

Redwood Valley/Chezem COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT



INTRODUCTION

The Firewise Communities/USA program is designed to provide an effective management approach for preserving wildland living aesthetics. The program can be tailored for adoption by any community and/or neighborhood association that is committed to ensuring its citizens maximum protection from wildland fire. The following community assessment is intended as a resource to be used by the Redwood Valley/Chezem residents for creating a wildfire safety action plan. The plan developed from the information in this assessment should be implemented in a collaborative manner, and updated and modified as needed.

Data collection for this assessment took place on May 19, 2014. Those involved in data gathering were as follows:

- Tom Hinz, Redwood Valley Community Group
- Paul Wolfberg, Redwood Valley Community Group
- Rea Erickson, Redwood Valley Community Group and the Green Point Elementary School
- Lane Hoffman, Chezem Rd. Resident
- Robin Hoffman, Chezem Rd. Resident
- Mark Rodgers, CAL FIRE Battalion Chief, Pre-Fire Planning
- Cybelle Immitt, Humboldt County Public Works/Humboldt County Fire Safe Council
- Danielle Allred, Humboldt County Public Works

Cybelle Immitt completed the “Assessing Wildfire Hazards in the Home Ignition Zone” training provided by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and Firewise.

DEFINITION OF THE HOME IGNITION ZONE

Redwood Valley/Chezem is located in a wildfire environment. Wildfires will happen--exclusion is not a choice. The variables in a fire scenario are when the fire will occur, and where. This assessment addresses the wildfire-related characteristics of Redwood Valley/Chezem. It examines the area’s exposure to wildfire as it relates to ignition

potential. The assessment does not focus on specific homes, but examines the community as a whole.

A house burns because of its interrelationship with everything in its surrounding home ignition zone---the house and its immediate surroundings. To avoid a home ignition, a homeowner must eliminate the wildfire's potential relationship with his/her house. This can be accomplished by interrupting the natural path a fire takes. Changing a fire's path by clearing a home ignition zone is an easy-to-accomplish task that can result in avoiding home loss. To accomplish this, flammable items such as dead vegetation must be removed from the area immediately around the structure to prevent flames from contacting it. Also, reducing the volume of live vegetation will affect the intensity of the wildfire as it enters the home ignition zone.

Included in this assessment are observations made while visiting the Redwood Valley/Chezem neighborhoods. The assessment addresses the ease with which home ignitions can occur under severe wildfire conditions and how these ignitions might be avoided within the home ignition zones of affected residents. Redwood Valley/Chezem residents can reduce their risk of destruction during a wildfire by taking actions within their home ignition zones. This zone principally determines the potential for home ignitions during a wildland fire; it includes a house and its immediate surroundings within 100 to 150 feet.

The result of the assessment is that wildfire behavior will be dominated by the residential characteristics of this area. The good news is that by addressing community vulnerabilities, residents will be able to substantially reduce their exposure to loss. Relatively small investments of time and effort will reap great rewards in wildfire safety.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SEVERE CASE WILDLAND FIRE CHARACTERISTICS THAT COULD THREATEN THE AREA

Fire intensity and spread rate depend on the fuel type and condition (live/dead), the weather conditions prior and during ignition, and the topography. Generally the following relationships hold between the fire behavior and the fuel, weather and topography.

- ✓ **Fuel:** Fine fuels ignite more easily and spread faster with higher intensities than coarser fuels. For a given fuel, the more there is and the more continuous it is, the faster the fire spreads and the higher the intensities. Fine fuels take a shorter time to burn out than coarser fuels.
- ✓ **Weather:** The weather conditions affect the moisture content of the dead and live vegetative fuels. Dead fine fuel moisture content is highly dependent on the relative humidity and the degree of sun exposure. The lower the relative humidity and the greater the sun exposure, the lower will be the fuel moisture content. Lower fuel moistures produce higher spread rates and fire intensities. In addition, wind speed significantly influences the rate of fire spread and fire intensity. The higher the wind speed, the greater the spread rate and intensity.

- ✓ **Topography:** Topography influences fire behavior principally by the steepness of the slope. However, the configuration of the terrain such as narrow draws, saddles and so forth can influence fire spread and intensity. In general, the steeper the slope, the higher the uphill fire spread and intensity.

