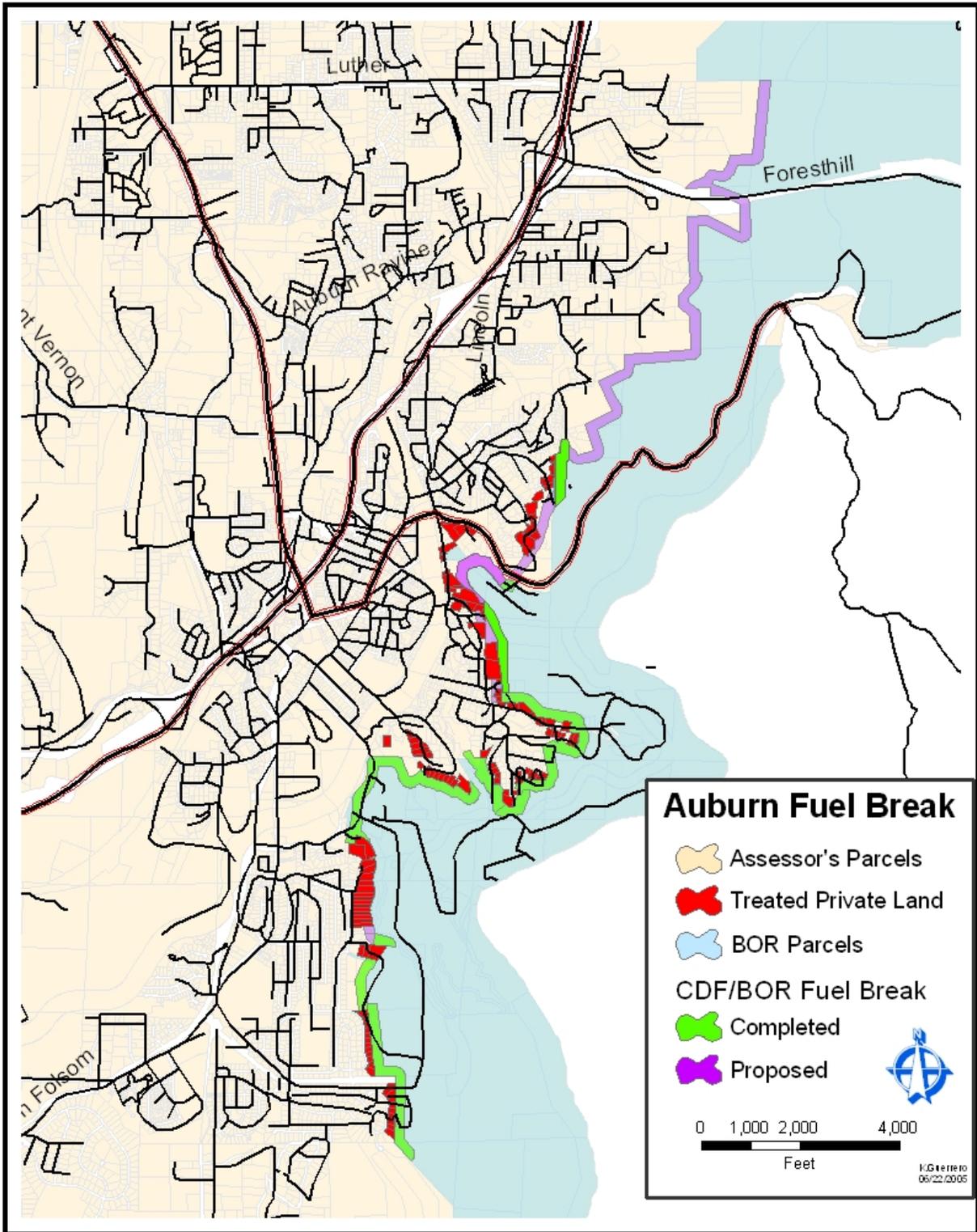
CEQA: Auburn Fire Department has a CEQA Exemption document on file.

