

A History of the Nevada County Coalition of Firewise Communities and the growth of Nevada County OES



FIREWISE USA™

Residents reducing wildfire risks

5 years, 5x growth



Coalition of FWCs 20 at meetings

100+ at meetings incl public

County OES 1 staff member

5 staff members

Sept 2017

Sept 2022

What is “the Coalition”?

- All-volunteer organization with no legal status
- No staff, no dues and no budget
- We produce monthly meetings to:
 - **Share** information, ideas, problems/solutions with other FWCs
 - **Amplify** the county-wide effort to educate residents on wildfire preparedness
 - **Be a “voice of the people”** in publicly advocating for better fire-safe practices and policies.

First meeting September 2017

Founder Kent Rees (Cascade Shores)
invited leaders of 22 certified and
22 In Training Firewise Communities

Co-Chair: Frances Jorgensen
(Greater Champion)

We started with about
20 people every month
in the Community Room
at the Madelyn Helling Library.



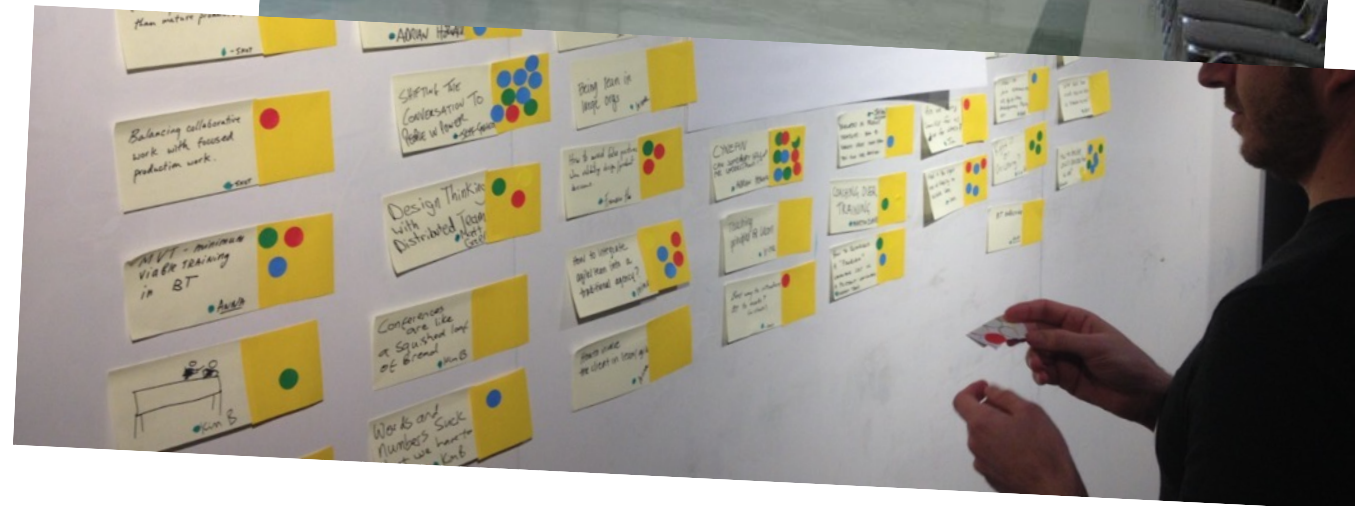
October 2017

Working groups formed

Pete Williams led us in an exercise that included “voting” with colored dots to determine our initial priorities.

Three Working Groups were created to address the issues identified as most important:

- Enforcement
- Evacuation
- Real Estate



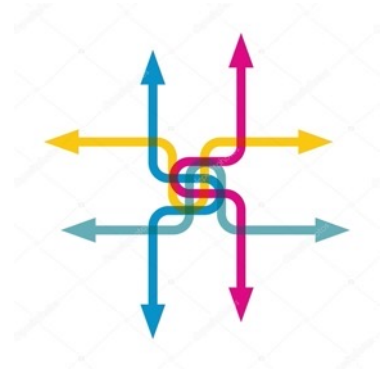
Enforcement Working Group



- Peter Beesley, Beth Enoch, Dario Davidson with Joanne Drummond advising
- **GOAL: compile and communicate to local & state government and fire agencies what actions and best practices need to be taken to:**
 1. Improve the effectiveness of local **building, planning and land use regulations**, including ... those related to **brush clearing and fuel modification**.
 2. Improve and expand the **County's fire prevention inspection program** with the goal of **significantly increasing its effectiveness beyond...compliance with PRCs 4290 and 4291 and the County's current HVAO**.
 3. Expand public/private partnerships that help **drive increased homeowner awareness and compliance**.
 4. Increase the level of resources needed **to mitigate hazardous vegetation** around communities, homes, other structures and along our roadsides.

Evacuation Working Group

- Chris Reilly, Michael Warner, Christine Knox, Steve Chandler, Edwin Curtis, John Wade, Kathy Fisch
- **GOAL: Study how other communities move people quickly out of harm's way.**
 - Civil defense warning systems, a loud horn, tsunami warning system.
- "Alta Sierra is Ground Zero for this problem."



Real Estate Working Group

- Kent Rees and Susan Rogers
- GOAL: Improve awareness and education about Defensible Space **when a house is being sold.**
 - NCAOR said they might make Realtors use the **Defensible Space Advisors' checklist** a requirement in all transactions.
 - We proposed a **Firewise Realtor's Certification** program, they liked the idea and plans for that were started by the Fire Safe Council.



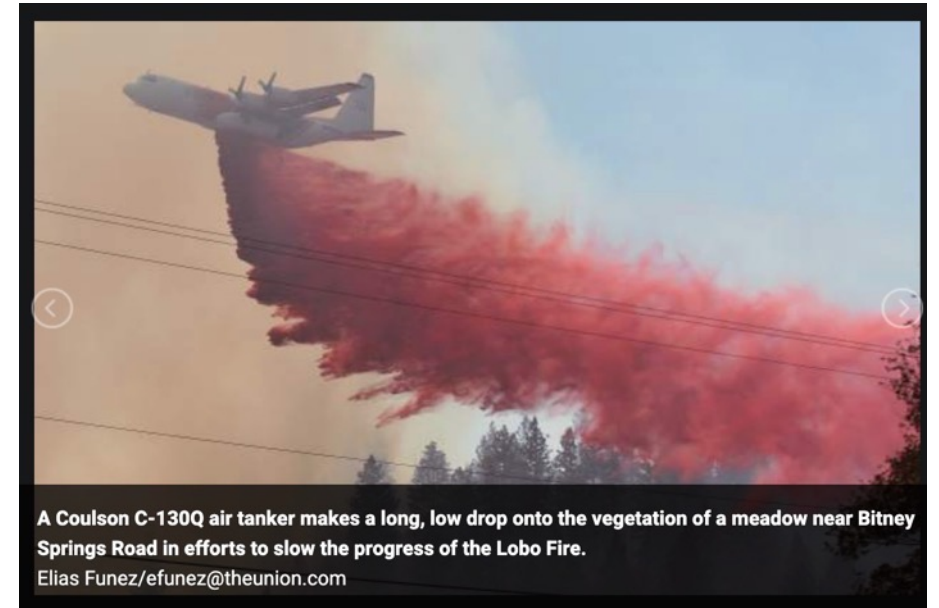
Six days after our meeting October 9, 2017

Lobo Fire (Rough & Ready)

821 acres

48 structures destroyed

Nearly 8,000 people evacuated



McCourtney Fire

76 acres

13 structures destroyed



December 2017

A **By-laws draft** was distributed and discussed.



Susan Rogers became Vice Chair.
Kent & Susan attended the Dec. 12
County Board of Supervisors meeting
to describe our key initiatives.



