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RESIDENTS REDUCING WILDFIRE RISKS

Greater Bend Community Wildfire Protection Plan

Date: April 9, 2021

TO: All Sunrise Village homeowners

RE: Neighborhood FireWise certification and individual property assessments

Hello neighbors-

We want to take this opportunity to update you on our neighborhood efforts to certify Sunrise Village under the Firewise Program, as well as what we have been working on to get our neighborhood and individual properties ready for this season.

At the last neighborhood meeting, the overwhelming #1 concern from nearly every homeowner in attendance was fire safety, and specifically what we were going to do to get our neighborhood more prepared to deal with the imminent threat of a wind-driven wildfire. In response, the Sunrise Village Association formed the SRV Fire Safety Committee, and appointed 3 volunteer homeowners to lead that effort: Jim Prehoda, Bart Mitchell, and Ray Page. Over the winter, the committee met with the leaders of the Firewise Program to do an on-site assessment of SRV. We have also used the Greater Bend Wildfire Protection Plan, published in 2016, which specifically addresses wildfire risk & prevention measures in our area of Bend. Using those two documents, we have created a neighborhood action plan to make our neighborhood more capable of preventing and withstanding a catastrophic fire event. That action plan is included as an attachment to this letter, but in summary, includes the following:

1.) Our neighborhood is in a very un-natural state of tree density. Properties are overgrown with trees, and are exponentially more dense than is natural. Trees have become thin, unhealthy, and more prone to fire and insect infestations (i.e. bark & pine beetles). The sheer quantity of trees is creating a dangerous overabundance of fuel for fires.

2.) The majority of properties in SRV are not defensible against a wind-driven fire event. Significant amounts of highly flammable fuels exist around homes in Zone 1 (within 5' of home/structures), and there is an abundance of highly flammable ladder fuels in all zones.

3.) The Greater Bend Wildfire Protection Plan states that our area of Bend is at an extremely high risk level for a catastrophic fire event, resulting in loss to both property and life. Similar to the Awbrey Hall fire, and the catastrophic fires that hit Vida/Blue River/Detroit in Oregon, and Paradise, CA in recent years.

4.) Individual properties need to take immediate action to reduce fuels in all 3 zones.

Individual Property Assessments: April 12-25

The committee has put together a 4-page document for assessing each individual property in the SRV neighborhood (attached to this letter). From April 12-25, members of the Fire Committee, volunteers, and the ARC members will be conducting visual assessments of all properties in SRV, as they meet the requirements set forth in our community fire action plan. If you would like to join us while we complete the assessment of your property, please let us know and we will schedule a day/time with you. Otherwise, we will be conducting the assessments throughout the week, during normal daytime hours.

Presentation & Explanation / Training on SRV Action Plan & Assessments:

Wed. April 21 @ 6pm

We will be conducting a 1 hour presentation, explanation, and training on our community action plan & property assessments. It will be held via WebEx, and an invitation will be sent out by Fieldstone Mgmt.

Priorities & Emphasis:

The emphasis this Spring & Summer will be on the following:

1.) Fuels reduction & compliance in Zone 1: removal of all flammable materials within 5' of all homes, screening of raised decks against blowing embers, and limbing of trees overhanging residences.

2.) Removal of highly flammable ladder fuels in all zones: removal of bitterbrush, small trees, manzanita, etc. that is located under large trees. Also including limbing up of all trees, so that no branches droop lower than 10' from the ground.

3.) Significantly reduced tree density in all zones: spacing of trees in Zone 2 (5' to 30' from house) such that no tree is within 18' of another tree, and in Zone 3 (30' to property line) so that no tree is within 12' of another tree. The goal being a natural, healthy ponderosa stand consisting of fewer, but HIGH QUALITY, large diameter, fire-resistant trees, rather than overly dense, low-quality, small diameter trees that compete for sun & water, and produce significant deadwood. (see images page 3)

Common Objections We've Heard:

This is BIG endeavor and a complete paradigm shift for most of Sunrise Village residents. We completely understand that there are a lot of challenges that go with an endeavor like this, and we are not ignoring them, or take them lightly. These are a few we've heard:

1.) Privacy:

We understand that many trees, bushes, etc. have been planted in zones 1 & 2 to create more privacy between homes, the street, etc., and our neighborhood does not allow fences. We believe that a fire spreading through out neighborhood will completely remove every bit of privacy. We are working with the ARC to update the list of approved, non-flammable measures for properties.