The two neighborhoods of focus in this assessment are deeply situated within the wildland-urban interface (WUI), where there is an increased likelihood that wildland fires will lead to structural fires, and vice versa. In recent years, when participating in a community workshop process of updating the local county's community wildfire protection plan (CWPP), participating residents became acutely aware of their vulnerability to a catastrophic wildfire event. Although the Redwood Valley/Chezem area has been fortunate not to have experienced many major wildfire events recently, the lack of fire in this region for several decades has led to the accumulation of heavy fuel loads in the forest understories. These communities are surrounded by industrial timberlands, characterized by steep hill slopes and drainages. This type of terrain, and the wind tunnels it sometimes generates, can greatly increase wildfire intensity and its rate of spread. Sudden Oak Death, an invasive forest pathogen, has had an impact in this region as well, adding to the fuel load in these forests. There are also standing dead trees, known as snags, which are likely targets for lightning strikes and could lead to wildfires in the surrounding forests.

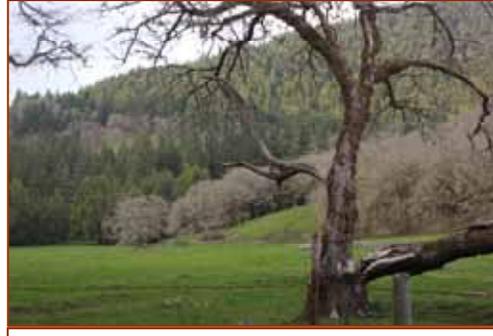
If lightning were to strike a snag, the dry, dead wood would be consumed quickly, dropping burning debris to the forest floor and raining down embers which, if the wind was blowing, could travel up to a mile away in any direction and cause spot fires. If this occurred on a day in summer, the Redwood Valley/Chezem neighborhoods are far enough inland that the vegetation would contain little moisture, enabling a fire to burn through the area hot and fast. Logging slash from timber harvest activities would act like kindling for the heavy fuel loads that have accumulated from decades of fire suppression.

The accumulation of dense vegetation has also formed ladder fuels, which can carry wildfires off the forest floor into the canopies, resulting in crown fires, which are nearly impossible to control. If a wildfire incident such as this broke out in the forests surrounding the Redwood Valley/Chezem communities, residents would be in great danger. Residences are accessible only through a few small, narrow and winding roads that branch off of Highway 299, which provides ingress and egress for the entire area. Limited access to these communities could create serious, potentially life-threatening complications if one of these roads became impassable and residents became trapped.

A section of Bair Rd. eventually connects to Highway 96 in Hoopa, but this would not be an ideal evacuation route because it is a narrow, windy road that necessitates slow driving. Complications could also arise if residents had to evacuate at the same time that fire suppression apparatuses were attempting to gain access. Residents would be on their own until fire protection resources from outside the area were able to respond, which--due to the remoteness of these communities--could take an hour or more.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The neighborhoods of Redwood Valley and Chezem are situated within the forests and drainages of the Redwood Creek watershed, approximately 35 miles inland, northeast of the City of Blue Lake. The Redwood Valley community is located approximately 8 miles north of Hwy 299, along Stover and Bair Roads. The community consists of approximately 30 households, most of which lie within the narrow valley bottom near Redwood Creek, with oak woodlands characterizing the valley floor. The Chezem neighborhood is situated along Chezem Rd., which connects to Hwy 299 in two places, wending down away from the highway towards the creek, then back up along the steep, forested hill slopes to reconnect with Hwy 299 approximately 4.5 miles away. Residences are located all along the road; some lie within the lower elevation near the creek and some are situated against the hillsides. The Chezem neighborhood includes approximately 15 homes, as well as two summer trailer park communities that exist down unmarked, gravel roads branching off of Chezem Rd. on either side of Redwood Creek.



Redwood Valley

There are no designated towns or cities in this area, and most of the surrounding landscape is privately owned, industrial timberland. Hwy 299, which runs east-to-west between the towns of Willow Creek and Arcata, is essentially the sole corridor for ingress and egress for the Redwood Valley/Chezem communities. Most residences are located a short way away from Hwy 299, along narrow, winding roads that interconnect and branch off of the main highway; these include Stover, Bair, and Chezem Roads. The terrain of this area is characterized by steep, forested, relatively unstable hill slopes and narrow valley bottoms, with elevations ranging from 1,100 to about 5,300 feet. Vegetation varieties include Douglas-fir dominant coniferous forests, also containing coastal redwoods, as well as several hardwood species, including big leaf maple, red alder, tanbark oak, madrone, and bay. Prairies and oak woodlands cover the south- and west-facing hill slopes and ridge tops.



