



Dear St Helena Road Property Owner:

The newly formed **Upper Mark West Watershed Fire Safe Council** has identified the St Helena Road corridor as one of its top concerns for fire safety issues in our community. We are working with Fire Safe Sonoma to submit a grant to CAL FIRE to support the completion of a shaded fuel break along St Helena Road. This proposed St Helena Road Fuel Break was identified as a top priority project in both **Friends of the Mark West Watershed Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP)** and in CAL FIRE's Sonoma Unit Strategic Fire Plan.

The overgrown vegetation along this road creates difficult ingress and egress for both emergency vehicles and residents of the community. In the event of a wildfire in the area, community residents need to be able to evacuate safely, and emergency responders need to gain entry without excessive risk to crews. No one is more aware of this dangerous situation than the landowners along St Helena Road.

A shaded fuel break provides a green canopy of foliage that is a safe distance above the road. Ladder fuels, small trees and brush, will be removed so that they don't provide a connection for flames to climb up into that canopy. The shaded fuel break can reduce fire intensity by the elimination of ladder fuels, while retaining and limbing-up larger healthier trees.

The effectiveness of shaded fuel breaks is greatly affected 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. We would like to extend this vegetation removal along St Helena Road up to 30 feet from the edge of pavement on both sides of the roadway. **As a property owner on St Helena Road, we request your permission to create this shaded fuel break on your property up to 30 feet from the roadway.** Your willingness to participate in this project will increase the effectiveness of the fuel break by providing an important link with the other treated areas along St Helena Road. The treatment work on your property will be provided free of charge to you and will be done according to CAL FIRE standards. If your home or outbuildings are within 30 feet of the road, this grant will help you create a safer space around those structures. This work will also support your efforts to comply with your homeowner's insurance company standards for renewing your policy and avoiding cancelations. This will be an invaluable first step to you safeguarding your property for the future.

If you agree to participate in this project, please complete the enclosed form. For your convenience, we will fill in the Property Description field with your parcel information. This form serves as your permission for work to occur on your property once the grant has been approved. We want to submit the grant to CAL FIRE as soon as possible and would greatly appreciate receiving the forms at your earliest convenience. We will keep you informed regarding the grant process. Please contact us immediately if you have any concerns about signing the approval form. If you have questions, please join us at an informational meeting on Thurs, Oct 17th at 5:30 pm at Monan's Rill. You can find more information and RSVP here: <https://forms.gle/Wx6m2SfLRTpi9N9HA> or scan the QR code below:

Sincerely,

Community Wildfire Protection Plan Steering Committee
Upper Mark West Watershed Fire Safe Council



info@markwestwatershed.org

6985 Saint Helena Road, Santa Rosa, CA 95404