

FOREST GATE FIREWISE (FGFW) NEWSLETTER

"INSPIRE, ENCOURAGE, AND MITIGATE"

7 October 2022

Dear Neighbors,

Where We Are:

1. **Three neighborhood projects have crossed the finish line** and checks are in the mail from the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) reimbursing them for 50% of the cost of their fire mitigation and health of the forest projects. What it means is they spent \$10,400 but are now getting back \$5,200 back.
2. **More CSFS grant money is available!** The HOA via the Firewise Committee was originally awarded \$10,000 *but based on our success, more is available.* Three other neighborhood projects are in various stages towards completing their projects and *New projects can continue to be submitted as we move into the Fall and Winter seasons. It is important to highlight that neither the Firewise Committee or the FGHOA makes the decision.* The CSFS is the approval authority with projects on a first come first served priority basis. To set you up for success, the attached Grant Information Paper provides the latest guideline on how to apply.

Where We Are Going:

1. **Need your help! Feedback from multiple homeowners have identified a growing presence of mistletoe and pine beetles that have made significant inroads within the HOA.** Over 22% of the standing tree volume in Colorado's forests is dead wood, with the leading causes of mortality being insects (65%) and disease (23%). These threats have been particularly aggressive on Lots bordering our eastern and southern boundaries. These are not just a Lot issue but rather a neighborhood issue as mistletoe and pine & spruce beetles easily cross Lot lines. Inaction may adversely affect your neighbors and concern has been raised by several homeowners to the FGHOA Board. Between now and the end of April 2023 is the best time to get a jump on this issue before next year's vulnerable spreading cycle starts. Section 18 of the HOA Covenants highlights homeowner responsibility.

"The owner of each Lot is responsible for immediately removing any diseased trees, or trees that are infested with harmful insects, which might contaminate or spread to adjacent trees and lots, and to meet any other Colorado State Forest Service recommendations or requirements pertaining to thinning of trees, or removal or treatment of diseased or insect infested trees..."

2. **Looking ahead The Colorado State Forest Service has an unprecedented \$15M beginning in 2023** to continue supporting grants that improve forest health and reduce wildfire risk through their Forest Restoration and Wildfire Risk Mitigation Grant Program. We are drafting a grant request to compete for some of this money. We encourage you to ask the fire professionals for Lot specific advice:
 - a. The Black Forest Fire & Rescue can advise you on their requirements to access with response vehicles as well as around the house and other structure fire mitigation measures.
 - b. The Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) provides a broader perspective and can walk your property and provide a fire mitigation and health of the forest recommendations for the various defensive zones.



FIREWISE USA™
Residents reducing wildfire risks

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- 3. Thank you:** Your 2022 Firewise Committee comprised of Scott Braeger, Craig Meeks, Mal Johnson, Kevin Koenke and Mark Schreder want to extend our thanks for the efforts of so many owners whose mitigation efforts not only reduced their own property risks but contributed to the overall safety of the Forest Gate Community in 2022. *Because of these efforts, we expect we will be recertified as a Firewise USA Community of Excellence for the 9th year in a row!*

Malcolm (Mal) Johnson
Forest Gate Firewise Committee Chair