View from top of Chezem Rd., overlooking Highway 299 (left) and the Redwood Creek drainage (right).

The majority of the Redwood Creek watershed is zoned “Very High Fire Hazard Severity,” as determined by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). This high wildfire hazard designation is due to dense fuel loads, steep terrain, and relatively hot dry weather during the wildfire season. Sudden Oak Death has also taken a toll on sections of forest within this watershed, gradually killing off stands of trees and potentially adding to already high fuel loads. Although the more populated areas are less severely zoned, “High Fire Hazard Severity,” this makes little difference since these areas are still completely surrounded by lands with “Very High Fire Hazard Severity” ratings. Potential ignition risks within the area include lightning strikes, intense seismic activity, downed power lines, vehicles and equipment, poorly maintained burn piles, and other human-related causes. Conditions in the valley also lend themselves to the type of wildfire that is resistant to control which will put a strain on firefighting resources and could lead to a larger burn area.

The Redwood Valley/Chezem communities’ vulnerability to losses from wildfire is exacerbated by the lack of local fire protection resources. CAL FIRE is the entity responsible for providing wildfire suppression services to the communities in the Redwood Creek watershed. Although air attack resources, out of the Rohnerville base, can respond quickly, it can take up to an hour and a half for a fire engine to respond to this area from the nearest CAL FIRE station. Firefighting resources from the Willow Creek and Blue Lake Fire Protection Districts will respond to fires if available, but the area is not within these Districts’ jurisdictional boundaries, and response times are still lengthy. This type of response is often referred to as “goodwill service” because the fire department is not responsible for the area, nor does it receive compensation for its efforts.

ASSESSMENT PROCESS



Community Assessment Process.

The Assessment Team visited the Redwood Valley and Chezem communities on the afternoon of May 19, 2014. The Team consisted of Cybelle Immitt and Danielle Allred of Humboldt County Public Works, along with Mark Rodgers of CAL FIRE, who were met by Redwood Valley Residents, Tom Hinz and Paul Wolfberg. The Team congregated at the top of Chezem Rd. and proceeded to drive the length of the road, stopping in various locations to take pictures, note wildfire hazards, and discuss the singularities of the community. The Team then moved onto Bair Rd. and drove into the Redwood Valley community, repeating the process described above.

After hours of touring and assessing the wildfire hazards of these two neighborhoods, the Team convened at the Green Point School, where they were met by Rea Erickson, Superintendent of Green Point School, as well as Chezem Rd. residents Lane and Robin Hoffman. The Team then discussed their observations of hazards, gained additional insight from the local residents, and then brainstormed action items that could be taken to begin to address the wildfire hazards in these communities.

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

The Firewise Communities/USA program seeks to create a sustainable balance that will allow communities to live safely while maintaining environmental harmony in a WUI setting. Homeowners already balance their decisions about fire protection measures against their desire for certain flammable components on their properties. It is important for them to understand the implications of the choices they are making. These choices directly relate to the ignitability of their home ignition zones during a wildfire.

1) Limited Ingress and Egress

Hwy 299 is the primary access route in and out of the Redwood Valley/Chezem area. Bair Rd. connects to the main highway and leads northeast into the valley, connecting to Stover Rd. Chezem Rd. is located about 1.5 miles past Bair Rd., and reconnects with Hwy 299 about 4.5 miles away. Although Hwy 299 is well maintained, the smaller community roads receive less maintenance and large pot holes are not uncommon; these roads are also typically narrow, with steep inclines and tight curves in some sections. Landslides have taken out portions of these roads in the past, making them impassable for drivers without large trucks or four-wheel drive capabilities. The quality of these roads could make access for firefighting apparatuses slow and difficult, with the additional challenge of overgrown roadside vegetation creating narrow tunnels too low for some apparatuses in places. Overgrown vegetation along residential driveways could also hinder access, as well as



Frequent landslide area on a main road in Redwood Valley. The road is very narrow which could hinder safe evacuation.

inadequate turn-around spaces. A few actions that might begin to address this issue are the following:

- Maintain driveway clearances at least 20 feet wide and 15 feet high by cutting back vegetation.
- Collectively identify alternative access routes for a variety of emergency scenarios and educate the community about evacuation planning and procedures.
- Identify potential evacuation zones where people could shelter in place in case there is no alternative exit strategy.