FWCs active by the end of 2017

Alta Sierra POA	Lake Vera-Round Mtn
Bear River Ranch	Lower Colfax
Cascade Shores	Mountain Lakes Estates
Cement Hill	Rattlesnake NA
Glenwood-Maidu-Charlene	Red Dog-You Bet
Greater Alta Sierra	Ridgeview Woodlands
Greater Champion	Sherwood Forest
Lake of the Pines	

***Our total geographical footprint encompassed nearly 50,000 people,
nearly half the population of Nevada County.***

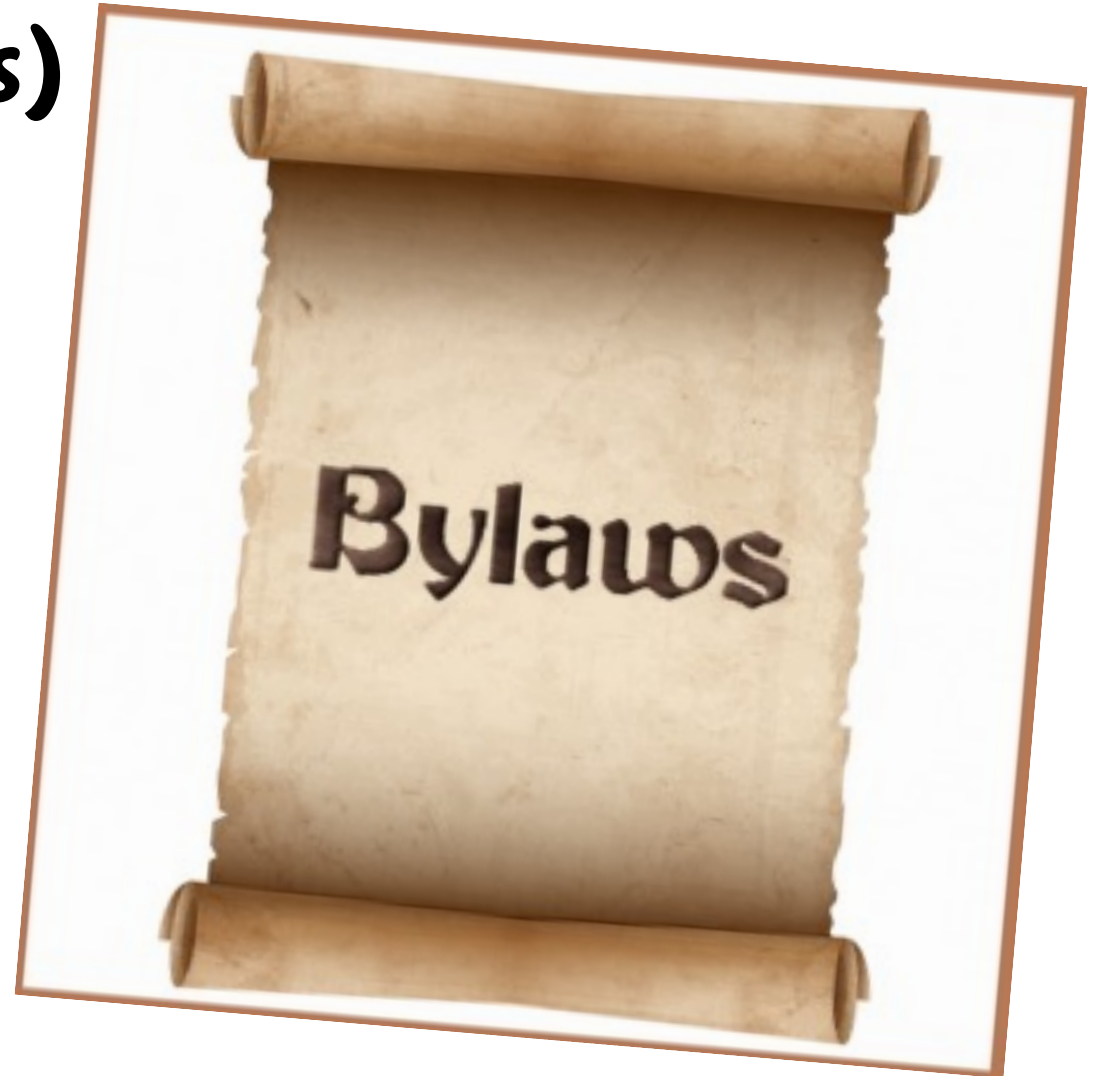
March 2018 (6-months)

27 attended meeting

Adopted **By-Laws** with a **Mission, Goal**, and sections on membership, officers, meetings and decision-making.

The By-Laws have been revised (slightly) four times and we should tweak them again soon, along with our Mission and Goal.

Available on the **About Us** page of our website.



April 2018

21 attended.

- Susan distributed survey on *How Do You Communicate with Your Firewise Community?*
 - We will implement this survey again in 2023
- Enforcement Group reported a top issue is **lack of enforcement of Hazardous Vegetation Abatement Ordinance**. Group members met with Supervisor Heidi Hall.
- Meeting minutes: ***“Supervisors seem very interested in the Firewise movement.”***



May 2018

23 attended.

Kent suggested we approach the County about putting a fire safety message

into **annual property tax bills** mailed to all residents.



Fire season is now year-round

Winter and early spring are the best times for clearing

Find information you need to prepare for wildfire: evacuation plan checklist, emergency supply kit, animal care tips, and more:

www.ReadyForWildfire.org (a CAL FIRE website)

Request a free Defensible Space Advisory Visit, get information on local resources to help protect your home and family:

Fire Safe Council of Nevada County

www.AreYouFireSafe.com (530) 272-1122

Want fire engines to come down your road? Here's what they need:
10' min. cleared beyond the shoulders and 15' height clearance (Nevada Co. ordinance Sec. G-IV T.4)

They liked the idea. Susan created the text and layout for the fire message.

The County put their own **CodeRED** message on the other side.

Also May 2018






Kent described the **30-day Clean-Up Courtesy Notice** used by Cascade Shores, to be used as a model for other FWCs.

Objective: **solve the problem** and **educate the homeowner** before involving the fire department.

Cascade Shores was getting @70% positive return on the form.

Evacuation Group reported meeting with Cal Fire, OES; working on system with signage and alerts.

30-DAY CLEAN-UP COURTESY NOTICE

TYPE YOUR FIREWISE COMMUNITY NAME IN THIS TEXT BOX. ARIAL FONT SUGGESTED

Date Mailed _____

To: Name _____

Street _____

City, State, ZIP _____

Dear Property Owner at _____ **in Your Community Name:**

As part of the fire safety program and "Firewise" in **Your Community Name**, we are working with fire officials to identify serious fire hazards. An alternative first step in the correction process, prescribed by fire authorities, is to provide this notice and to **give you extra time** to abate the safety problem(s) cited below.

Observed problems on a lot with structure(s):

- _____ Heavy fuel load not cleared to 100 feet from structure(s).
- _____ Excessive dry debris on roofs, gutters, and/or decks. (Marked as applicable.)
- _____ Excessive "ladder" fuels likely to spread potential ground fire into trees above.
- _____ Other: _____

Good progress toward correcting the above must be made by this date: _____

After this date, fire authorities may intercede with their own enforcement procedures. Please go to www.areyoufiresafe.org At this site you will find information about the Firewise program, wildland fire issues, and requirements of property owners, contacts, and resources for making your property safer.

NOTE: This "Courtesy Notice" supplements but does not replace ultimate fire agency authority to inspect and enforce.

Thank you for your cooperation in helping to make a safer community.

Community Name Here Firewise Community
Please call (530) **contact number here** with any questions

June 2018

27 attended.

Terry McMahan, Consolidated Fire Marshal, told us he'd sent about 500 notices to **owners of vacant parcels that need fuels reduction.**



Guest Speaker Matt Wallen of Cal Fire:

- **Emergency Drills** held in Alta Sierra and Lake Wildwood
- Said he's "excited about the Coalition's motivation and drive and feels the work of the Coalition is a positive force."