“Project Canyon Safe”

“Project Canyon Safe” was first initiated on May 22, 2010 by way of a “community” event involving over 110 individuals; citizen volunteers, agency personnel, and private contractors, performing fuels reduction work on the American River Canyon Shaded Fuel Break in the Robie Point area. After a day of fuels reduction, 9 acres were treated, 3 chippers were operated through donated contractor time and personnel, and 158 tons of fuel were chipped and scattered in the project area. The initial event proved that community participation can make a difference in reducing our threat of wildfire.

“Project Canyon Safe” continues forward with the collaboration of organized neighborhoods, federal, state, and local government agencies, and the Greater Auburn Area Fire Safe Council. The focus is on the accomplishment of fuels reduction and sustainability of the American River Canyon Shaded fuel Break.

Through neighborhood work events or raising funds to contract for work performed, the community is committed to continue a collaborative effort in reducing our threat of wildfire to the Auburn area.



ONGOING COUNTY CHIPPER PROGRAM OPERATION FUNDS

Issue/Background: Since 1998, the Placer County Chipper Program has provided a free service to residents of the County. This helps to lower the costs of creating and maintaining defensible space and also reduces the amount of outdoor burning and the associated air pollution as well as escaped fires.

The County owns four chippers and tow vehicles, purchased from a PG&E settlement and supplemented by a Prop 204 grant. Maintenance is performed by CAL FIRE. Therefore the annual cost is for the four crew managers, one for each chipper, and the crews. In order to keep costs down, trustees from the County Jail are used as crews.

Cooperators: Placer County Resource Conservation District; Cal Fire NEU, Placer County

Priority (H, M, L): High

Benefit: Life Safety; Reduce property Loss. A cost of \$76 per parcel is about 0.03 percent of the average Assessor's Roll Value of about \$260,000 per home (which is far below actual replacement value).

MAINTENANCE ON SHADED FUEL BREAKS AND DEMONSTRATION FUEL BREAKS.

Issue/Background: Several roadside shaded fuel breaks and demonstration fuel breaks were created during the period of 1998 to 2002 using a grant from Proposition 204 funds and other sources. In order for these fuel breaks to continue to be effective, maintenance must be done on a periodic basis.

The fuel breaks are on primarily private property, and the property owners are expected to perform the maintenance with some cost-share assistance. The fuel break locations, size, and resources protected are listed in the following table:

Location	# Acres	# Homes Protected	Value*
Aeolia Heights demo SFB	20		Educational
Alta demo SFB	20		Educational
Foresthill School demo SFB	25		Educational
Maidu demo SFB	20		Educational
Foresthill Divide Rd. (Todd Valley)	36	1,500	391,500,000
Michigan Bluff	43	14	3,654,000
Boole Road	11	100	26,100,000
Cerro Vista	16	100	26,100,000
Ponderosa Road	21	100	26,100,000
Spring Garden Road	25	100	26,100,000
Yankee Jims Road	55	50	13,050,000
TOTALS	312	1,964	512,604,000

*The value is based on the average home value for the unincorporated County from the Assessor's Roll Values. The number of homes is approximate.

Cooperators: Placer County Resource Conservation District, CAL FIRE

Priority (H, M, L): Medium

Cost Estimate: Estimated cost is \$500 per Acre for a total of \$156,000.

Benefit: The roadside fuel breaks protect homes valued at approximately \$512,604,000, and also shield evacuation routes and firefighter access. The demonstration fuel breaks educate and encourage homeowners to create and maintain defensible space. The cost of \$156,000 is 0.03 percent of the values protected.

Schedule: Fuel breaks should be checked every 5 years for maintenance needs.

ESTABLISH ADDITIONAL FIRE SAFE COUNCILS IN THE THE LINCOLN AREA, GRANITE BAY – AND GREATER TRUCKEE AREA

Issue/Background:

Establishing Fire Safe Council(s) in this area of the County is a first step towards educating local residents about the fact that they live in an urban forest and there is a wildfire hazard, and motivating them to take appropriate action to reduce their risk.

Responsible Office: Placer County Fire Safe Alliance partners, including local fire agencies and CAL FIRE

Priority (H, M, L): High

Cost Estimate: The major cost involved is fire agency manpower, especially on the part of the Prevention Officer/Fire Marshal. There may also be some administrative cost for mailings, etc. However, most of these costs can probably be included in normal operating expenses.

