Novato Heights Name of Leader:

Robert Streich

Funding Requested:

\$10,000

Project Description:

The Novato Heights Firewise community, located in a Tier 2 High Fire Risk Area (HFRA) in Marin County, proposes to clear 2-4 large trees and a large patch of underbrush along a designated evacuation route. A PG&E 12kV three-phase overhead distribution line traverses the evacuation route for its entire length.

Evacuation Route Clearance:

SCOPE: Remove 15ft x 80ft patch of shrubs, thick grass, poison oak and berry bramble underbrush that is directly under a 300ft. span of 12kV primary line.

* The underbrush also encircles a 12kV 3-way corner pole with an open delta transformer bank and fuses attached.

Project Benefits:

Community and PG&E Infrastructure

1. Removes highly flammable underbrush along an entire span of PG&E primary line;

2. Clears the evacuation route of flammable vegetation AND widens the road at a critical pinch point on the Novato Heights Evacuation Route;

This project is shovel ready, including verbal permission from the property owner to clear the portion that's on private property. Work would commence at project approval.

Hazardous tree removal:

SCOPE: The proposed tree clearing would include the removal or heavy trimming of 2-4 50'-80' tall Pine and Cedar trees. Several of the same Pine species have been infested with the Bark Beetle disease mortality and been removed over the past 12 months. However, more of these same tree species pose a risk of falling onto the 12kV pole line and also blocking the 61 Novato Heights property owners from evacuating during a major disaster.

Disposal of the cuttings would be with a chipper for branches and hauling off the larger trunk sections and underbrush for recycling.

PROJECT BENEFITS

- Mitigate wildfire risk by the reduction of vegetation fuel under a service aged 12kV distribution line;
- 2. Removal of high risk trees that are within 10 ft of the 12kV line to reduce the risk of ignition from a tree/power line strike;
- 3. Reduce the risk of tall trees falling and blocking the one-way-out evacuation route;
- 4. Remove flammable materials away from the 12kV line to reduce the risk of a vegetation fire damaging or burning down the pole line.

Since the proposed tree removals are in the proximity of the primary lines, a tree crew that is certified to work near energized power lines will be required. If possible & for the sake of efficiency, we'd

contract with PG&E crews to provide the qualified crew, if not, we will contract with another certified crew.

To avoid the cost of nesting bird surveys, we propose the tree work would start in September 2023 to avoid bird nesting season. Though, if this is not possible due to the 75% by August 31st requirement, surveys and work would be completed sooner. The project should be completed within five working days.

The Novato Heights Firewise group supported by Firesafe Marin will request approval from the property owner's permission to remove or heavily trim the proposed at-risk trees prior to the start of the project.

The Novato Heights Firewise Community appreciates PG&E and other agencies' support in their efforts to mitigate the risk of wildfires and we look forward to partnering with them to achieve the proposed project benefits.





Photos:







Firewise Community: Muir Beach Name of Leader: Don Piotter Funding Requested: \$10,000 Project Description:

Muir Beach Sunset Way Evacuation Route Clearance and Elimination/Reduction of Sources of Fire Ignition and Spread

Project type:

The project scope includes removal of vegetation that can be ignited by sparks and fire caused by fallen PG&E distribution lines, pole mounted transformers, or other equipment. This vegetation removal will be in addition to existing annual PG&E vegetation management efforts on Sunset Way. The purpose of PG&E's existing vegetation management is to prevent higher limbs from severing power lines or hitting other PG&E equipment. The purpose of this project is to reduce lower vegetation that can ignite from sparks or fire caused by PG&E equipment, including sparks from downed lines, exploding transformers, melting insulators, or other malfunctions.

A PG&E distribution line runs along the Sunset Way for its entire length (6 tenths of a mile) and includes 12 pole mounted transformers. This project will have a street level crew, with potentially some tree climbing, to trim or remove vegetation near poles with transformers (particularly older ones that have the potential for failure / explosion), with the aim of preventing the ignition and/or spread of future fires related to PG&E equipment. By reducing the likelihood of vegetation fires igniting from PG&E equipment, the project will enable safer ingress for fire department vehicles and egress for evacuating residents.

Treatment methods:

Manual removal of limbs using chainsaws with extensions and other hand held tools.

Disposal methods:

Material can be chipped on site or hauled away - whichever is less expensive.

How does this reduce wildfire risk to your community?

