



Important New Information



October 24, 2019

Dear St Helena Road Property Owner:

Thank you for your interest and support of our project to secure a grant to create a shaded fuel break along St Helena Road. We have received almost unanimous agreement that the overgrown vegetation along St Helena Road should be decreased. However, we also realize that 'one size does not fit all' in terms of how this will be accomplished along different properties bordering the road. This is especially true where homes, wells, pump houses, barns and outer buildings are within the 30-foot treatment perimeter. We also realize that there are additional concerns for those properties where Mark West Creek falls within the 30-foot treated area. For this reason, we are providing additional clarification regarding these situations.

By signing the attached Property Owner Approval Form, you are giving your approval to continue the shaded fuel break along St Helena Road onto your property, up to 30 feet from the roadway. We are seeking your approval BEFORE we submit for the grant. Once we have received grant approval, there will be additional opportunities for homeowners to provide more input and individually direct what work is done on your property, before any work is completed. There will also be a significant amount of effort once the grant is approved to secure the necessary environmental approvals and clearances, prior to any work being done.

A few additional points of clarification that will hopefully make you more comfortable signing the approval form now:

- The grant will include a contracted professional forester which will be available to work with homeowners to develop specific treatment plans where homes and structures reside inside the 30-foot fuel break. Homeowners will have the ability to review and approve these treatment plans before any work is initiated.
- Work will be done according to CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) guidelines and environmental review, if required, will be completed prior to vegetation work initiation. All CEQA requirements will be met utilizing a consultant.
- Consultants will provide input and oversight to ensure that vegetation removal does not cause erosion issues on homeowner's property or create additional erosion concerns for properties along Mark West Creek. Fuels removal will not be ground disturbing.
- "Green Fences" (bamboo/oleander) or other vegetation that were planted to provide protection from noise, debris, and vehicle/fuel fumes will only be removed with homeowner approval, unless they are in conflict with roadside vegetation standards of Sonoma County Code Chapter 13A.

info@markwestwatershed.org

6985 Saint Helena Road, Santa Rosa, CA 95404



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Once again, the project treatment work will:

- Be provided free of charge to homeowners and will be done according to CAL FIRE standards
- Include vegetation treatment out to 30 feet from road on both sides (unless prohibited due to proximity to riparian zones)
- Stop at fences (within 30 feet from edge of road) unless property owner agrees to treatment, and if existing fences will not make work impractical for the contractor.
- Stop where erosion potential present
- Only remove vegetation from fences with owner approval
- Only remove "Green Fences" (bamboo/oleander) with homeowner approval
- Improve defensible space if structures <30 feet of road
- Help create a safer space around structures if home or outbuildings are within 30 feet of the road
- Be an invaluable first step to safeguarding homeowner's property for the future.

We hope that you agree to participate in this project and can complete the enclosed form. For your convenience, we will fill in the Property Description field with your parcel information. We need to submit the grant to CAL FIRE by December 4, 2019 and would greatly appreciate receiving your signed approval form no later than November 15, 2019. 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 the Friends of Mark West Watershed's Fall Gratitude Gathering, Saturday, November 2, 2019 3PM to 6PM at Monan's Rill.

Sincerely,

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

info@markwestwatershed.org

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