2) High Fuel Loads

The Redwood Valley/Chezem communities are surrounded by fire-adapted forests that have traditionally experienced fire on a semi-regular basis, whether by natural ignition sources (such as lightning) or intentional burns used by indigenous tribes in their management of the forests. When maximum fire suppression became the norm for wildfire management in the



Heavy brush and ladder fuels on a steep incline up from Stover Rd.

mid-20th century, the amount of vegetation, such as leaf litter and smaller saplings in the forest understory that were historically controlled by frequent, low-intensity fires, were allowed to accumulate and develop into heavy fuel loads and ladder fuels. These heavier fuel loads cause wildfires to burn with extreme intensity and ladder fuels create the potential for fire to reach the forest canopy, putting all of the surrounding landscape at risk from flying embers. Residences in Redwood Valley and Chezem would be vulnerable to “ember attack” in the event of a large wildfire. A few actions that might begin to address this issue are the following:

- Use fire-resistant construction materials on homes and keep combustible items out of contact with structures.
- Maintain “lean, clean, green” home ignition zones to keep the area fire-resistant.
- Manage vegetation around homes and community structures by selectively limiting flammable vegetation and breaking up fuel continuity to create and maintain good defensible space and prevent a fire from leading up to a structure.

3) Long Distance from Firefighting Resources

The homesteads of Redwood Valley and Chezem are not within the boundaries of any local fire protection agency’s jurisdiction. These neighborhoods are within CAL

FIRE’s jurisdiction, however the nearest station is located in Trinidad, which can lead to response times of an hour and a half or longer. The nearby Fire Protection Districts of Willow Creek and Blue Lake will provide goodwill service to the area, but only if firefighting resources are available, and response times can still require an hour or more. These local departments are the entities most likely to respond first in medical emergencies as well. The remoteness of the area translates into a longer amount of time needed before help can arrive on the scene, so residents of this community will be required to handle emergency situations on their own for the first hour or so into the incident. There is also no municipal water sources servicing the area, meaning there are no fire hydrants, and residents must obtain water—including fire protection water—through other means, such as drawing from nearby creeks and holding tanks. A few actions that might begin to address this issue are the following:

- Invest in a large community water tank or series of tanks for fire protection water.
- Train local community members in firefighting, medical first aid and basic disaster response. Obtain basic firefighting tools and gear, such as fire-resistant Nomex clothing, gloves, and shovels.
- Make sure homes and roads are well marked to assist out of area firefighters
- Explore possibilities of inclusion in the Blue Lake Fire Protection jurisdictional boundaries if those boundaries were to be expanded in the future.

OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As the Assessment Team examined the Redwood Valley and Chezem neighborhoods, the following observations were made and mitigation actions are recommended.

Flammable Debris in Direct Contact with Structures

There were many observations of flammable vegetation in direct contact with structures. This included brushy shrubs and trees growing directly alongside houses, debris accumulated on roof tops, and overhanging tree branches looming above structures. If vegetation in contact with a structure were to ignite, the possibility the home catching fire would be very high. Leaves and pine needles on roof tops are ready receptors for flying embers that accompany wildfire events, and fires that start on the roof or in gutters can spread to the rest of the home. Another commonly observed hazard was propane tanks covered by flammable vegetation, which is another ignition hazard.

Residents can begin to eliminate these hazards by regularly cleaning needles and leaves off of their roofs, creating a vegetation clearance



around propane tanks and generators, and trimming back tree branches hanging over their home or garage. These are small actions that can make a huge difference in protecting one's home from wildfire.

Old Cars Along Roadside

Numerous old cars are lined in succession for almost a quarter of a mile along the upper end of Chezem Rd. This section of road is already particularly narrow, and the obstruction of these seemingly permanent vehicles could create major complications for emergency access and/or evacuation during a wildfire event. Firefighting apparatuses



would likely be unable to pass through if another vehicle was traveling in the opposite lane and the placement of these old vehicles block the possibility of any usable turnouts. Additionally, this collection of vehicles, with their rubber tires, oil, and fuels contribute hazardous materials for burning if a wildfire were to pass through this area. The presence of these cars has been an ongoing issue in the neighborhood for several years. Although residents and County officials have spoken to the landowner about the issue, and the vehicles have been temporarily removed at times, they have always been replaced. Local residents can continue to work with County officials and the property owner to find a long term solution to this hazardous issue.