Sunset way is a very narrow and long dead-end street with dense trees and bushes and closely spaced houses on either side. The street is just 12 feet wide in most places and is .6 miles long. Virtually the entire length of the street, cars must pull tightly to one side to allow cars to pass in the opposing direction. It is quite difficult to get wide fire department vehicles down the street to reach the location of a fire. Due to the narrowness of the roadway, It is also very difficult for residents to exit the street – particularly when fire vehicles are entering the street or are parked on the street near a fire. Sparks from downed power lines or transformer explosions/fires could easily spread into a major vegetation and/or structure fire involving several residences/lots. In that case, it could be very difficult to get fire/ambulance vehicles to the fire site and also very difficult for residents to evacuate. Residents could be trapped behind the fire site, with no vehicular access to the escape route from the fire – Highway 1. Further, Muir Beach is an aging community, with many residents that have reduced mobility.

In recent years, there have been multiple fires on Sunset Way that were started by PG&E equipment.

These include a fire at the base of a PG&E pole at the dead end of Sunset Way on July 18, 2018. This fire was caused by a melted connection on PG&E equipment. There was a vegetation fire at 20 Sunset Way on October 26, 2022 that was caused by a downed PG&E power line. Nearby, there have been multiple fire incidents caused by PG&E equipment including a pole mounted transformer that exploded on Panoramic Highway just north of the Highway 1 intersection that occurred on June 9th, 2019. The explosion caused a fast moving wildfire at the site that was extinguished by County fire. Due to the dense, coastal scrub habitat, and strong coastal winds, this could have easily become a large and catastrophic wildfire; thankfully, on that day, weather conditions were favorable and local fire authorities were able to respond fast enough to contain it. There are also multiple PG&E poles on Sunset way that are unstable and lean or sway. On February 21, 2023, during a storm, a downed PG&E power line on Frank Valley Road (less than a mile from Muir Beach) generated sparks that ignited a wildfire that was extinguished by County and Muir Beach Fire. Also, a 40 acre fire occurred about a mile north of Muir Beach Highway 1 on October 24, 2019. This fire did not involve PG&E equipment but is indicative of how quickly fire can spread in the Muir Beach area. Fortunately, these fires were quickly identified and extinguished and weather conditions were favorable. It is apparent, from the many ignitions in recent history, that PG&E equipment, particularly on red flag days, could have catastrophic consequences, with fatalities, injuries, and extensive property damage. This Sunset Way project targets one of these potential ignition points that, due to its central location along a narrow but important evacuation corridor, is of particular importance to the residents of Muir Beach.

How does this mitigate fire risk to PG&E infrastructure?

Increasing the distance between vegetation and PG&E lines and transformers will greatly reduce the likelihood of fire from sparks generated by PG&E equipment and reduce PG&E's liability.

Who will complete the work?

The work will be completed by qualified contractors that have experience working in Muir Beach (Forster & Kroeger, The Tree Man and Small World Tree).

When will the work occur? How long?

Planning will take place in May and June 2023, including consultation with residents of Sunset Way. Vegetation removal will be completed in July 2023.

Who owns the land to be treated and how will they be involved in the process?

The project influence zone of the project includes over 50 private residences. Not all of the residences will be affected by the project. Affected residents are supportive of this work. Outreach will be conducted to communicate the risk reduction benefits of this work to the community. Despite their expressed interest and support of the work, property owners retain the right of refusal for vegetation trimming on their individual property. If this happens on any given property, work will not be halted as there are multiple supportive residents along this evacuation corridor.

Does this work pose any environmental impacts?

Vegetation removal will be very selective, in developed areas, and not have a negative ecological impact.

Does this work provide any environmental value?

By reducing the potential for catastrophic wildfire, this project supports the preservation of many acres of coastal scrub and forest.

Please state whether your project is in a High Fire-Threat District (HFTD). Projects in HFTD will likely be prioritized over non-HFTD.

The project is within a Tier 2 fire threat district and within one mile of a large Tier 3 fire threat district (Muir Woods National Monument and Mount Tamalpais State Park).



Bayside Acres

Name of Leader:

Julia Glenister **Funding Requested:** \$10,000 **Project Description:**

Project type: Evacuation route clearance Private Property Defensible Space Clearing (Glenwood Elementary School)

Treatment methods:

Mechanical and manual treatment

Disposal methods:

Chipping on Site

How does this reduce wildfire risk to your community?