The “Core Group” models used by the Greater Auburn Area Fire Safe Council and the Ponderosa Fire Safe Council in their Partnership Agreements could be replicated to create a local base of involved citizens to work with their local fire agencies.

Benefit: Fire Safe Councils have been demonstrated across the state as being effective in informing and motivating local residents to take action to create and maintain defensible space. It costs almost nothing to start and operate a fire safe council and to create local education programs. Grant funding for larger projects will be worked through the Placer County Fire Safe Alliance partners and the developing Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

Schedule: The Greater Lincoln Area Fire Safe Council was started up in 2010. Initial contacts have begun to start up a Greater Truckee Area Fire Safe Council. Sub-chapters could be implemented via homeowner associations, neighborhood watch groups, and other existing community-based organizations.

MEADOW VISTA / APPLGATE PRE-FIRE PROJECT PROPOSAL

The Meadow Vista / Applegate pre-fire project was also designed to augment current pre-fire projects that have been implemented by the Placer County Resource Conservation District, in conjunction with Placer Hills Consolidated Fire District, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the Black Oak Waldorf School, through grants funded by way of CAL FIRE and other sources. These projects include demonstrations of a CAL FIRE Vegetation Management Program prescribed burn, shaded fuel break, defensible space, and hand versus mechanical methods of fuel reduction, and a handbook for home-owners about defensible space. There is strong support of these pre-fire projects by the local community as evidenced by heavy attendance of public workshops and landowner participation.

Meadow Vista / Applegate Pre-Fire Project

Event 1: A series of roadside fuel modifications, located in strategic areas to allow fire fighting resources access and a location to effectively suppress an encroaching wildfire. Using existing roads for the location of the fuel modification takes advantage of the area occupied by the road surface, which is devoid of all vegetation. Modifying the fuels for a distance of 25 feet on both sides of the existing road will give an effective fuel break width of approximately 70 to 80 feet for secondary roads. The location of these fuel modifications will allow ready access and a strategic defensive position for fire suppression resources and facilitate long term maintenance of the fuel breaks.

Proposed Roadside Fuel Modifications:

1. Canyon River Fuel Break separating Applegate from the North Fork of the American River. The fuel break will follow primarily along portions of Cerro Vista Drive, and Boole Road.
 - Approximately 7 miles (This portion has been completed)
2. Placer Hills Road Fuel Break from I 80 to and including Weimar Cross Roads to I 80 again.
 - Approximately 8 miles
3. Work with landowners along McElroy road to meet defensible space standards, complete fuel treatments along road and reduce overhead canopy to allow for engine access. (In progress, 2012).
 - Approximately 4 miles

CEQA: Forest Practice Exemption document, filed by Placer County RCD

Event 2: An intensive inspection program of the Meadow Vista and Applegate area to enforce the Public Resources Code 4291 Fire Safe standards (LE-100 Inspection). Placer County Planning Department estimates that there are approximately 3,400 housing units in this general area.

1. Ensure compliance with PRC 4291. This will promote a fuel condition adjacent to structures where fire suppression resources will have a better chance of protecting homes should a wildfire occur.

2. Educate the homeowners of the state law and local ordinance requirements regarding defensible space standards and what they should do to help the chances of their house surviving a wildfire in the area.

Event 3: Revise the Defensible Space and Healthy Forest Handbook: A Guide to Reducing the Wildfire Threat (2003). This handbook was developed specifically for landowners within the Meadow Vista Community Plan area and its surrounding communities. It currently discusses the old 30 foot firesafe clearance standards and need to be upgraded to comply with the 100 ft clearance. It focuses on defining wildfire threat and explains how to implement defensible space concept and enhance forest health.

This manual would be available through Placer Hills Fire District, CAL FIRE and the Placer County RCD, and Placer County Offices for all interested residents, focusing on those who are new to the community and have not lived in rural environments previously.

Event 4: Work with landowners within the Meadow Vista Community Plan area to implement and make use of the Meadow Vista PTEIR (Program Timberland Environmental Impact Report), completed initially in 1999. This document was developed by the Placer County RCD and CAL FIRE to make it easier for landowners in the Meadow Vista Community to conduct fuel reduction treatments, such as shaded fuelbreaks, defensible space, and defensible landscape practices, while at the same time providing some revenue through commercial timber harvest.

