



NORTHERN SONOMA COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT 2020 ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

PROTECTING WINE COUNTRY FOR OVER 100 YEARS

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<https://www.facebook.com/NoSoCoFire/>

The Northern Sonoma County Fire Protection District wants to be known as a fire department that **specializes in rural fire protection** and specifically for what it does in prevention and preparedness. Responding to emergencies is our highest priority with paid and volunteer staffing, but we firmly believe the **work done before an emergency affects the outcome of the emergency more than the response.**

Our biggest threat is wildfires. More residences and buildings are burning from wildfires than any other cause. The wildfires of the last several years have changed our way of life and now, more than ever, we need to “live with wildfire.” A map showing the fire district’s boundary and (large) fire history since 2000 is included in this newsletter **Approximately 45% of the fire district has burned in the last 3 years.** Some areas have burned more than once.

We want to do more! This newsletter describes efforts we are currently expanding as funding allows.

FUELS CREW

The fire district formed a “fuels crew” in the Spring of 2018 to perform vegetation management (wildfire “fuels”) using CAL FIRE grant funding. The crew is comprised of part time fire district employees who are primarily volunteer fire fighters and SRJC forestry students. The crew operates chain saws and chippers to cut and chip vegetation. The crew also builds and assists with burn piles. The initial work focused on reducing vegetation along private roads and helped stop the spread of the 2019 Kincaide Fire along Coyote Ridge Road. Community donations, project sponsorships, and grants have provided funding to keep the fuel crew operational. And in the past several months fuel crew members were part of a fire district fire crew that was assigned to the Walbridge Fire for 14 days and have staffed five fire district managed prescribed burns, with over 150 acres burned. **We are the only fire agency in Sonoma County with a Fuels Crew and we are proud of their work!**



Fuels Crew Removing Vegetation along Road to create Fuel Break

PLEASE CONTACT US

Our goal is that you know at least one fire fighter by name

FACTS ABOUT US

Protects over 273 Square miles

Responds to over 600 emergencies a year

6 Paid Fire Fighters

1 Part Time Fire Chief

1 Part Time Administrative Manager

25 Volunteers

FIRE STATIONS

Geyserville
20975 Geyserville Ave

Alexander Valley
6571 Highway 128

Dry Creek Valley
3970 Dry Creek Rd

Franz/Knights Valley
16850 Spencer Ln

MAILING LIST

If you would like to be part of the District mailing list, please email us at aturbeville@nosocofire.com



Prescribed Burn on West Dry Creek Road to Reduce Future Wildfire's Intensity

COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLANS

The collaborative process to develop a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) allows residents, property owners, and government agencies to understand their wildfire “risk” and develop a project list to mitigate those risks. The District’s goal is to develop individual CWPPs reflecting the needs of each “community” in the fire district. These CWPPs will complement the countywide CWPP and allow the development of projects ready to implement pending funding. The fire district and its non-profit partners can then pursue grants and other funding opportunities. The Fuels Crew increases the fire district’s ability to carry out identified projects to reduce the risk to each community. **We can do much more risk reduction working together!**

CITIZENS ORGANIZED TO PREPARE FOR EMERGENCIES (COPE)

COPE is a grass roots effort based upon neighbor helping neighbor before, during, and after an emergency by partnering with public safety agencies to provide prevention, preparedness, and decision making information. COPE provides a forum for neighbors to meet one another and how they can help each other during an emergency when public safety agencies are stretched thin. COPE has led to prevention and preparedness improvements such as 1) development of pre-attack and neighborhood information maps which have been used during the Kincaid and Walbridge Fires, and 2) a communication link to share information about upcoming Red Flag Warnings and on-going emergencies. **COPE likely has prevented wildfire ignitions.**



Pre-Covid-19 COPE Meeting

<https://copenorthernsonomacounty.com/>

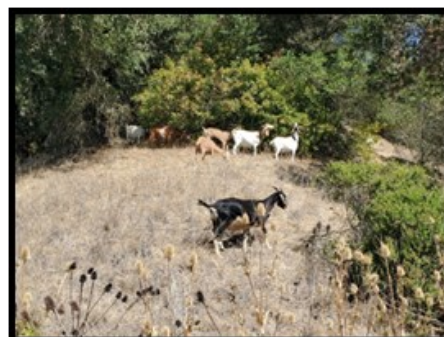


COLLABORATION



Community Fire Danger Sign

The District is always looking for opportunities to collaborate to implement fire prevention projects. During 2020, we partnered with 1) CAL TRANS to implement a vegetation management project utilizing goats along Highway 101 between Canyon Road and Chiquita Road, 2) shaded fuel break in the hills northeast of Geyserville, and 3) community fire danger signs that met the requirement for an Eagle Scout project and were funded by the California Fire Foundation.



The Fire District partnered with CAL TRANS for a vegetation management project along Highway 101

CONSIDER VOLUNTEERING



We live in a rural area and you may be able to help your neighbor before a public safety agency can arrive. Being a volunteer firefighter requires approximately 120 hours of initial training and then 4-6 hours per month of training to maintain qualifications and proficiency. Volunteer firefighter applications are available at the fire district's website. We also need volunteers to help with other fire department functions such as station maintenance, fundraising, and project coordination.



ABOUT YOUR FIRE DISTRICT

The Northern Sonoma County Fire Protection District is an independent special district with an elected five-person board of directors. The District was formerly the Geyserville Fire Protection District which merged with the area covered by the Knights Valley Volunteer Fire Company. The District works closely with the Cloverdale Fire Protection District under a Joint Powers Agreement. The fire district is funded by property taxes, grants, and donations to the Geyserville Volunteer Firefighters' Association.

USEFUL LINKS

- **Grazing for Vegetation Management:** There is a program to partner land owners with livestock owners: <https://matchgraze.com/>
- **Air Quality Permits** for Pile and Other Types of Burning: <https://www.nosocoair.net/permits.html>
- **Structure Retrofitting** to be Wildfire Resistant: There is a program offering advice and loans: <https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/General-Services/Energy-and-Sustainability/Benefits-of-Sustainability/Construction-Hardening/>
- **Defensible Space** Landscaping: http://sonomamg.ucanr.edu/Firewise_Landscaping/
- **CAL FIRE Ready for Wildfire:** <http://www.readyforwildfire.org>