Scotch Broom

Scotch broom is a highly invasive, woody weed that crowds out native species and negatively impacts wildlife habitat, and it is abundant in the Redwood Valley/Chezem area. It covers the hillsides, borders roadways, encroaches on open meadows, and even



Between March and June, Scotch broom has distinguishable, 1-inch bright yellow flowers. The rest of the year it appears like the brushy shrubs in the upper-right picture above.

grows around houses. As Scotch broom grows, the inner stems die back, providing highly flammable fuel, even in healthy plants. Plants can grow up to twelve feet in height and

form dense, impenetrable stands. These characteristics, and its high oil content, make scotch broom a significant fire hazard.

Due to the prevalence of Scotch broom in the area, complete eradication is not a feasible option for the Redwood Valley/Chezem community. However, residents can take steps to reduce their own fire hazard by removing Scotch broom plants growing on their property, particularly near their homes. Efforts to keep scotch broom out of open meadows and back away from roadways could also reduce fire risk by maintaining defensible space areas and safe, roadside clearance. If plants are small (1/2 inch diameter or less), they can be removed by hand-pulling, hoeing, or with the use of a weed wrench. Lopping the larger plants (1/2 inch or greater) within 3 inches of the soil surface, can be effective if done during the driest period of the season, otherwise lopping when moisture is readily available can lead to vigorous re-sprouting. Mowing can be effective but it is important not to mow when seedpods are ripe because this can stimulate germination. Many herbicides are effective on Scotch broom as well. Residents who want to use herbicides to remove Scotch broom should contact the county agricultural commissioner for recommendations.

Sudden Oak Death



Heavy fuel loads consisting of dead vegetation resulting from Sudden Oak Death.

Sudden Oak Death (S.O.D.) is an invasive forest pathogen that has caused the widespread dieback of tanoak and several other oak species throughout coastal California. The forests surrounding the Redwood Valley/Chezem area have been impacted by S.O.D. and the results can be seen among the groups of standing dead trees scattered throughout the timberland. Large patches of dead, gray trees amidst the otherwise green forest are viewable across the valley from Stover Rd. Trees, particularly groups of trees, affected by S.O.D. can become a serious danger to firefighters and increase fire intensity. The Redwood Creek watershed has hosted S.O.D. management projects intended to slow-the-spread of the pathogen and to promote fire resiliency, the most recent of which will be a fuel break along the strategically important Stover Ridge.

All symptomatic tanoak trees and all California bay laurel trees will be removed along a ridge line that separates the Stover Ranch from the Bureau of Land Management’s (BLM) Lacks Creek Management Unit. Although it is not clear what residents can do to prevent S.O.D., they can reduce their vulnerability to fire risks from S.O.D. by hardening their homes against ember attack, choosing fire-safe landscaping, and maintaining good defensible space.

SUCCESSFUL FIREWISE MODIFICATIONS

When adequately prepared, a house can likely withstand a wildfire without the intervention of the fire service. Further, a house and its surrounding community can be both Firewise and compatible with the area’s ecosystem. The Firewise Communities/USA program is

designed to enable communities to achieve a high level of protection against WUI fire loss even as a sustainable ecosystem balance is maintained.

A homeowner/community must focus attention on the home ignition zone and eliminate the fire’s potential relationship with the house. This can be accomplished by disconnecting the house from high and/or low-intensity fire that could occur around it. The following photographs were taken in Redwood Valley and are examples of good Firewise practices.

Although the Assessment Team observed houses with vegetation growing hazardously close to structures, there were also several homes demonstrating good defensible space, with mowed, well irrigated lawns and vegetation clearance around their propane tanks.

Additionally, the team observed at least two locations—one in Redwood Valley and one on Chezem Rd.—with well maintained, open meadows that could potentially serve as a helicopter landing site. These locations are valuable for these communities that lack any local fire protection resource, as they could enable a more rapid air response from CAL FIRE in a wildfire emergency.

A core group of residents dedicated to



Residence with defensible space and vegetation clearance around propane tank.



Possible helicopter landing site on Chezem Rd.