Event 5: Work with Placer County OES to develop an evacuation plan for this community.

Potential Stakeholders:

- Placer County
- CAL FIRE
- Local Service Groups
- Placer County Resource Conservation District
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Placer County Air Pollution
- Placer Hills Fire District
- American River Watershed CRMP
- Homeowners Associations
- Placer County Sheriff's Office
- WACMAC (Weimar/Applegate/Colfax Municipal Advisory Council)

FORESTHILL FUEL MODIFICATION PROJECT

The Foresthill pre-fire project was designed to tie in with and increase the effectiveness of current projects that the Placer County Resource Conservation District (RCD) has implemented in the area as a result of grant funding from CAL FIRE and fuel break projects the Tahoe National Forest has started to the east of Foresthill. The RCD projects include a demonstration of a shaded fuel break for forest lots, education of the local population of fire safe standards, and fuel break planning for the Foresthill Divide.

Foresthill Pre-fire Project:

Event 1: An inspection program of the Foresthill Divide area to enforce the Public Resources Code 4291 Fire Safe standards (LE-100 Inspection). Placer County Planning Department estimates that there are approximately 2,400 housing units on the Divide. Inspection of these housing units will serve two purposes:

1. Ensure compliance with PRC 4291. This will promote a fuel condition adjacent to structures where fire suppression resources will have a better chance of protecting homes should a wildfire occur.
2. Educate the homeowners of the state law requirements regarding defensible space standards and what they should do to help the chances of their house surviving a wildfire in the area.

The Nevada Yuba Placer Unit has found, in its Nevada County LE-100 Inspection program in 2001, that 33% of the residences require a second inspection to ensure compliance with PRC 4291. Approximately 1% of the residences required a third inspection.

Event 2: Work with Foresthill Fire Department to collect and validate information on fuel treatments completed through various funding sources within the communities and status them for maintenance. A series of roadside fuel modification projects are located in strategic areas to allow fire fighting resources access and a location to effectively suppress an encroaching wildfire.

Event 3: Work with homeowners to continue removal of vegetation and firesafe landscaping through the process of defensible space inspections. The inspections will most likely occur in the late spring and summer months. Residents who remove vegetation as a result of the inspections may need alternative ways to dispose of the material. Burn days will be limited due to air quality and fire hazard concerns. The proposed support for the homeowner is to notify the residents that have been inspected as to a time frame when a chipper and crew will be by their street. Homeowners can then clear vegetation around their residence and bring it to the curbside. The crew will then chip the vegetation and deposit the material back onto the property. Multiple residents within the project area have made use of the chipper program and many others have cleared around their homes in an effort to reduce their fire hazard.

Potential Stakeholders to participate in Cost Sharing to Fund the Project:

- CAL FIRE
- Placer County

- Todd Valley Homeowners Association
- Local Service Groups
- Placer County Resource Conservation District
- Placer County Air Pollution
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- California Energy Commission
- Tahoe National Forest
- Bureau of Land Management
- Bureau of Reclamation
- American River Watershed CRMP
- Foresthill Fire Protection District
- Pacific Gas & Electric

ANNUAL DEFENSIBLE SPACE INSPECTIONS PROGRAM IN THE UNINCORPORATED COUNTY

Issue/Background: Defensible space is recognized by CAL FIRE as the single most important action that a homeowner can take to increase the chances that homes and other structures will survive a wildfire. Defensible space also helps to protect the wildland from a structure fire. Another benefit of defensible space is that it provides firefighters with a safe place to work while defending a home from fire.

Many homeowners are still not completely aware of the requirements of defensible space, especially new residents who move to the County from highly urban areas where it is normal to expect a fire engine, or even multiple engines, to be dedicated to fighting a structure fire. However, during a wildfire, this is not feasible. Homes and other structures must be able to withstand an approaching wildfire with no assistance from firefighters. Also, fire fighters will not defend a home unless they can do so safely.

Regular inspections, based on the requirements of California Law as specified in Public Resources Code 4291, can help ensure that homeowners create and maintain adequate defensible space. The inspection process is also an opportunity to educate and motivate the homeowners to take action to improve their wildfire safety.