Kent Rees resigned as Coalition Chair. Bob Long unanimously elected new chair. Joanne Drummond no longer with Fire Safe Council.

July-November 6, 2018

25-29 attended.

Evacuation Group – Alta Sierra engineers meeting with OES and Public Works on testing audible warning devices, flashing signs.

Virginia Gompertz reported creating the **Emergency Alert Buddy System** in Lake Wildwood after spending 2 hours waking up 27 neighbors.

Guest Speaker John Gulserian from OES reported they received \$80k to pay four temporary **Defensible Space Inspectors who work only during fire season.**



Two days later November 8, 2018

The Camp Fire destroys
the town of Paradise,
50 miles north of here.

153,336 acres
18,804 structures destroyed
85 people died, several
firefighter injuries

**The costliest U.S. wildfire in
history: about \$10 billion**



January 2019

54 attended.



- YubaNet starts its Fire Safety By the Week series

- Guest Speaker Patrick Mason, Consolidated Fire
 - Described complaint-driven enforcement process



- John Gulserian, the sole County OES staffer, retires and moves away.

February 2019

52 attended.

- Virginia Gompertz appointed Coalition Secretary. Jeff Peach moved to Tech Manager and launches a **Coalition website**.
- County announces adoption of **Ready Nevada County** theme for wildfire preparedness, and their upcoming RNC website.
 - Quarterly Stakeholders Meetings started
- Coalition Straw poll (hand raise) on home sales: majority supported a **County ordinance to require a defensible space inspection by close of escrow**.



March 2019

62 attended. Our last meeting at Helling Library.

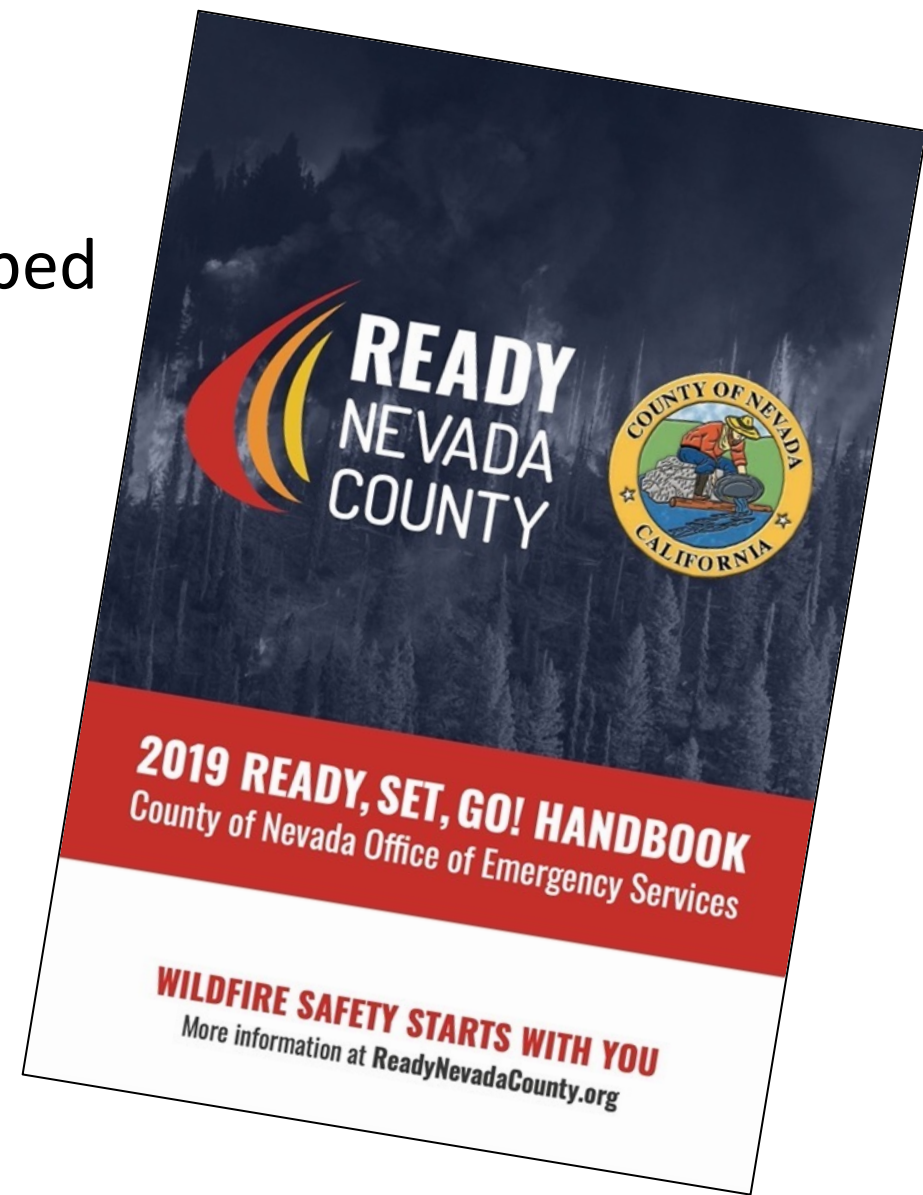
- County appoints Captain Jeff Pettitt from Sheriff's Office to OES. He starts attending every Coalition meeting and giving a monthly report.
- County appoints Jenn Tamo as Admin. Analyst in OES. She organizes **three standing-room-only Town Halls** on wildfire preparedness.
- Truckee FPD passes ordinance requiring a **Def Space Inspection prior to close of escrow.**



April 2019

First Coalition meeting in Esterly Hall. We stopped tracking attendance & names. We now have a **website** hosted on Fire Safe Council server.

- County mails its first annual **Ready Nevada County handbook** to all Nevada County residents (abt 60,000)
- Capt. Jeff Pettit of OES announces that a Defensible Space Inspector will come out if you have a complaint (**first time County provides these inspections instead of the fire agencies**).



May 2019

61 attended mtg

First Free Green Waste Disposal
managed by Fire Safe Council and
paid for with grant funding



August 2019

NFPA-certified Firewise Communities now at **35**

September 2019

37 certified FWCs, **42** In Training

County announces new **Hi-Lo sirens** in all county and city patrol cars

First annual county-wide test of the **CodeRED Emergency Alert** system

Coalition Chair Bob Long and Vice Chair Susan Rogers announce intention to step down at end of year.



