



# Amador Fire Safe Council

Amador County, California

DECEMBER 2024

## COMMUNITY PROJECTS

On November 18th, the AFSC coordinated with fire crews from the Pine Grove Conservation Camp to begin their hand treatment on the vital Pine Acres Fuelbreak. This is predominantly a maintenance project to keep this important fuel break viable for many years to come. This fuelbreak was critical in mitigating severe devastation from both the Butte Fire of 2015 and the Electra Fire of 2022.

The Pine Grove crews will be lopping, chipping, and piling the debris from their work on some very steep slopes. With most projects, the AFSC is unable to clean off vegetation on slopes over 50 or so percent, however, this project demands handwork to maintain the clearances needed to stop wildfires coming out of the Mokelumne Canyon.



During Treatment

AFSC is expecting the implementation of contracted work by Nate's Tree Service on slopes between 30%-60% in the beginning of December. In total, the Pine Grove crews are expected to hand clear approximately 50 acres of these steep slopes and Nate's Tree Service is expected to clear approximately 60 acres with machine masticators. This grant will conclude in March of 2025.



Before Treatment



After Treatment



# ALL THINGS AMADOR COUNTY FIREWISE!



2024 saw a tremendous amount of work accomplished by the Firewise Communities of Amador County. Every year, each Firewise community must make a minimum volunteer contribution of 1 hour of wildfire risk reduction effort to remain in good standing as a certified and nationally recognized Firewise USA community. This includes activities such as:

- working with local forestry and fire related experts
- coordinating projects/meetings regarding wildfire outreach events and educational presentations
- training events for residents
- improvements and maintenance on homes and outbuildings
- improvements and maintenance within the home ignition zones
- neighborhood/community focused projects
- actual expenses

This year, the communities in good standing within Amador County not only met those requirements, but exceeded them by an enormous amount, and are truly ‘sparking the effort’.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) calculates the risk reduction efforts from each Firewise community as such: **1 hour worked = \$31.80 contributed to risk reduction.** Each Firewise community can include the following when adding up their work totals for the year:

- Chipper costs
- Rental equipment costs
- Hired contractor costs
- Home Improvement costs
- Landscaping costs
- Vehicle mileage
- Miscellaneous activities (burn piles, raking, home hardening, etc.)

<b>Amador County Firewise USA Year End Totals</b>	
Risk Reduction Expense Investment Costs:	\$1,627,040.70
Risk Reduction Work Hours Recorded:	34,655
<b>Total Risk Reduction Investment:</b>	<b>\$2,760,021.73</b>

Throughout 2024, Amador County’s Firewise communities participated in numerous programs offered by the AFSC and the Amador Resource Conservation District (ARCD). Examples of these programs are:

- Ingress/Egress Vegetation Removal
- Community Fuel Breaks
- Neighborhood Chipping Events
- Neighborhood Street Signage Update/Replacement



*“Getting our Firewise Community approved in May this year was a highlight for many in our neighborhood. This free program brought the community together for projects like installing new reflective signage, neighborhood chipping, vegetation clearing and knowledge sharing so that we can be better prepared to keep our families, pets and homes fire-safe. We have more plans for next year and are grateful to the Amador Fire Safe Council and the Amador Resource Conservation District for all the support”*

*-Jessica Roland*

*Manzanita Meadowlark Firewise Community Lead*

**INGRESS/EGRESS PROJECTS:**

This program was a definite highlight of collaborative efforts from the AFSC and the Amador County Firewise communities. The seven communities to participate and take advantage of this critical work were the Quartz Mountain, FPPOA/Brockman Mill, Andrews Lupe Ridge, Hale Road, Upper Rancheria, Bonnefoy Road, Upper Rancheria, and Manzanita Meadowlark Firewise communities.



BEFORE Lower Andrews AFSC Ingress/Egress Project      AFTER Lower Andrews AFSC Ingress/Egress Project

**UPPER RANCHERIA COMMUNITY FUEL BREAK:**

In 2021, Neighborhood Leads and members from the Upper Rancheria and Quartz Mountain Firewise communities submitted a proposal to the AFSC to implement a fuel break in their region. The AFSC then applied for and obtained grant funding through Cal Fire’s Fire Prevention grant program. The fuel break



**UPPER RANCHERIA (cont.):**

As of this Fall, Krisman Enterprises and Bordges Timber completed 199.17 acres out of the project total of 246 acres.

**COMMUNITY CHIPPING EVENTS:**

The ARCD completed various scheduled Neighborhood Chipping Events, throughout the county this year- all coordinated and requested by Firewise communities ranging in location from Jackson all the way up to Kirkwood!



**STREET SIGNAGE PROGRAM:**

Over 16 Firewise communities took part in updating their street signage to allow clear direction for emergency response personnel, as well as residents, in the event of an emergency.



NEW Visible Reflective Road Signage provided by Amador Fire Safe Council, Firewise USA sign by NFPA



Interested in becoming Firewise?  
Please visit our website:  
[www.amadorfiresafe.org/firewise-usa](http://www.amadorfiresafe.org/firewise-usa)



## Please welcome Todd Bertwell!



The ARCD welcomes the newest member of its team, Todd Bertwell as its Natural Resource Project Manager. Todd is responsible for overseeing wildfire protection and resiliency projects, including Community Fuel Breaks and Ingress & Egress routes. Todd brings a variety of experience and skills to the ARCD team. He is a forestry graduate of both Oregon State University and the University of Florida and has practiced forestry in the Sierra Nevada since 2022. He also served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Mexico, where he engaged community partners in wildlife surveys and environmental education. Todd is excited to work towards a healthier, safer environment in Amador County and beyond through collaborations with Fire Wise Communities and institutional partners. Beyond his role with the ARCD, Todd thoroughly enjoys living in Amador County and participating in community activities. You may see him performing on the Volcano Theater Company stage, catching up with friends at the farmers market, or jogging the backroads of Amador City. Don't be shy, say hi!

## LAST CALL FOR FREE CHIPPING!!!

The Chipping Program hosted by the Amador County Resource Conservation District is coming to a close! ARCD will be offering their FREE Chipping Program to residents of Amador County through **February 1, 2025**. This service has proven very effective, assisting many neighborhoods and residents in clearing their property of hazardous vegetation without the need for burning.

Don't miss this opportunity! The process to apply is simple:

Go to the ARCD's website to read the Chipping Program specifications to ensure compliance and prompt, seamless service:

[www.AmadorRCD.org/  
roadside-and-neighborhood-chipping](http://www.AmadorRCD.org/roadside-and-neighborhood-chipping)



If you think your neighborhood as a whole would benefit from this service and you have multiple neighbors who'd like to participate, please reach out to Megan Watts to discuss scheduling a Neighborhood Chipping Day!

**MEGAN WATTS:**  
(209) 214-9727 or [megan@amadorrkd.org](mailto:megan@amadorrkd.org)

### UPCOMING EVENTS:

#### UPCOUNTRY SAFETY MEETING

**Tuesday December 10th**  
**5:30pm-7:00pm**  
**Pioneer Veterans Hall**  
**25100 Buckhorn Ridge**

**Presenters: AFSC, AFD and the Sheriff's Office  
of Emergency Services**

Emergency Go-Bags will be  
distributed to each household in  
attendance

### AFSC Board Meetings

The Amador Fire Safe  
Council Board  
Meetings take place on  
the 3rd Wednesday of  
every month.

**Time:**  
3:00pm - 5:00pm

**Location:**  
Volcano  
Communications  
Tech Center  
19888 Church St.  
Pine Grove