While CAL FIRE has the legislative mandate to perform these inspections, in reality budgets do not provide for sufficient staffing to do this beyond the occasional inspection requested by a homeowner.

Priority (H, M, L): High

DEVELOP THE FOLLOWING GIS LAYERS FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES WITHIN YUBA COUNTY:

The Yuba Fire Safe Council, a GIS subcommittee has been established to share GIS data and information, as well and set standards for development of GIS data to support major incidents. This data would be hosted by Yuba County IT in the form of a master dataset available online, through a password protected site.

Yuba County is vulnerable to large, fast moving fires that involve deployment of incident command teams and evacuations. Building a readily accessible master database of county data and fire related data will expedite strategic planning and streamline the mapping process. This master dataset will include data from Yuba County, the Yuba County Firesafe Council, CAL FIRE, USFS, BLM, UC Davis and local timber company owners.

Yuba County and other should have the ability to assess the status of critical facilities at the time of an incident. Mapped data would improve this process by allowing the Emergency Operations center to compare a mapped hazard against mapped facilities allowing for a more precise query of affected facilities. Mapped data will significantly improve the direction of damage assessment teams as an example.

The Yuba County Firesafe Council has also been developing data layers for fire hydrants and water sources. Mapped fire hydrants and water sources will reduce the time that it takes an engine company to find an adequate water source in the event of a fire.

Cooperators: Yuba County Firesafe Council, Yuba County, CAL FIRE, USFS, BLM, UC Davis, local timber companies and any other emergency services provider that wishes to participate.

Priority (H, M, L): Medium

Benefit: The development of a shared GIS server will significantly improve the quality of the County's. Mapped data will improve planning accuracy, will improve precision in operations and will improve response timeliness. It is not possible to quantify cost savings in terms of dollars.

Potential Funding: TBD

Schedule: An interagency group was formed in early 2011. Yuba County is investigating server availability and security policies. Each member has been tasked with collecting an inventory of the data they house. A geodatabase template for collecting fuel treatments has been started.

ALTA SIERRA PRE-FIRE PROJECT

The Greater Alta Sierra Neighborhood (GASN) Firewise Community in collaboration with the Nevada County Firesafe Council (NCFSC), CAL FIRE and the Nevada Consolidated Fire District (NCCFD) strike to improve defensible space through risk assessment, public education, and fuels mitigation. Goals include improving defensible spaces through community involvement, completion of a Wildfire Hazard Assessment and the development of an associated wildfire mitigation plan.

This program seeks to:

- Increase defensible space through community outreach and education;
- Identify and help implement specific fuel reduction projects on large public owned parcels or other high risk areas;
- Increase participation in existing successful programs such as the NCFSC Scotch Broom Challenge and Alta Sierra Property Owners Association (ASPOA) Green Waste program;
- Maintain the necessary criteria to be recognized as a Firewise Community USA.

Stakeholders:

- Nevada County
- Local Service Groups
- Nevada County Resource Conservation District
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Northern Sierra Air Quality District
- Nevada County Consolidated Fire Protection District
- Alta Sierra Subdivision Homeowners Association
- California FireWise
- Nevada County Fire Safe Council
- USDA Forest Service

B. COLUMBIA HILL SHADED FUEL BREAK PROJECT

With California's wildland-urban interface areas quickly growing, as well as the population of Nevada County, the objective of the Columbia Hill Shaded Fuel Break Project is to create a shaded fuel break in the Columbia Hill area of Nevada County. Strategically, the project will tie in with the earlier established Montezuma Fuel Break to give firefighters a place to make an efficient stand against a wildfire on the San Juan Ridge.

In the 6 mile fuel break area there are approximately 85 separate landowners, 47 of whom chose to participate in the project. Nearly all of these homeowners have insufficient defensible space and combining this with poorly maintained roadside vegetation, the Fire Safe Council of Nevada County was able to work with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection to identify the prior mentioned aspects of the area as a recipe for disaster.