2.) Cost:

We understand that this is likely a major undertaking for most homeowners, and will require a tree service that could cost \$2,000 - \$5,000 (or more). We're working with several tree service companies to be our 'preferred' neighborhood tree service company, in exchange for a more 'bulk rate' for the neighborhood. We believe that while this is a lot of money, it is exponentially less than the alternative: destruction of the the entire tree stand & homes in our neighborhood. While the homes are insured and somewhat replaceable, the decrease of property values when all of the trees are wiped out in a fire is immense.

3.) Keeping property 'natural':

We hear a common theme that owners want to keep their property 'natural', and not cut trees down. This notion is actually counterintuitive. With lack of thinning and naturally occurring fires, we have grown into a non-natural state. Natural, healthy ponderosa tree stands are naturally thinned by fire, with only the high-quality, large diameter trees remaining. Our neighborhood has not had a fire in over 75 years, and we've done very little thinning: it's become completely unnatural. The last page of this letter includes an aerial photo of our neighborhood taken in 1978. We believe that tree density is a truly 'natural' state.

We realize this is an aggressive, major endeavor, with a very short-term timeline. Unfortunately we are already nearly into fire season, and the fires West of Saddleback last week only remind us how vulnerable we are right now. We hope that you'll join us in aggressively preparing our neighborhood, and your property for this Summer, as ultimately each of ours home's safety is only as good as the efforts of our neighbor on their property.

If you have any questions, concerns, suggestions, etc. please do no hesitate to contact us. You can email us via Fieldstone Management, and they will forward to us: kdoroski@fieldstonemanagement.com

Thank you for all of your help,
The Sunrise Village Fire Safety Committee

Example Photos....

Healthy, fire-resistant tree density should look like this....
(fewer, but high quality trees)

Not this....
(too many, mostly low-quality, skinny, with lots of deadwood.)