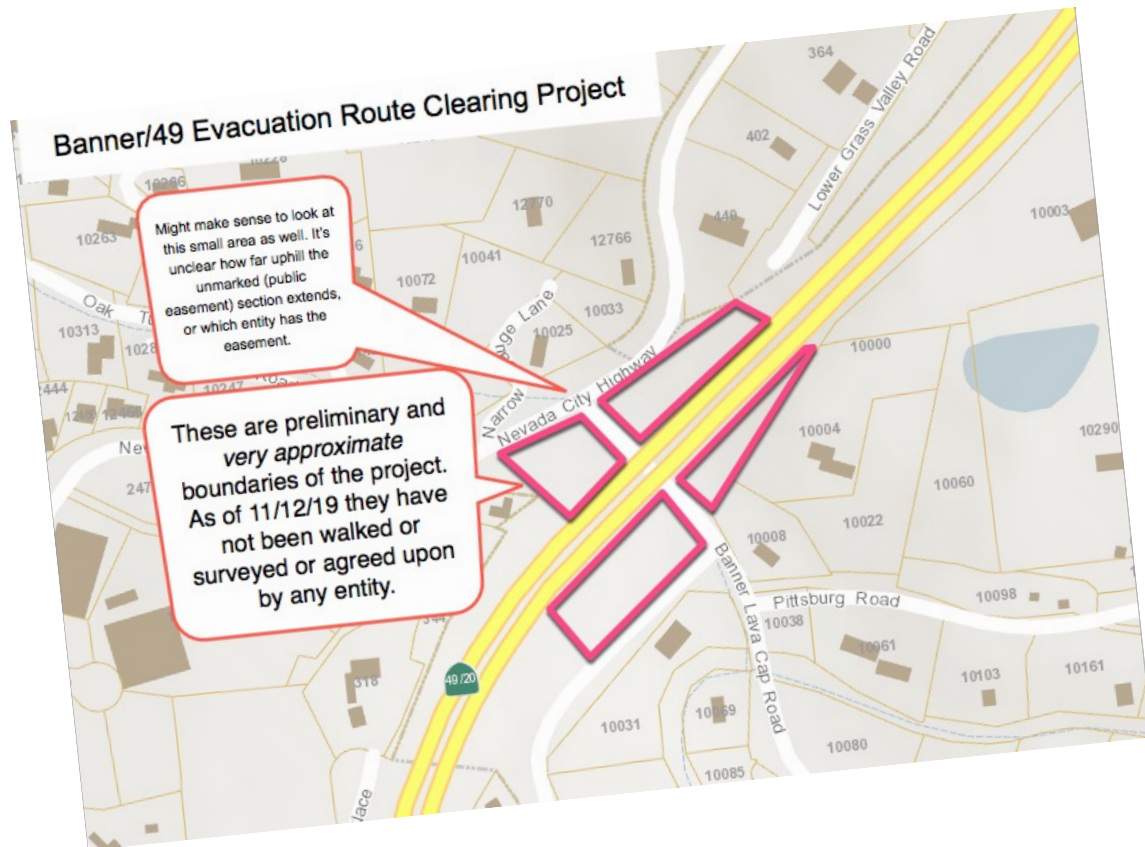
Nov 2019

Dr. Joann Fites-Kaufman, local fire scientist, alerted us that that Banner Lava Cap overcrossing at Hwy 49/20 was “the worst tree density” she’d ever seen at an evacuation chokepoint.



Nov 2019+ (cont'd)

Susan Rogers talked to CalTrans; the Nevada County Transportation Commission; and Trisha Tillotson, County Director of Public Works.



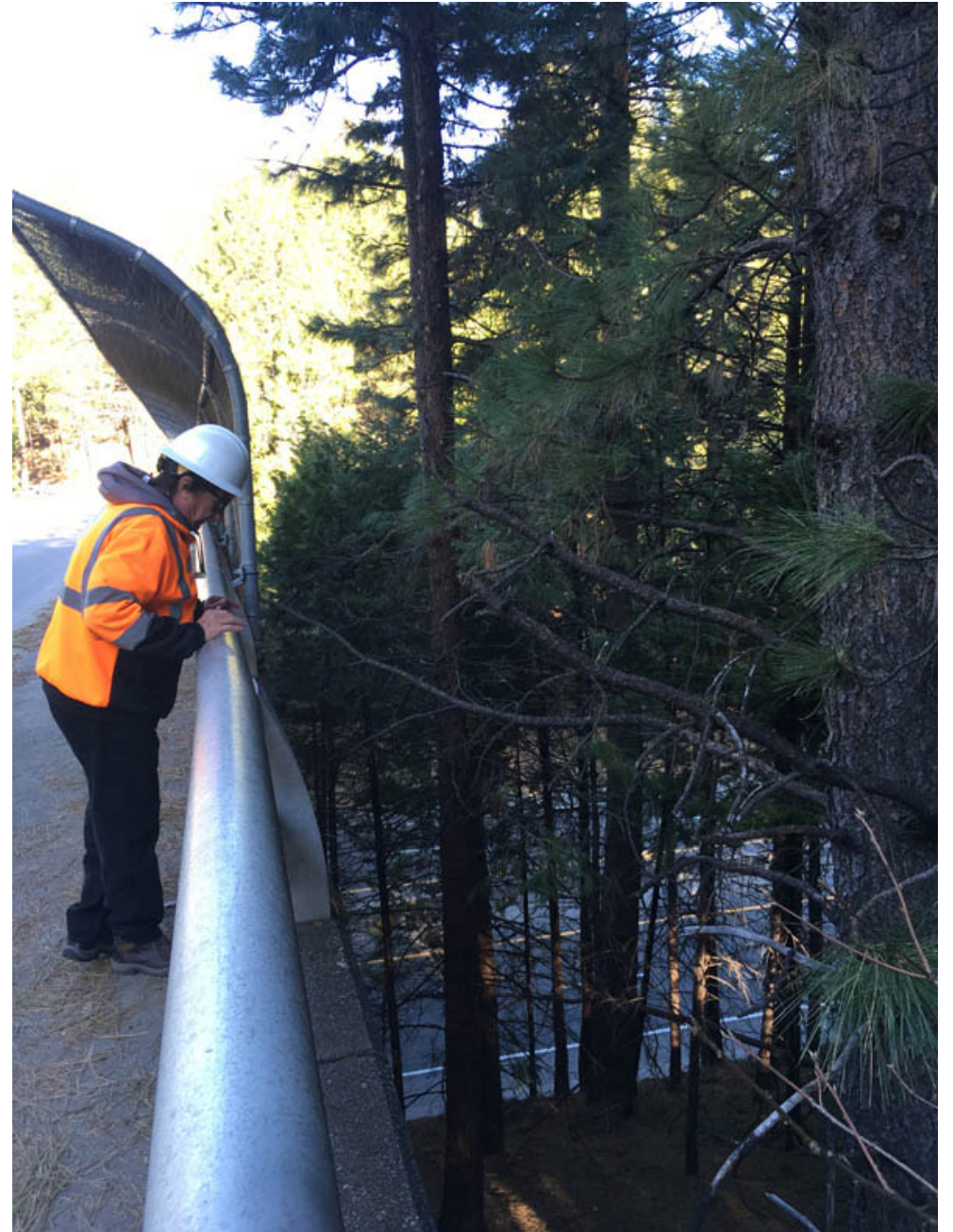
CalTrans sent me their 4–page Encroachment Permit form with 31 questions to answer and 34 data points to include.

Any tree over 4” to be removed **listed on Excel spreadsheet with:**

- Diameter
- Common name
- Species
- General condition
- GPS coordinates

Nov 2019+ (cont'd)

- I gave up.
- But, we had their attention. Over the next few months, I received three phone calls from CalTrans updating me about their attention to the issue, and an invitation to meet one of their supervisors at the bridge.



Nov 2019+ (cont'd)

- Eventually, CalTrans let PG&E clear the NC Highway side because of the high-voltage power lines there.
- CalTrans thinned the trees on the Banner Mountain side.
- After some illegal campers started a fire under the southeast bridge, I got a shout-out in a Coalition Zoom meeting for having brought CalTrans' attention to the tree problem at that overpass.



Dec 2019

- Lt. Robert Jakobs of Sheriff's Office replaces Captain Jeff Pettitt
- Coalition produces 1-pager on Roadside Clearance Regulations (County/City)

Roadside Clearance Regulations in Nevada County

These are the minimum clearances needed to provide safe access for 911 emergency response teams. **More than the required clearance is always better** because it reduces available fuel and creates much safer evacuation routes for residents.

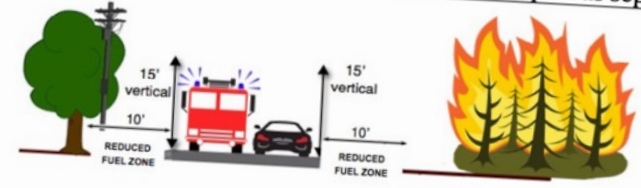
If you live in the unincorporated County*:

Nevada County Code, Chapter G-IV, Article 7

Distance from road	Clearance Requirement
Shoulder: paved or dirt/gravel	Clean and clear: No vegetation
Code Requirement: Next 10 feet on both sides of private roads leading to habitable structures.	Reduced Fuel Zone: Trees thinned and limbed to minimum 15' vertical clearance.