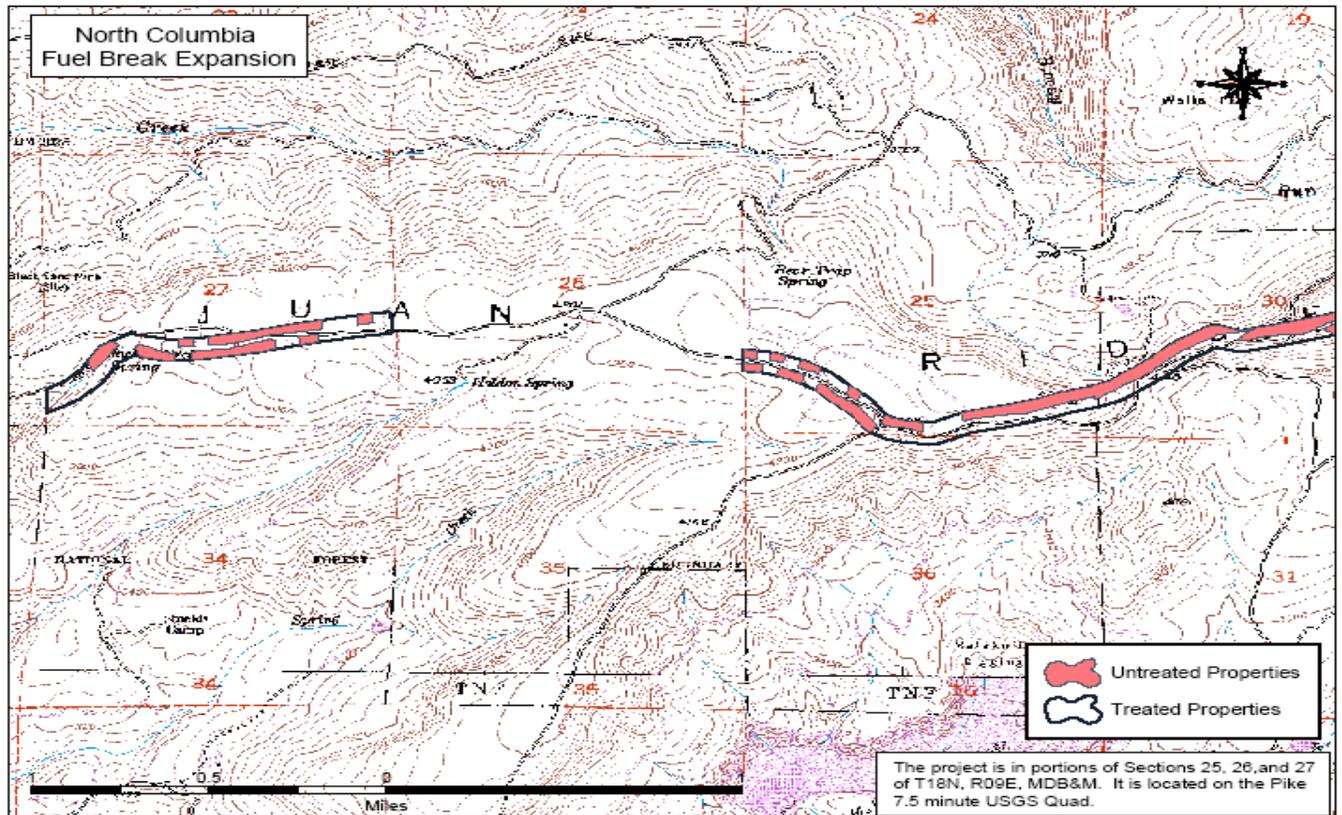
The Columbia Hill area is predominately heavy timbered land with thick manzanita understory fuels.

Actions involved in the proposed project

The Columbia Hill Fuel Break Project was designed to tie in with previously established fuels reduction efforts, such as the Montezuma Fuel Break. Specifications written into the project called for the creation of a 400' wide shaded fuel break to run 200' along both sides of Tyler Foote and Cruzon Grade Roads in the project area. There has been strong support and great interest in this project from the involved community.