Highly visible, reflective address signs aide rapid emergency response.

increasing emergency preparedness and self-sufficiency in their community have formed the Redwood Valley Community Group (RVCG). This group meets monthly at the Green Point School – the community’s only centralized building—to discuss hazards in the community and form plans of action to mitigate those hazards. For example, poor or lacking address signage, which can hinder emergency response, had been an issue in this community. Unmarked roads and driveways could cause even longer response times to an already remote, isolated community, so the RVCG collaborated to improve signage throughout the neighborhood. Funding was provided by a Humboldt Area Foundation Community Building grant to purchase and distribute bright green, reflective address signs that make driveways and homes easier for emergency responders to locate. The RVCG’s efforts are also geared toward helping educate their neighbors about all potential disasters faced by the community and ways to prepare for them.



Two community bulletin boards have been installed, one at the entrance to the Green Point School, and one at the entrance to Redwood Valley, where Bair Rd. meets Hwy 299. These bulletin boards display information about upcoming events in the community as well as fire safety tips.

The RVCG has also taken the steps to have the Green Point School—the community’s most



Redwood Valley Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) members.

centralized building—

designated as a Red Cross emergency shelter. A supply shed at the school has been stocked with essential emergency supplies, such as a first-aid kit, a back-board, an emergency blanket, an emergency food supply, and some personal protection gear, such as



Emergency supply shed at Green Point School.

gloves.

To further enhance capacity within the community, a

number of residents underwent training through the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program in November of 2013. This program educates people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills. CERT members can assist others in their neighborhood following an event when professional responders are not immediately available to help.

Redwood Valley was also selected for a fuels reduction project implemented by the California Conservation Corps (CCC), which receives funding from the State Responsibility Area Fire Prevention Benefit Fee (SRA fee). The project created a shaded fuelbreak around the Green Point School. The project area is made up of Douglas-fir, coastal redwood, and tan oak trees as well as various brush species. The area was brushed and small trees removed to allow fourteen feet spacing between trees. The shaded fuelbreak was developed by pruning, limbing, and brushing roadside vegetation within one-hundred feet of the road around the school. Vegetative debris was chipped on site or lopped and scattered within 18 inches of the ground. The removal of dead and dying vegetation as well as a major decrease in ladder fuels significantly reduced fire hazards around the Green Point School. This project also resulted in enhanced defensible space and improved ingress and egress around the school. Pictures taken before and after the fuels treatment are shown below.



The “Before” picture above shows the density of vegetation beyond the school’s fence line.

The “After” picture below shows the brush clearance that was done to create a fuelbreak between the larger trees.

NEXT STEPS

After reviewing the contents of this assessment and its recommendations, the Redwood Valley/Chezem Firewise Community Working Group in cooperation with CAL FIRE and the Humboldt County Fire Safe Council will determine whether or not it wishes to continue seeking Firewise Communities/USA recognition. The Firewise

Communities/USA representative will contact the Firewise Committee representative by June 30, 2014 to receive its decision.

If the site assessment and recommendations are accepted and recognition will be sought, the Redwood Valley/Chezem Firewise Community Working Group will create agreed-upon, area-specific solutions to the Firewise recommendations and create an action plan in cooperation with CAL FIRE and the Humboldt County Fire Safe Council.

Assuming the assessment area seeks to achieve national Firewise Communities/USA recognition status, it will integrate the following standards into its plan of action:

- ✓ Sponsor a local Firewise Committee, task force, committee, commission or department that maintains the Firewise Community program and status.
- ✓ Enlist a WUI specialist to complete an assessment and create a plan from which it identifies agreed-upon, achievable local solutions.
- ✓ Invest a minimum of \$2.00 annually per capita in its Firewise Communities/USA program. (Work done by municipal employees or volunteers, using municipal or other equipment, can be included, as can state/federal grants dedicated to that purpose.)
- ✓ Observe a Firewise Communities/USA Day each spring that is dedicated to a local Firewise project.
- ✓ Submit an annual report to Firewise Communities/USA. This report documents continuing participation in the program.

Redwood Valley residents are reminded to be conscious of keeping high-intensity fire more than 100 feet from their homes. It is important for them to avoid fire contact with their structures. This includes firebrands. The assessment team recommends the establishment of a 'fire free zone', allowing no fire to burn within ten feet of a house by removing fuels located there. It is a bad idea for fire to touch a house during a wildfire. Remember that, while wildfire cannot be eliminated from a property, it can be reduced in intensity.

Weather is, of course, of great concern during wildfire season. At such time as fire weather is severe, homeowners should remember not to leave flammable items outside. This includes rattan doormats, flammable patio furniture, firewood stacked next to the house, or other flammables.

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