Note: the 10-foot requirement only gets you enough to enable responder access. **For maximum risk reduction and to avoid lethal radiant heat in an evacuation, clear a minimum of 20-30 feet.**

Brush/vegetation: all branches and dead bushes/trees removed; weeds and dead grasses cut to 4 inches maximum. "Mosaic" any stands of maintained, live plants, i.e. space them apart as separate islands.



If you live within city limits*:

Must be completed by June 1 and maintained through fire season.
Grass Valley Codes 8.16.230 & 8.16.240, Nevada City Codes 8.10.010-8.10.070

Distance from road	Clearance Requirement
City Code: The first 3 feet from road (public or private).	Clean and clear: No vegetation.
For maximum risk reduction: As far back as you can	Exception in Nevada City: cultivated ground cover: such as grass, ivy, and succulents, or similar plants, provided they do not constitute a fire hazard. **
Height above road	Minimum 13½' vertical clearance



* Street addresses with 5 digits are in the County. Street addresses with 3 digits are in an incorporated city or town.
** There is some flexibility in Nevada City for existing trees in the first 3 feet.

Jan 2020

- Paul Cummings hired as OES Program Manager.
Shane McLaughlin is **first full-time County Defensible Space Inspector**.
- 47 NFPA-certified FWCs, 31 In Training

April 2020



- Meetings moved from Esterly Hall to **ZOOM** in response to pandemic, initially hosted by Caleb Dardick using a County Zoom account .

July 2020

County launches the Ready Nevada County Dashboard

Ready Nevada County Dashboard Click [HERE](#) for a mobile friendly version of the Wildfire & Evacuation Incident Dashboard

Evacuation Incidents | Live Webcams & Fires | Burn Day Status | Current Wind & Weather | Air Quality Map | Evacuation Route Pre-Planner | Roadside Vegetation Mgmt Tracker

Expand the side-panel on the left for Evacuation Map legend & How-To

Current as of:
06/09/2022, 2:04 PM

Acres burned is unavailable at this time.

Percent Containment information unavailable at this time.

Personnel information is unavailable at this time.

Structural damage information is unavailable at this time.

Zone
GRS-E242
Nevada City Highway, Woodland Way, Maidu Lane, Charlene Lane

640 Charlene Lane, Grass Valley, California 95945, United States

Status
NORMAL

ALL CLEAR
No current knowledge of active public safety incidents affecting your area.

Map showing fire zones: GRS-E239, NCO-E253, GRS-E242, GRS-E247, NCO-E251, NCO-E324, NEV-E252, NEV-F290, NCO-E256, Gold Flat, E-300.

Tweets from @NevCoOES

Nevada County OES Retweeted
YubaNet @YubaNet · Dec 1
The South County Shaded Fuel Break Begins Community Outreach. Nevada County, CA December 1, 2022 — Eligible property owners are receiving information outlining how to participate in this critical fuel reduction program. The South County Shaded Fuel Break i bit.ly/3uhTbOR

Nevada County OES Retweeted
County of Nevada @NevadaCo... · Nov 30
Nevada County & Sierra Roots Open Cold Weather Emergency Shelter Thursday Night, December 1st, Through Saturday Morning, December 3rd Read at: [Twitter](#) [CodeRed Alerts](#)

also July 2020

Coalition produces
“How to Stay Informed
During Wildfire Season.”

September 2020

Zoom meeting opened to
the public so FWCs can use it
to meet their “annual
educational meeting”
requirement for NFPA during
the pandemic.

HOW TO STAY INFORMED DURING WILDFIRE SEASON

Check these **National Weather Service** websites for weather watches, warnings, and advisories: **Western Nevada County** - <https://www.weather.gov/stol/>. **Truckee** - <https://www.weather.gov/rev/>
To get PG&E **Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS)** forecasts: <https://m.pge.com/#registration>. Register your account and then set up your “Profile & Alerts.” Enter your email and all phone numbers.

Sign Up Now to Receive Emergency Alerts

CodeRED Emergency Alerts mynevadacounty.com/emergencyalerts. (On your smartphone, you can also text READYNEVADACOUNTY to 99411 to be linked directly to the sign-up page – be sure to complete your registration at the link texted to you.) It’s best to create a “managed account.” Input your information for all your landline/cell phone/text/emails. *If you need help signing up, dial 2-1-1 or 1-833-DIAL211 for assistance.* **Then add the following phone numbers to your “Favorites” on your cellphone** so you won’t think a CodeRED telephone alert is a spam call: CodeRED Emergency Alerts (866) 419-5000; CodeRED Non-emergency alerts (855) 969-4636.

Know your Evacuation Zone Number: visit community.zonehaven.com and type your address in the search box. Write it down AND save it in your cellphone. Use the *Find Your Five* plan (pg 18, [Ready Set Go Handbook](#)) to create a “buddy system” of friends who will alert you when they hear there’s a fire.

Sign up for Cal Fire text alerts. Visit www.readyforwildfire.org/. In the middle “KNOW” section, click “SIGN UP NOW.” On the next page, put your cellphone number and zip code in the SIGN UP box.

Download the Watch Duty app via App store or Google Play. Sign up and select “Nevada County” to get real-time push notifications directly to your phone about local wildfires. <https://www.watchduty.org/>



Monitor These Local Media to Stay Informed During An Actual Emergency

CodeRED emergency alerts work only when cell phone towers and telephone lines are working. *There is no guarantee you will receive an alert during an emergency, and it’s easy for rumors and misinformation to spread, so it’s critical that you also monitor the trusted sources of information listed below.* And remember that battery-operated, car/truck, and hand-crank radios will still work if your electricity goes out.

- **Internet:** the [Ready Nevada County Dashboard](#) (works best with Chrome browser) will have live-update information on **large** wildfire and evacuation incidents *when the county’s Emergency Operations Center is activated*. Put the [mobile version on your smartphone](#). Also has a tool for learning your Evacuation Zone number, checking wind direction, a live Twitter feed, and more.
- **Internet:** YubaNet.com - <https://yubanet.com/> Click on “**Happening Now.**”
- **Radio:** KVMR 89.5 FM (western county) or KVMR 105.1 FM (Truckee/Tahoe) - Nevada County’s Emergency Info Station (staffed 24/7). *Reports at the top of each hour and when there’s new info.*
- **Radio:** KNCO 830 AM or STAR 94.1 FM
- **Internet:** the County’s ReadyNevadaCounty.org website, during an emergency, will post a link to important evolving event information at the top of every page.
- **Internet:** The Union.com - <https://www.theunion.com/>
- **Internet:** Facebook [Nevada County Office of Emergency Services](#) and [Nevada County Sheriff’s Office](#)
- **Texts:** *Breaking News* from The Union: text “UnionNews” (without quotes) to the number 86677
- **Texts:** text your zip code to 888777 to get Nevada County Sheriff’s Office alerts
- **Twitter:** @NevCoOES; @NevCoSheriff; @YubaNetFire; @YubaNet; @TheUnion; @CAL_FIRE; @CALFIRENEU (Nevada-Yuba-Placer Unit); @PGE4Me; @PlacerSheriff
- **Cal Fire:** <https://www.fire.ca.gov/> or (530) 823-4083 (call volume may be high) for large incidents.
- **2-1-1 Connecting Point:** <https://211connectingpoint.org/> or dial 2-1-1 on your phone (or 1-833-342-5211). A free service (open 24/7) for official information on evacuations, road closures, mass care shelters, animal evacuations, social services, etc. **Do not dial 9-1-1** just to request information.


December 2020

We sent a letter (authorized by Coalition member vote) to CalTrans pointing out that they were way behind the curve with regard to roadside trees and safety.

 
FIREWISE USA
Residents reducing wildfire risks

NEVADA COUNTY COALITION of FIREWISE COMMUNITIES
The list below includes NFPA-certified and those pending assessment. An additional 29 communities are considered "in training" and working on becoming certified.