Event 1: Fuel Break Construction. A community meeting was held in July of 2003 to introduce this project to the community. After a number of other mailings to landowners, the FSCNC began meeting with landowners who chose to participate in the project to mark property boundaries as well as determine what specific work they would like accomplished. Under the grant funding the project the FSCNC was also able to hire a contracted forester who met with each landowner who wished to have timber removed from their land to mark timber and confirm their wishes. Once this was accomplished, a Timber Harvest Plan was submitted to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection and the hand clearing and timber work was put out to bid. Pending approval of the Timber Harvest Plan, the FSCNC will select a licensed timber operator to contract with to complete the work at which time a FSCNC representative will be on site at all times to ensure correct operations are taking place on individually owned lands. The end result will be a 400' wide fuel break throughout much of the Columbia Hill area. **This portion of the project has been completed.**

Event 2: Fuel Break Maintenance. With the exception of one parcel, all participating landowners have agreed to donate revenue from their harvested timber back to the Fire Safe Council of Nevada County. These funds will be placed in a trust fund and utilized to maintain the fuel break over the next five to ten years.



SENIOR AND DISABLED ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Fire Safe Council of Nevada County has identified a need to continue the Senior and Disabled Assistance Program to provide defensible space clearing for elderly and disabled Nevada County residents unable to physically and financially clear on their own. The program currently utilizes workers from the Nevada County Probation Department's Work Release Program with supervision and direction from FSCNC staff to complete the requested work and bring participants into compliance with current defensible space laws.

Event 1: Secure Funding for Program Continuation – This program is currently funded by a grant from the Allstate Foundation, however the Fire Safe Council of Nevada County is applying for additional grants to expand program operations.

Event 2: Senior Contacts and Clearing – The Fire Safe Council of Nevada County will meet on-site with Seniors to determine what work they would like completed and consequently schedule the clearing work with the Probation Department. This task will be ongoing from the current time period until funding is no longer available.

DEFENSIBLE SPACE DROP OFF PROGRAMS

In an effort to encourage residents in outlying portions of the County and the East side of the County to clear defensible space, the FSCNC provides drop-offs days and locations throughout the County where residents are allowed to drop off vegetative material, including pine needles and other materials not able to be processed through the chipping program, for a weekend time frame. Materials are then ground and transported to cogeneration facilities or distributed as mulch. This program has proven more effective than chipping in the Eastern portion of Nevada County.

Event 1: Secure Funding for Program Continuation – This program is currently funded through grants of Proposition 40 Funds.

Event 2: Schedule Drop-offs: Multiple drop-offs have been scheduled throughout the County in 2006 in Condon Park, Owl Creek, Glenshire, Plavada, Soda Springs, Hobart Mills and Tahoe Donner.

Event 3: Conduct Drop-Offs: The drop-offs will be open for a full month with material being processed within seven days of the close of each drop-off. Material will be trucked to a co-generation facility or left onsite.

C. YUBA COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS ROADSIDE CLEARING PLAN

Actions involved in the proposed project:

Roadside clearance projects that will benefit the various foothill community's fire protection and traffic safety have been identified by the cooperative efforts of CDF, USFS, and the Yuba Watershed Protection & Fire Safe Council. Through a system of prioritization and cooperation the Yuba County Department of Public Works (YCDPW) will direct their roadside clearing efforts to those roads identified as having the greatest potential for improving fire safety, evacuation, egress, and access.

Event 1: A priority list of roads will be provided to the YCDPW. They will then direct their roadside clearance crews to direct their efforts on the roads based on the established priorities.

This portion of the project has been completed.

This project will result in a direct reduction of the fire hazard to the homes immediately adjacent to the identified roads and will provide enhanced protection to the communities of Dobbins – Oregon House, Brownsville, Challenge, Loma Rica and many more.

Roads identified include Forbestown Road, Pendola Extension Road and the 169 Road. Also included and identified by CAL FIRE as priority roads are Selby Ranch, Woods Creek Truck Trail, Labadies High Prairie Road and Oregon Peak Lookout Road. **(In progress 2011-2012)**

For cost efficiency, CAL FIRE Washington Ridge Crews have been utilized successfully for this project in cooperation with Yuba County Public Works. Recent federal fuels grants have been implemented within this project.

CEQA: Yuba County has filed a CQUA NOE

Stakeholders:

- Yuba County
- CAL FIRE
- USDA Forest Service – Tahoe National Forest
- Feather River Air Management District
- Yuba Watershed Protection & Fire Safe Council