Our proposal seeks to secure the primary evacuation route from the Main-Manzanita neighborhood in the Bayside Acres subdivision. Our community is in a WUI-designated area bordering China Camp State Park and extensive open space in San Rafael, CA.

We seek to remove the most dangerous trees and branches in a grove of mature eucalyptus located along Main Drive on the Glenwood Elementary School property about 100 yards from where it intersects with Point San Pedro Road.

How does this mitigate fire risk to PG&E infrastructure?

In September 2022, two large branches fell from two trees in the Eucalyptus grove, and one limb fell on Main Drive, narrowly missing a passing car. That limb knocked out cable and telephone lines on September 8th. Fortunately, no one was injured. Main Drive is the only evacuation route for the residences.

Our Firewise team had proposed to the San Rafael Fire Department (SRFD) and Marin County Fire Department (MCFD) in January 2021 that they remove this grove because of its threat to a potential wildfire evacuation. The SRFD vegetation management team said they were responsible for the grove. They approached PG&E to ask about sharing the cost of removing the larger trees near the power lines, but PG&E declined. The SRFD opted to thin and remove eucalyptus trees less than 8" during the Roadway Survey work in January 2022. Several large trees remain a threat to the power lines and evacuation.

Who will complete the work?

We would coordinate with the Glenwood Elementary School to hire a licensed tree removal firm with a certified arborist to oversee the work.

When will the work occur? How long?

The work would occur this summer, well before August 31st, and would take 2-3 days.

Who owns the land to be treated and how will they be involved in the process?

The Glenwood Elementary School owns the undeveloped property adjacent to Main Drive where the trees stand. The school's address is 25 W Castlewood Dr, San Rafael, CA 94901.

Does this work pose any environmental impacts?

No.

Does this work provide any environmental value?

Yes. Eucalyptus trees are non-native, highly flammable, and consume a lot of water that would be otherwise going to plants with less fire risk and more habitat value.

If the project(s) are within or adjacent to a fire footprint, please provide the name of the fire and distance from the fire footprint in your proposal.

Eucalyptus trees on a private residence at 70 Manzanita Ave, San Rafael, CA, caught fire two years ago.

Please state whether your project is in a High Fire-Threat District (HFTD).

Yes. The CPUC High Fire Threat District (HFTD) overlaps with the edge of Bayside Acres community. This eucalyptus grove is down in a valley below the HFTD lines drawn around San Pedro Mountain, China Camp State Park and the Bayview Fire Road that leads to our subdivision.

Any other relevant details:

Main Drive is the only clear evacuation route for residents of Manzanita Avenue and Main Drive. The extension of West Castlewood Drive that runs past the school and joins with Main Drive is potentially an alternative evacuation route. Two locked gates block that lane (extension), which is unpaved and is essentially a fire road.

The eucalyptus grove poses a hazard not only to local residents but to the children who use Main Drive to go to the Glenwood School, and who play in the area of the trees. Additionally, these trees are a fire danger to the Glenwood and Bayside Acres firewise neighborhoods.



Alta Molino

Name of Leader:

Margaret Fisher

Funding Requested:

\$10,000

Project Description:

Project Type: Evacuation route clearance

Treatment methods:

Manual and mechanical removal of fallen Eucalyptus debris, underbrush and leftover logs. Chipping branches less than 8" in diameter.

Disposal methods:

- Broadcasting wood chips nearby, at the end of Lockwood lane.
- Hauling larger logs to compost facility (ideally through chipper days to reduce cost)

How does this reduce wildfire risk to your community?

The debris is located just downhill from a secondary PG&E power line strung through older Eucalyptus trees which have debris and their foot

How does this mitigate fire risk to PG&E infrastructure?

If during a windstorm a spark was emitted, the Eucalyptus debris would ignite the brush and start a fire destroying the lines attached to PGE equipment. If fire originated below this area, it would spread uphill, burning the debris and ignite the PGE lines embedded within the Eucalyptus trees.

Who will complete the work?

A local tree service depending on submitted quotes.

When will the work occur? How long?

Project will begin as soon as funding becomes available but no later than Aug 2023. Duration is estimated at 2 weeks.

Who owns the land to be treated and how will they be involved in the process?

The land is owned by the City of Mill Valley. The Mill Valley DPW Parks Dept. is supportive of this grant and will be involved in oversight as the area is cleared and brush and downed wood removed. The SMFD has offered to provide a Chipper if needed.

