

February 04, 2011

Fire Mitigation Policy

For Summerwood Homeowners

Background: Our Forestry Service, "A Cut Above," provided an assessment of the Summerwood property and developed a Forest Management Plan for the entire subdivision. The goal of the plan is to provide Summerwood with management guidelines and implementation direction to improve tree and forest health and reduce the risk of property loss due to wildfire.

Wildfire Risks: The lodgepole beetle infestation has multiplied exponentially over the past several years. The Forest Service estimates that there will be a loss of 95% of untreated lodgepole pine trees greater than 6 inches in diameter by the time the pine beetle returns to endemic levels. Fire risks faced by homeowners far exceeds earlier years, due to massive forest decimation.

Goal: Mitigate the risk of wildfire damage to Summerwood life and property by taking measures within the property owners' and the Summerwood Board's control.

Objectives: Present Summerwood HOA and homeowners with a comprehensive forest management plan that provides:

1. Reduced risk of wildfire within Summerwood
2. Reduced risk of personal injury due to wildfire
3. Reduced risk of property loss
4. Access opportunities for firefighting crews
5. Defensible space around homes
6. Restoration and reforestation of native plants

Wildfire areas of defensible space:

- Zone 1. Area 15-20 feet from a structure (including decks or eaves). Embers from nearby fires ignite the roof or tall dry grass and shrubs next to a structure.
- Zone 2. Area from zone one to 100 feet but primarily within 45 feet of a structure that could include trees that are in poor form, dead or defective.
- Zone 3. Area exceeding 100 feet from a structure.

Recommendations by A Cut Above that have and will continue to be implemented by the Summerwood Board:

1. Continuous spraying of lodgepole pine trees (since 2005).
2. Removal of infested and dead lodgepole pine trees.
3. Prophylactic spraying of spruce trees (spruce beetle has been found in Summerwood).
4. Revegetation of trees in areas where watering is possible (currently along the front of the subdivision on either side of the entrance).

General Approach:

Actions (or inactions) by individual homeowners can and often do affect their neighbors and the overall community. Summerwood will work with individual homeowners to help them define and achieve a rational defensible space around their home.

Financial responsibility for any work will be the owner's for work on their private property and the HOA for work on common areas.

Summerwood HOA Responsibilities:

1. Continue to follow the comprehensive plan of tree removal and spraying recommendations from A Cut Above.
2. When tree removal close to a home (within 15-20 feet) is recommended the HOA/BPM will contact the homeowner and explain the work recommended by A Cut Above. With the homeowner's concurrence and agreement on financial responsibility BPM will contract A Cut Above to complete the work.
3. Replace trees on common ground as recommended and within budget constraints. If tree replacement is close to a home, prior approval of the homeowner and their commitment to watering will be requested.
4. Cutting roadside and common area grass as recommended for fire mitigation.

Summerwood Homeowner responsibilities:

1. Cut high grass, low-lying tree branches and woody shrubs that abut or are close to your home consistent with the fire mitigation recommendations.
2. Share responsibility to protect your home and, consequently, the Summerwood community, by removing wildfire fuel risks close to your home.