

Ray
FROM
BUCKE
STREET
PUT ON
WEBSITE

Cedar Mesa Ranches

2021 Wildfire Mitigation and Preparedness Program

Fire and Weeds Committee Recommendations

Background

CMR has been a part of the Wildfire Adapted Partnership (WAP) for at least 10 years with 3 to 4 Neighborhood Ambassadors helping to spread wildfire preparedness information and assistance to lot owners. There are 140 WAP Ambassadors across Montezuma, Dolores, La Plata, and Archuleta Counties serving 105 communities. The CMR Ambassadors and community members donated nearly 800 volunteer hours in 2016-18 and through those efforts CMR was able to attain NFPA "FireWise Community" status. Over 250 hours of Ambassador and community volunteer time in 2019 was contributed to maintain our FireWise Community status.

The 2020 pandemic greatly restricted the HOA wildfire mitigation and preparedness activities last year, but individual lot owners continued mitigation efforts on their own properties. Most of the activities were removal of dead wood and ladder fuel reduction, with slash material being chipped or piled and then burned. A planned activity around evacuation planning and a drill did not occur, but a draft evacuation plan was prepared. We did accumulate enough 2020 volunteer hours to keep the Firewise Community designation.

2021 Program

The Fire and Weeds Committee has the following recommendations for the 2021 program:

1. Continue working with the Montezuma County Wildfire Adapted Partnership (WAP) on individual lot wildfire fuels mitigation by directing lot owners to Alex Graf for assessments and individual mitigation grants through WAP.
2. Complete the draft Evacuation Plan for the subdivision in coordination with Mancos Fire and Jim Spratlen, Montezuma County Emergency Coordinator.
3. Review the 2011 Cedar Mesa Ranches Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) and complete the mandated 10-year update.
4. Plan, publicize and accomplish our 2021 NFPA Firewise activity to maintain our "Firewise Community" status. Our recommendation is a community chipper day(s) using a \$750 WAP chipper grant to chip slash brought to a central area by the community lot owners and then distribution of the chips over time to lot owners to use as mulch. August or September would be good times to have that activity.

A long-range activity to start planning for 2022 would be a community evacuation drill in coordination with Mancos Fire, Montezuma County, BLM and Mesa Verde NP.

The continuing increase in permanent residents in the subdivision makes recruitment of additional Neighborhood Wildfire Ambassadors desirable. Discussions with Alex Graf of WAP indicate they are not planning more Ambassador training in 2021 but are planning some virtual Home Ignition Zone training. Requests for more Ambassadors in the HOA board meeting notes and emails from the board leadership would likely lead to more interest from residents.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Ruatti, Committee Chair

Diane Cherbak

Bruce Short

May 19, 2021