Does this work pose any environmental impacts?

No

Does this work provide any environmental value?

The reduction of fire risk protects habitat. While the soil chemistry is likely already altered to favor Eucalyptus over native plants and habitat, the removal of eucalyptus duff will reduce this effect.

Please state whether your project is in a High Fire-Threat District (HFTD)

This project is located within a HFTD.

Any other relevant details:

The proposed work is located in the Norris Park area of Mill Valley and is adjacent to private property. There is an evacuation route that passes through this area of Norris Park. If necessary, residents and crews will replant with native groundcover and add any additional erosion control measures such as waddles or netting.



Firewise Community: Sun Valley Flats Name of Leader: Jim Rubin Funding Requested: \$10,000 Project Description:

Private property defensible space clearing and electric line protection.

This project will reduce the height of a dying eucalyptus tree near the residence, road and electric wires. Branches will be removed mechanically by local arbor companies. Removed branches will be chipped onsite. Additionally, directional pruning may be applied to oak, maple and elder trees with lines running directly through.

How does this mitigate fire risk to PG&E infrastructure?

Large tree with dead branches is a fuel source very close (>10 feet) from a residence and could easily contribute to ignition of the house in a fire. Branches are also close to electric wires and if a branch falls it could sever a wire.

When will the work occur? How long?

Work will take place this spring/summer over 2-3 days.

Who owns the land to be treated and how will they be involved in the process?

The land is on the border of 261 Humboldt St and 2254 5th Avenue, San Rafael as well as 2252 & 2250 5th Avenue in San Rafael, CA. The owners will supervise hired workers.

Any other relevant details:

The branch removal will greatly reduce the fire threat in the immediate area.



Photos:



Tam Valley

Name of Leader:

Jim Kasper

Funding Requested:

\$10,000.

Project Description:

Tam Valley Marin Drive

- Project is within the Tier 2 Fire Threat Zone in Southern Marin County (Tam Valley) in Southern Marin Fire District jurisdiction.
- Work will primarily be manual brush cutting (some pulling) in 100' defensible space; in some spots, within 'extended' d-space (i.e. about 150 feet from structures). Some removal of lower limbs on trees.
- All work along an evacuation route (Marin Drive) for a community of about 100+ homes.
- Mostly work on public agency-owned property ('extended' right-of-way of Marin Drive); some limited amount on private property. Access directly from Marin Drive.
- Property owners will be formally contacted by the end of April.
- Material will be chipped and hauled away.
- Reduce risk to 100+ homes in development immediately adjacent to and uphill from the work location.
- PG&E overhead electric lines are along Marin Drive.
- Private contractor to do the work; contractor, schedule and duration to-be-determined.
- Minimal, if any, environmental impact (minimal ground disturbance). Expect long term environmental benefit from removal of invasive plant species (broom) and allowing natives to repopulate the work area.



Upper Sequoia Firewise

Name of Leader:

Michael Kamerick Funding Requested:

\$6,000

Project Description:

Our site exists primarily on Sequoia Drive, a one lane, two way, dead end road. Our only drivable evacuation route is down this road. The property in question is bounded by Sequoia Drive along a particularly tight, narrow set of turns. The vegetation along the boundary of the property is thick, overgrown, and on a steep slope below the roadbed. If that vegetation were to be fully inflamed, our one evacuation route could be cut off. We are proposing significant vegetation mitigation through thinning and limbing that would reduce the immediate fuel load below and at the edge of the road. We have gotten an estimate from Elite Tree Service for two days worth of work for a fully staffed crew.

How does this mitigate fire risk to PG&E infrastructure?

PG&E power lines pass directly over the area of proposed work, and power poles stand within 12 feet of the boundary of the proposed area.

Treatment methods:

Treatment will be mechanical and manual.

Disposal methods:

Vegetation will be chipped and removed from the site.

Does this work pose any environmental impacts?

We don't anticipate any environmental impact from this work.

Who owns the land to be treated and how will they be involved in the process?

The work will be done on the property at 88 Crooked Avenue in San Anselmo. The owner is Travis Hansen. He will be consulted as to the particular vegetation to be treated, and the work will proceed with his consent.

Please state whether your project is in a High Fire-Threat District (HFTD).

The property is near but not in a High Fire Threat District.