6B Ranch Estates
Ananda Village
Bear River Pines
Bear River Ranch
Bitney Springs
Cascade Shores
Dalmatian Drive Neighbors
Darkhorse
Deer Creek Southside
Echo Ridge
Foxwood-Slate Creek
Friends of Banner Mountain
Glenshire-Devonshire
Glenwood-Maidu-Charlene Nghbrs
Golden Oaks
Greater Alta Sierra Community
Greater Cement Hill Neighbors
Greater Champion Neighborhood
Greenhorn
Grizzly
Hyatt Blue Sage
Jones Bar Neighborhoods
Juniper Hills
Kentucky Flat
Lake of the Pines Association
Lake Vera Round Mountain
Lake Wildwood
Lower Colfax
Martis Peak
Montezuma Ridge
Mountain Lakes Estates
Outer Jackass Flats
Pine Forest
Rattlesnake Ridge Estates
Ridgeview Woodlands
Salmon Mine - East Sages
Serene Lakes
Shenwood Forest
Sierra Knolls Estates
Stonebridge HOA
Tahoe-Donner Association
The Cedars
The Gazebos HOA
Toller Ridge Court
Upper Rough & Ready
Town of Washington
West End Donner Lake
Wolf Mountain
You Bet Community


Coalition mailing address:
640 Charlene Lane
Grass Valley, CA 95945
Email c/o: susanrogers@nccn.net

Date: December 4, 2020
To: Caltrans District 3, Program/Project Management
From: Nevada County Coalition of Firewise Communities
Re: State Route 49 Draft Safety Assessment Report

This letter is regarding the **State Route 49: I-80 to McKnight Way Draft Safety Assessment Report**. At our December 1 online meeting, 44 representatives of Firewise Communities in Nevada County (listed at left, encompassing more than 70,000 county residents) voted to authorize this public input from the Coalition.

The draft Report is admirable as far as it goes, but its sole focus is on reducing traffic accidents. The Report completely ignores the other danger Nevada County residents face on Route 49 between McKnight Way and I-80: the risk of burning to death in our cars when the highway is jammed during a wildfire evacuation.

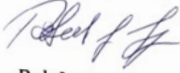
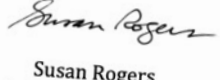
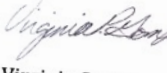
Caltrans is aware of the increasing number of huge, lethal wildfires that occur in this state. In Nevada County, we have more than one state route with trees that are far too close to the highway to allow for safe evacuation. And yet, looking at your website, Caltrans' idea of highway safety relative to trees seems to be limited to, "make sure trees don't fall on the highway and block traffic."

It's imperative that Caltrans update its vision of highway safety to include fuel reduction on the sides of state highways in high-risk zones. While State regulations require a 10-foot mitigation area on roadsides, at least one fire scientist suggests a 30-foot zone is necessary to provide protection from the lethal, radiant heat of burning vegetation. (We don't even have 10 feet in some places.) The extra 20 feet of space is also needed so cars can safely pull off the road to let emergency responders pass by.

The word "evacuation" appears only three times in the 49-page "Safety Assessment," all on page 34, Section 6.2 (entitled "Long Term Treatments" expected to take between 2 and 10 years to implement), under "Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, and Evaluation." Where it is used, it is only in regard to making evacuation plans.

Plans will not save us from lethal heat created by burning roadside trees and vegetation when we are sitting in our cars on a jammed Route 49 during a wildfire evacuation. Only aggressive fuel reduction, beginning now and continuing whenever weather permits, will save us. You could start by eliminating the tree tunnel overhanging Route 49 just south of McKnight Way.

We ask Caltrans to: 1) update its definition of highway safety to include safety from burning roadside vegetation, and 2) revise the Safety Assessment to include the need for 30 feet of defensible space alongside the evacuation corridor in Nevada County.

Sincerely yours,
  
Bob Long Susan Rogers Virginia Gompertz Jeff Peach
Officers of the Nevada County Coalition of Firewise Communities

Cc: Governor Gavin Newsom Nevada County Board of Supervisors
Toks Omishakin, Director, Caltrans Nevada County Transportation Commission
Placer County Transportation Planning Agency
State Senator Brian Dahle State Assemblymember Megan Dahle

Feb 2021

Scott Beesley steps in as Chair of the Coalition. Members vote to **re-define Coalition leadership as a *Steering Committee*** including four officers.

Kristen Cook and Nick Johnson join the SteerComm later that year.



Nevada County Coalition of Firewise Communities - February 2021 Meeting

Feb 2021

Coalition produces 5-page educational piece, “What if Your 100 feet of Defensible Space Goes *Beyond* Your Property Line?”

WHAT IF YOUR 100 FEET OF DEFENSIBLE SPACE GOES *Beyond* YOUR PROPERTY LINE?



The Nevada County Coalition of Firewise Communities often hears from residents asking how to meet State and County requirements for 100 feet of defensible space around their house (or other structure when it is less than 100 feet from a property line, (i.e., when **your** 100 feet of defensible space would extend onto *someone else's* property).

The answer depends on a number of variables. This document provides guidance on how to move forward in such a situation.

Please note that the Coalition is an all-volunteer organization of residents interested in wildfire preparedness – the information here does not constitute legal advice, and the codes and ordinances can change over time (though we make every attempt to stay current). If you have further questions after reading this, contact Roger Tucker, our county's Lead Defensible Space Inspector, at (530) 470-2727.

Your first step is to identify the owner of the neighboring property

If you don't know who owns the property or how to contact them, here's how to find out:

- Go to the webpage <https://gis.nevacounty.net/MyNeighborhood/>
- In the right sidebar, ensure that "Address" is selected as the Search By method, then type the parcel address into the box.
- You should get a result that includes the parcel number (usually nine digits separated with two hyphens). For privacy reasons, the owner's name is not available online. The Assessor's office in the Rood Center has a kiosk that will give you the owner's name. If for some reason you cannot visit the office, try calling them at (530) 265-1232.

Once you know who owns the adjacent property, your next steps depend on whether you live within city limits or in an unincorporated area of the county.

If you live in the incorporated cities of Grass Valley or Nevada City (city street addresses will have a 3-digit number), skip to the bottom of page 4 for city requirements on your own property. There are no regulations that require, or allow, city residents to compel a neighbor to create amount of defensible space on the neighbor's property. The information on pages 2 and 3 will not apply to you. However, if you see unsafe conditions on a neighboring property that constitute non-compliance with city codes (such as accumulated trash/debris or piles of vegetation), you can anonymously report the condition and the city will conduct an inspection. (Note: unless invited, code enforcement personnel are not allowed to step onto your neighbor's property to observe the violation – they must be able to see from the public sidewalk or road, or possibly from your property if it is in plain sight and easily observable.) The City of Grass Valley Code Compliance Investigation Request online form is at <https://www.cityofgrassvalley.com/webform/code-compliance-investigation-request-form>. For Nevada City, visit <https://www.nevadacityca.gov/forms.aspx?fid=555>, click Code Compliance Investigation Request.

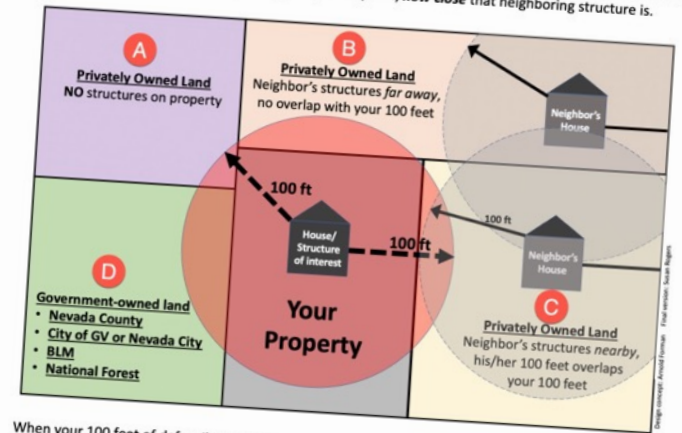
If a city resident's neighboring property is owned by a government entity (such as a city park, or county land), skip to the middle of page 4, "Diagram Scenario D: the neighboring land is government-owned."