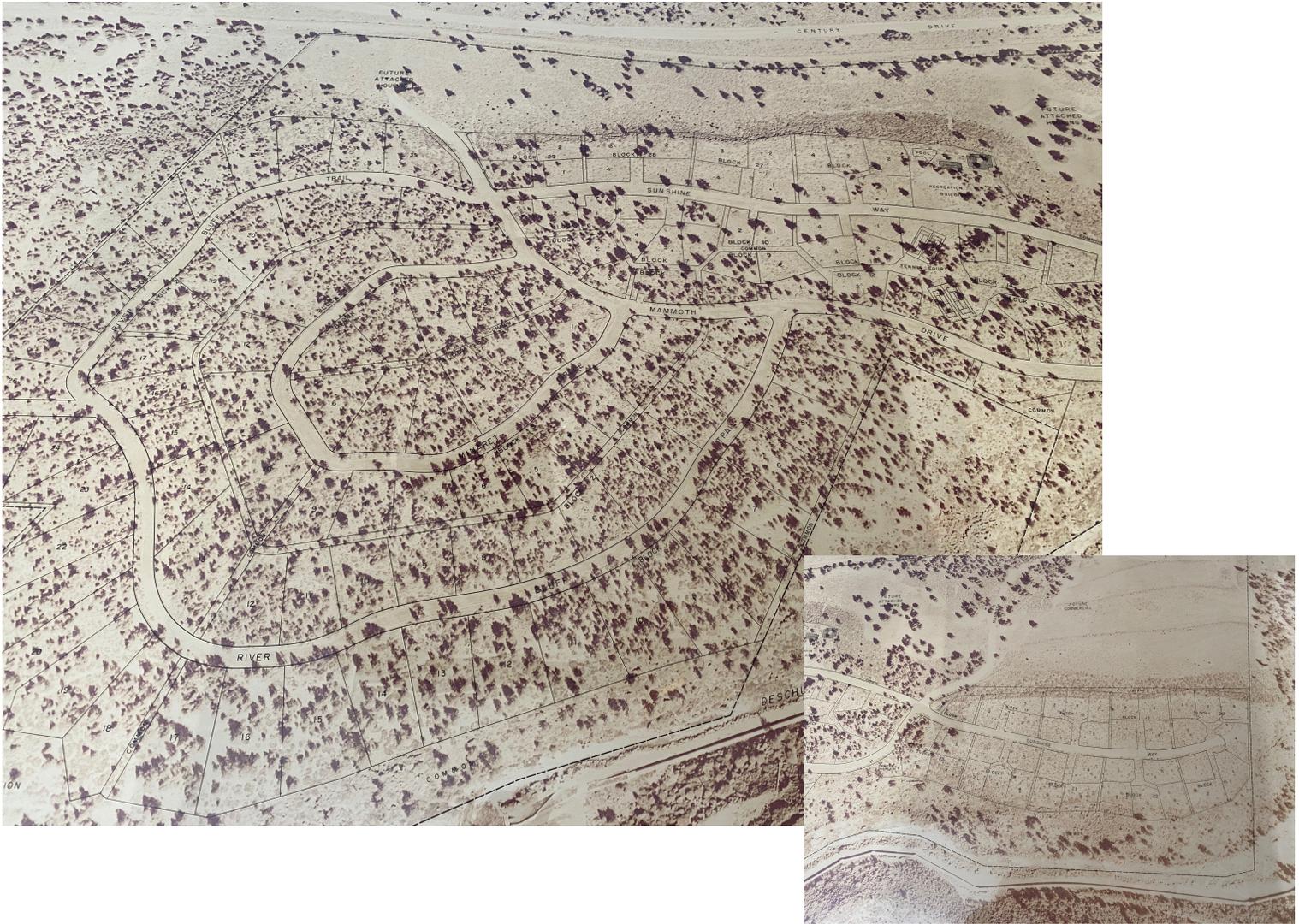


These photos show how a dense stand of low-quality, skinny trees burns, compared to a less dense, healthy stand of ponderosas. Not only do the trees withstand fire better, they survive.

Notice that there is a long line of sight through a healthy, natural ponderosa stand *(photo on the right)*



Our neighborhood in 1978, in it's 'natural' state.... (you can see the original 5' wide photo of this inside the lodge)



Neighborhoods similar to ours, who experienced catastrophic fires last year.... Napa, CA. and Vida / Blue River, OR.



Higher risk of large fires predicted in parts of West

Capital Press

An elevated risk of large wildfires is expected to develop in parts of the West through spring and summer.

Nick Nauslar, meteorologist at the National Inter-agency Fire Center in Boise, Idaho, said he expects an above-normal risk of significant wildfires — defined as consuming total acreage above long-term medians — in parts of California and into the east side of the Pacific Northwest starting in June and increasing by July.

The highest Northwest risk during that period likely will be in Central Oregon east of the Cascade Mountains and the Columbia Basin of Oregon and Washington. The wind-fueled Bull Spring Fire burned 211 acres just outside of Bend on March 28 and forced hundreds to evacuate their homes.

In the April 1 National Significant Wildfire Potential Outlook for April through July, he wrote that climate outlooks indicate warmer- and drier-than-normal conditions are likely for much of the plains and intermountain

west through spring and into early summer, “continuing and exacerbating drought there.”

Drought “continues for much of the West, with large swaths of extreme to exceptional drought in the Southwest, Great Basin and on the West Slope” of the Rocky Mountains,” Nauslar wrote. Drought likely will persist, if not worsen, across much of the West.

He said the risk of significant wildfires likely will be above normal in parts of the Northern Rockies into early May, but nearly normal for rest of the outlook period. Risk of large fires likely will increase in the Great Basin in June and July due to a below-normal snowpack and significant long-term drought.

Northern California’s risk of large fires is forecast to be normal through June, and above normal by July at higher elevations. Southern California risk likely will be normal through July, and then above normal away from the deserts and the San Joaquin Valley in July.

List of Local Tree Service Contractors:

Timberstand Improvement, Nate Goodwin: natedgoodwin@gmail.com and (541) 771-4825

4 Brothers Tree Service: www.4brostrees.com

Adam Bright Tree Service: www.adambrighttreeservice.com

Artisan Tree Works: <https://simplyarbortree.com>

Arbor 1 Tree Service: www.arbor1.com

CO Tree Experts: www.cotreexperts.com

Fagen Tree Service: www.bendoregontreeservice.com

Simply Arbor Tree Care: <https://simplyarbortree.com>

**There are many others in Central Oregon.