



# Forest Fuels and Defensible Space

Eric Horntvedt  
November 20, 2020

## **SNPLMA 16 – Tahoe Network of Fire Adapted Communities (TNFAC)**

Chipping ended for the season in October. Colder weather and snow greatly reduced solicited requests for defensible space inspections. Nonetheless, DSI Sarah Gley completed 100+ inspections and Inspector Ramon Manzano completed 15+ defensible space inspections during his short-term rental inspections. More than half of these inspections were onsite with the property owner or agent. Our TNFAC program is also designed to recruit neighborhood leaders who are interested in taking wildfire risk reduction action in their community. To best guide this action, NTFPD led the charge for the Basin to parallel our TNFAC program with NFPA's Firewise USA recognition program. This provided a programmatic frame work, process, and recognition criteria for our communities to meet before they become nationally recognized as Firewise USA communities and also requires annual recertification. I'm very proud to share that, as of November 20, 2020, NTFPD has three Firewise USA sites that renewed and are in good standing: Alpine Meadows, Carnelian Woods Townhouse Association, and Dollar Point. Three new Firewise sites submitted their application: Alpine Peaks, Agate Bay, and Chamberlands.

## **FEMA – Hazardous Fuels Reduction on California Tahoe Conservancy (CTC) Lots**

Phase II will treat 281 individual parcels for a total of 51.82 acres of CTC lots from Hwy. 267 to Tahoe City. This project treats state-owned lots in order to enhance and provide effective defensible space to our community members living adjacent to these lots. As of November 20, 2020, over 25 acres of fuel reduction has been completed, and the contractor has continued to work as conditions allow.

## **SNPLMA 16 – Tahoe Program Timberland Environmental Impact Report (PTEIR)**

The PTEIR core submitted comments to the Admin Draft Final PTEIR on November 2. Ascent(contractor) will be clarifying comments, and working to prepare a screencheck draft, begin noticing requirements, and it will look to publish a Final Tahoe PTEIR in early 2021. It is very exciting to finally see years of environmental research, analysis, modeling, and calculations come to live in a comprehensive analysis of an increased pace and scale of forest management and fuels reduction on the California side of Lake Tahoe.

- All agencies that conduct vegetation management on the California side of Lake Tahoe will benefit from this Programmatic report as it will streamline environmental planning/permitting on commercial & noncommercial timber harvesting/fuels reduction projects. The project-by-project review process that has been used to comply with CEQA, FPA, TRPA, LRWQCB, and other regulatory requirements has led to inefficiencies, delays, excess costs, and inconsistencies in project planning. We are excited to keep our momentum moving forward with this project, as completion will allow accelerated implementation of fuels reduction projects by resource managers in the Defense zone of the WUI on the California side of the basin.



# Forest Fuels and Defensible Space

Eric Horntvedt  
November 20, 2020  
Page 2

## **SNPLMA 16 – Hazardous Fuels Reduction & Wildfire Prevention Projects**

I have been using available geodatabase sets to identify landowners that are at high risk for catastrophic wildfire and will be looking to engage these landowners for implementation of fuel reduction treatments that would begin as early as 2021. I have met onsite with Tamarack Mutual Water Co. representatives to propose implementing a 700-1000' shaded fuel break along Hwy. 89 uphill of the "Ring Roads". The current approach is to engage CTC, Tamarack, Rubicon, and a few other adjoining property owners in order to implement an all-ownership fuel break that would tie in to previously treated USFS lands.

## **SNPLMA 15 – North Tahoe Community Wildfire Protection Plan Implementation**

Nothing new to report, still waiting to hear back from SNPLMA on the project modification request – hand thin and pile work is nearing completion. As of October 1, 2020, there are only seven acres left to cut and pile. While carrying out July-September reporting, we had to pause additional hand thin and pile burn work on this project after catching that we slightly exceeded the \$450,000 available in federal funding. All project partners are aware, and we have some promising options for more funding to complete the project and carry out pile burn operations across 134-150 acres. As of October 29, 2020, a Project Modification request for \$90,000 in Special Account Reserve funds and a one-year time extension was submitted to SNPLMA. We are hoping that this request is approved, and that with local match supplied by NTPUD and this additional funding, we will be able to carry out pile burn operations when conditions allow. I will be looking to finalize a burn plan, smoke management plan, obtain an air permit, and develop an incident action plan for slash disposal pile burning activities so that we have all plans and permits in place and are able to burn when funding, conditions, and crew availability all align.