Nevada County Coalition of Firewise Communities
www.nccoalitionfwc.com - Rules & Enforcement - What if Your 100ft Defensible Space Rev2March2021SR.pdf

If you live in unincorporated areas of Nevada County (your street address has a 5-digit number), keep reading. We describe steps you can take to communicate with the owner of the adjacent parcel with the goal of meeting your defensible space requirement.

If the neighboring land is government-owned, skip down to page 4, section "Diagram Scenario D, the neighboring land is government-owned." If your neighbor is an individual or a company, keep reading.

Study the diagram below. It will help you determine which codes and ordinances will apply, depending on: 1) who owns the land onto which your 100 feet of defensible space extends; 2) whether there's a structure on that neighboring land; and 3) if so, how close that neighboring structure is.



When your 100 feet of defensible space would extend onto privately owned land (scenarios A, B and C on the diagram), the question of whether your neighbor is legally obligated to do the work to give you 100 feet of defensible space depends on how far his/her structures (if any) are from the property line.

For Diagram Scenarios A and B: Privately Owned, Undeveloped Neighboring Land (no structures on their property) OR Privately Owned Neighboring Land (their structures are far away, no overlap with your 100 feet): Per Nevada County Ordinance No. 2477 (which incorporates California state standards into its requirements), the neighbor has the responsibility to create defensible space on only the part of his/her property that is within your 100-foot circle radius (see diagram, A & B).

- Approach your neighbors first to ask if they will do the work so that you can get 100 cleared feet from your structure. You may get lucky and they will do that for you.

Nevada County Coalition of Firewise Communities
www.nccoalitionfwc.com - Rules & Enforcement - What if Your 100ft Defensible Space Rev2March2021SR.pdf

Also Feb 2021

Bob Long's persistence results in BLM creating a Defensible Space Permit Application so that private property owners can clear BLM land adjacent to their parcel.



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Mother Lode Field Office
5152 Hillsdale Circle
El Dorado Hills, CA 95762
www.blm.gov/california



BLM Mother Lode Field Office Defensible Space Permit Application

Name (first, middle, last)				Address (include zip code)		Telephone No. (include area code)	
Township	Range	Section	Meridian	County Assessor Lot Number:		Residential:	Business:
						County:	Subdivision:

- Defensible Space:** Has the private property been cleared of hazardous fuels and vegetation within 100' of all buildings and structures, as required by California Public Resource Code 4291?
- Map:** Please attach a high quality map of the project and treatment area to this application
- Vegetation Treatment Requested** (Check all that apply):
 - Cut and remove any down or standing **dead** vegetation less than six inches in diameter. Any wood removed for personal use may require a separate firewood collection permit.
 - Cut or masticate any down or standing **dead** vegetation less than 12 inches in diameter.
 - Cut or masticate **LIVE** vegetation with trunks less than 10 inches in diameter as measured 4.5 feet above the ground. All trunks shall be cut horizontally to two inches or lower to the ground. Total removal of live woody (shrub and tree) cover should not exceed 50% of pre-thinning cover.
 - Cut with a string cutter any grasses and forbs. Use of mowers is not permitted unless specified in the permit.
- Additional Treatments Proposed:** (Prescribed fire proposals will not be authorized).

- Equipment to Be Used:** (Check all that apply)
 - Hand tools – Shovel, axe, pulaski, loppers, etc.
 - Chainsaw
 - Feller Buncher
 - Processor
 - Chipper
 - String Cutter
 - Other _____
- Special Conditions:** (Additional special conditions may be added)

Oct 2021

Coalition produces CodeRED Explainer

Dec 2021

Lt. Bob Jakobs returns to Sheriff's Office after promotion, replaced by Lt. Sean Scales

EXPLAINER (SIDE 1): The Kinds of Emergency Wildfire Alerts You Can Receive from Each Type of System or App

For information of each type, see other side.

Certain conditions may p

With THIS → type of alert...

Will you get an Evacuation Warning?

Will you get an Evacuation Order?

Will you get an All Clear message (i.e., okay to return home, Evacuation Order has been cancelled)

EXPLAINER (SIDE 2): How the Different Alert Systems and Apps Work

REMEMBER: No technology can be guaranteed to work at all times, and the capabilities described are not guaranteed to work at the time you need them. Certain conditions may prevent alerts from getting through to you, such as if cell towers have burned down, your phone is turned off or muted, etc. Do not rely on just one method of becoming aware of an emergency. Visit www.ReadyNevadaCounty.org/handbook for other ways of staying informed.

With THIS → type of alert...	Nevada County's CodeRED Emergency Alert System	CodeRED Mobile App (Optional, for smartphone or tablet. Not related to the County's system in Column 1)	Wireless Emergency Alert Works without any registration	Comments
Will Nevada County OES (Office of Emergency Services) use it to send you Evacuation Warnings AND/OR Evacuation Orders when a wildfire threatens your home or other registered addresses?	YES Register now by visiting ReadyNevadaCounty.org/EmergencyAlerts . For help registering, dial 2-1-1 on your phone or call 1-833-DIAL211 (1-833-342-5211)	NO - this is a commercial app for Apple and Android phones and tablets that sends only "sound alerts" for threats near your device's location, and only if that location uses the CodeRED system, and only if you have Location Services enabled.	SOMETIMES This is a loud Evacuation Order (only) alert that is sent to all cellphones that are in an Evacuation Order zone.	OES is also able to access an Emergency Alert System that would issue Evacuation Orders (only) interrupting radio and TV programs. Both it and the Wireless version (see column at left) are locally accessible federal government systems for which you do NOT register.
Will OES send a phone alert to a landline phone, smartphone or basic cellphone; a text to mobile phones; and/or an email alert?	YES You can register for any one or ALL these ways to receive an alert: phone call, text and/or email	SMARTPHONES AND TABLETS ONLY Your device will make whatever "alert sound" you set. See box above.	CELLPHONE ONLY All cellphones in an Evacuation Order zone at the time of the emergency are sent an Evacuation Order (only).	
Will OES send an alert for emergencies impacting your home address?	YES You will receive the alert even if you are at work, shopping, traveling, or otherwise not present at that address.	MAYBE Will alert you only when a fire is within the "warning radius" you specify (up to 25 miles) of WHERE YOUR PHONE IS. If you are away at work, shopping or traveling, you may NOT be alerted to fires near your home.	NO REGISTRATION POSSIBLE All cellphones in an Evacuation Order zone at the time of the emergency are sent an Evacuation Order (only).	IMPORTANT: Cellphones that are NEAR, but NOT IN, an Evacuation Order Zone may also receive a Wireless Emergency Alert. Know Your Zone so you can tell if the Order applies to you.

Rev. 5Oct2021 This is an unofficial document created for the Nevada County Coalition of Firewise Communities. The information here has been reviewed by the Nevada County Office of Emergency Services and is subject to change without notice. This document is for Educational Purposes Only, and makes no warranties or claims of any kind, including but not limited to its completeness or accuracy. The person reading this or listening to a speaker on this topic is solely responsible for learning about and preparing for wildfires.

[CodeRED Explainer Coalition version FINAL-SFR]

March 2022

Jenn Tamo leaves OES, Alex Keeble-Toll hired as **Senior Admin Analyst**

May 2022

72 certified Firewise Communities, 22 In Training, 29 Requesting To Be

July 2022

Alessandra Zambrano hired as **County Wildfire Coordinator**

Craig Greisbach appointed the County's first **Emergency Services Director**, overseeing the OES operations and team

Aug 4, 2022

CalTrans
announces
roadside clearing
between McKnight
Way and Lime Kiln.

