

Scope of Work

The work performed under this 50/50 cost-share will be focused on the removal of hazardous trees and shrubs that serve as fuel for wildland fire. The fuels targeted will be those nearest the home and any other structures on the property. Creating what is called a Defensible Space around the home is the goal of this work. The criteria for a Defensible Space is outlined by Firewise Communities /USA (Firewise) promoted by the National Fire Protection Association. Although the Firewise standards for Defensible Space include recommendations such as modifications to building materials and planting of fire resistant plant species, among others; the funding for this project is dedicated specifically to the removal of trees and shrubs. Clearing gutters of leaves, twigs/branches, and needles, raking leaves, twigs/branches, and needles away from the structures and from beneath porches and decks and cutting native and planted grasses/weeds will be the responsibility of the Homeowner and any costs for these actions are not covered by this particular cost-share grant.

Mitigation of wildfire hazards focus on breaking up the horizontal and vertical continuity of fuels. A Defensible Space by Firewise Communities/USA standards break properties up into three general zones labeled zone 1, 2, and 3. These zones will depend on factors such as slope/topography, size and type of vegetation that is on the property. Each zone has certain requirements for spacing of vegetation. The distance between trees decreases as the distance away from the home increases. However, because of the way fire behaves on a slope (spreads faster going up a slope) spacing of all residual trees will have to be increased with an increase in slope to achieve the desired defensible space.

Zone 1 is the closest to the home and extends out to 30ft. from the edge of the home or any attached garages, decks, or patios. Within zone 1, you should expect the crown of trees to be spaced about 30ft. apart and limbed/pruned up to either 10ft. or 1/3 the tree height, whichever is less. If a specific tree near the home is desired to be left, that tree will be isolated from other trees and the branches of that tree will be pruned away from the structure so that they do not touch the structure. All "ladder fuels" will be removed from within this zone as well. Ladder fuels are defined as vegetation with vertical continuity that may allow a fire to burn from the ground up into the branches and crowns of trees. This includes shrubs and smaller trees beneath a larger tree, as well as lower hanging branches on the larger tree itself.

Zone 2, depending on slope/topography, can extend to 100 ft. from the structure. In this zone, trees may be broken up into clumps of 2-3 trees or individual trees may be left with a canopy distance up to 20ft. Trees that will be selected for removal will be prioritized based on stressed, diseased, dying, and dead trees (not necessarily in that order) and then the more healthy trees will be removed to achieve the desired spacing. Residual trees will be pruned the same as trees within zone 1 and ladder fuels will be reduced accordingly.

Zone 3 is the farthest zone away from the structure and requires the least amount of thinning and spacing. However, smaller conifers growing between larger, more mature trees will be removed to

reduce the fuel density in this zone. Canopy density in this zone will be reduced to the point that branches from adjacent trees are not overlapping.

Trees to be removed will be marked prior by qualified personnel from either La Veta Fire Protection District (LVFPD) or Huerfano County (County). Trees and shrubs to be removed will be marked using blue spray paint. Any specific trees desired to be left such as, but not limited to, sentimental trees, memorial trees, view blocking trees etc. will be marked using black and yellow striped flagging tape. Any other tree or shrub that has not been marked will be not be cut.

Once work has been deemed complete by the contractor, a qualified individual from either LVFPD, Huerfano County, or Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) will visit the location to give approval of final product. When approved, a Certificate of Completion will be signed by both the qualified agency individual and the contractor. The Certificate will be sent into the County and the contractor will invoice the County for the full price of the work done. Once the County receives the invoice from the contractor, the County will pay the contractor. The County will then invoice the Homeowner for one half the cost of the invoice that the contractor sent to the County. This method of invoicing will allow the County to streamline the process of cost-share reimbursement to the homeowner, saving time, paper and money.

Listed below is a non-exclusive list of actions that will be taken, techniques possibly used, and other items that may give the Homeowner a little more insight as to the work being done on their property.

- Vegetation less prone to carrying wildfire and that promote species diversity will be prioritized for leaving.
- Trees will be directionally felled, limbed, and bucked with chainsaws.
- Tree rigging systems using ropes, cables, winches, come-a-longs, vehicles or other pulling devices may be used to guide cut trees in desired direction.
- Climbing systems using ropes, harnesses, and securing devices may potentially be used.
- Mechanical lifts may potentially be used in areas requiring specialized contractors.
- Large woody material will be decked in a neat and orderly fashion near the road to be transported off the property. These wood piles will be removed when accumulated amounts make it cost effective to do so.
- Large material may be skidded by hand, ATV, draft animal, or skid steer.
- Skidded logs will be suspended at least in the front of the log to reduce soil erosion.
- Soil rutting and excessive soil compaction, as determined by the Grant Supervisor, is not in compliance with grant criteria and will be the responsibility of the contractor to rehabilitate at their (the contractor's) expense.
- Slash will be removed and chipped or chipped and broadcast on site at a depth of no more than 3" unless Homeowner specifically requests chips to be piled on site for later use.
- Stump heights are not to exceed 6" on the uphill side.
- "Best Management Practices" (BMP's) as outlined by the CSFS, are to be adhered to for all cutting/treatment activities