Fuel reduction work started this week on Highway 49

Submitted to The Union

Caltrans is alerting Highway 49 motorists of the start of a new wildfire fuel reduction contract to address overgrown vegetation at various locations in Nevada County between Lime Kiln Road and McKnight Way, a news release states.

The project, which started Wednesday, will have construction crews begin staging equipment along the highway near Lime Kiln Road to start vegetation removal at various locations along the sides of the highway. Fuel reduction activities are expected to occur along the 6-mile stretch of highway weekdays between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. Most work will occur in

shoulder areas with minimal disruptions to traffic. Short traffic holds may be required intermittently during large tree removal operations.

The \$2.8 million wildfire fuel reduction contract will assist vegetation removal efforts along

Highway 49 in Nevada County and Highway 32 in Butte County. P31 Enterprises of Oroville is the prime contractor for the project, which is expected to be completed in summer 2023.

Source: Caltrans

Aug 2022

Coalition
produces
educational
piece

“Is There
A Wildfire?”



Is there a wildfire?



Here's one way to HEAR about it *and FIND OUT if it's near you*

1. Sign up NOW for text alerts from Cal Fire, Watch Duty and *The Union*. These will be *general alerts to fires in our region*. (This *different* from CodeRED, which alerts you only to fires that could become— or are — a threat to your home).
 - To get texts from Cal Fire: visit incidents.readyforwildfire.org. In the box “Sign Up for Text Messages,” enter your cellphone number and zip code, then click SIGN UP. Sign up your household members, too (and tell them).
 - Download the Watch Duty app to your smartphone via App store or Google Play. Sign up and select “Nevada County” to get real-time push notifications about local wildfires directly to your phone. More info at <https://www.watchduty.org/>
 - Text “UnionNews” (without quotes) to the number 86677 to receive Breaking News texts from *The Union* newspaper.

2. If you receive one of the above text alerts, or you just hear something about a wildfire (*beware of rumors on social media – this is how to check them out*) follow these steps:
 - Visit YubaNet.com, click **Happening Now** on the top navigation bar. Scroll to find info on a fire. If the fire is already big, you may find just one entry with a link taking you to a page that’s about that fire only, with ongoing frequent updates. **Keep that page open in a tab on your web browser and re-load the page frequently to stay updated on the status of the fire.**
 - In a new tab on your web browser, visit ReadyNevadaCounty.org/dashboard. Note: this County Dashboard is *not activated for every fire*, only for those that become threatening to homes and lives. If you don’t see active fire information, go back to YubaNet and follow it that way. If the fire keeps growing, check the Dashboard again. If the Dashboard becomes activated, **re-load the page frequently to stay updated.**
 - On a desktop computer or laptop, the Dashboard’s left panel should name the fire and give a few statistics (once they’re available).
 - The middle panel will have a map. Zoom in to see if you can see Zones that are under Evacuation Orders or Warnings and note where they are compared to you. (If necessary, keep zooming in until you can read a street name.)
 - Click the **Current Wind & Weather** tab on the top bar, zoom in as needed and **see if the wind is blowing in your direction**. Wind direction can change abruptly, but for now, this will tell you if the fire is being pushed in your direction (or not).
 - The right-hand panel is a Twitter feed from the County, constantly updated with Cal Fire and Sheriff’s Office tweets on fire activity and evacuations. These tweets are very current and helpful -- review them as they are updated.

NOTE: the ReadyNevadaCounty.org/dashboard mobile (phone & tablet) app will work differently -- small phone screens make it difficult to present multiple types of data. It is easiest to see everything and navigate the Dashboard on a desktop or laptop computer screen.

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Aug 2022

Members vote to approve Coalition asking BOS to put Measure V on the November ballot. Several FWC reps also speak in favor.

County announces 26 micro-grants to certified Firewise Communities, **the first money available to unincorporated neighborhood groups for small, localized mitigation projects.**

December 2022

Two representatives from Truckee identified for Steering Committee in 2023

Great education through the years

**EQIP
Grants**

Prescribed burns

**Fire-Smart
Landscaping**

**Home
Hardening**

**Homeowners
Insurance**

**Generators:
Use & Safety**

**Defensible
Space**

**Early Warning
Systems**

**Personal
Protective
Clothing
in an evacuation**

**EVACUATION:
HOW TO PREPARE**

Survivor Stories



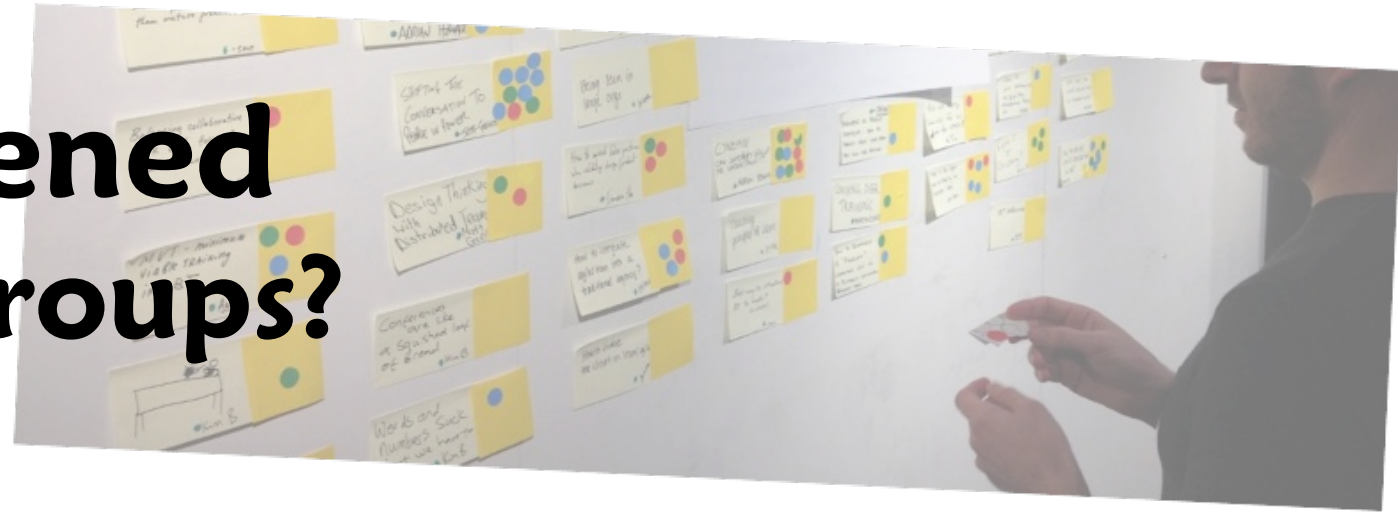
Annual Wildfire Preparedness Day & Kid's Safety Fair

Tables at public events



Builder's Fair

Whatever happened to the working groups?



- **Enforcement** – the County increased its involvement and now has full-time Inspector(s) year-round to educate residents and enforce the codes.
- **Evacuation** – the County pulled a Sheriff’s Dept. officer into OES and implemented technology tools (ReadyNevadaCounty Dashboard, Zonehaven) that exponentially improve public communication.
- **Real Estate** – Truckee FPD got an ordinance. Western county is more complicated, now falls under new state law AB38.

We have much to be proud of. Where do we go from here?

FWC Challenges

- New, inexperienced leaders for many FWCs
- The NFPA and CalFire requirements for becoming and staying certified are more stringent now

Coalition challenges

- 100 FWCs (approx.) and leaders are hard to track/manage
- Should we keep including the public or go back to FWC reps only?
- By-laws should be reviewed; edu docs reviewed for needed updates
- Scott has finished his two years as Chair; no replacement found yet



FIREWISE USA™

Residents reducing wildfire risks

**Thank you to all
FWCs & reps,
County staff,
Cal Fire,
Consolidated FD,
Fire Safe Council
and all others**

