

## **Sierra Park EVACUATION PLAN**

**The purpose of this plan is to address the issue of evacuating the park when wild fires threaten.** Fire is unpredictable. It is not known if the park residents might have several days to prepare to evacuate or only minutes. The only “sure thing” is not “if” a fire threatens, but “when“. We have been most fortunate and although fires have been near, none has threatened the park in many years.

Currently, Wheeler Road is the only egress from the park which is always open and it may be blocked by fire or fire fighting equipment entering the park.

It is important to plan in advance . There are steps which can be taken to minimize the fuel available to burn. Removal of down trees and excess undergrowth will cut down the intensity of the fire and will assist firefighters to control the fire.

Each resident is encouraged to prepare their property with defensible space. Many suggestions are in the document, “Living with Fire in Tuolumne County”(a copy is available for every homeowner). This document includes suggestions for making your property defensible and check lists on how to prepare your personal items so that they are moved to safety, or can be loaded quickly when the evacuation order is given. Some preplanning will ensure a better outcome for all homeowners.

This plan is not expected to address every possible situation .

**In addition to each homeowner assuming responsibility to make their property defensible, the park must prepare a plan to provide multiple exit routes and to minimize the fuel load on park property.**

### **DEFENSIBLE SPACE IN THE PARK**

Although we have been fortunate in not having a fire for decades, trees have fallen, and the undergrowth has flourished. Defensible space requires removing this fuel supply.

A forester will mark trees within the park which need to be removed .

A fire prevention expert shall evaluate the areas of the park and advice where undergrowth and down wood should be cleared.

Areas that contains down trees that can be used for firewood, can be opened and woodcutters in the park could cut the wood and remove it.

A crew will then go into those areas and chip the remaining fuel.

### **EVACUATION ROUTES**

Fire can approach the park from any direction. In the event that an evacuation of the residents in the park is ordered, alternate routes must be available. Newcomers in the park who are renting houses, or visiting the home of friends or relatives, will not be familiar with alternate roads. Marking the routes will assist everyone to leave the park.

**There are now four routes which are usable to exit the park.**

1. Wheeler Road
2. Sugar Pine Long Barn Road East -to Long Barn
3. Sugar Pine Long Barn West- past the former Cedarbrook Boy Scout Camp, to Bottini Apple Ranch Road to Hwy 108.
4. Isaac Road off Abraham Road, past the Odd Fellows water tank and using Forest Service road to road 3N01 to Long Barn

**Three other roads could be available with some clearing.**

1. Old Rebekah /Old Wheeler Road requires removal of five to six trees and some grading
2. Road off Rebekah (middle of road ) through Mr. Green’s lot (permission needed ) and connecting with Three Links Camp Road-requires grading and a key to their gate.
3. Forest access through gate south end of Rebekah behind the houses on Rebekah and connecting with Three Links Camp Road-requires grading and eliminating the terraces left by loggers, steep and probably not usable by two wheel drive vehicles, key to Three Links Camp gate required.

Signs should be placed on the main roads in the park identifying evacuation routes. Routes should be designated by color so when an evacuation is ordered, park residents can be advised which routes lead to safety. There is no guarantee that these routes will remain safe. But every effort will be made to give accurate information.

Evacuation routes are designed to get people out of the park. If an official escort is not available, evacuees must monitor radios for information regarding safe locations to go once they are out of the park.

## **WARNING NOTICE TO EVACUATE**

Many devices are utilized to notify residents to evacuate.

REVERSE 911, is in effect for Tuolumne County. The Office of Emergency Services (O.E.S.) can initiate the calls which will ring all land line phones in the park notifying residents of the danger and to evacuate.

Siren/horn in the park can be set off to warn the residents of the danger .

Officers from the sheriff 's office or community service volunteers will be in the park announcing the order to evacuate and provide escort, if time permits.

Local Radio stations will make announcements about evacuations.

KKBN 93.5 FM, KVML 1450 AM, KZSQ 92.7 FM, KOSO 93 FM (MODESTO LOCAL EAS STATION)

Neighbors telling those who are living or staying near them and may not have land line phones.

## **UPDATING THE PLAN**

An Evacuation Plan committee will be formed. The committee will be made up of at least five members of the Homeowner's Association. They will be volunteers and they will be asked to serve a two year term. To ensure continuity of the program the committee will be made up of at least two continuing members. The Board of Director's safety director will be encouraged to attend meetings.

The committee shall meet at least twice a year. They would send a notice in the park newsletter twice a year to remind homeowners to review and update their emergency plan. New homeowners in the park will be provided information regarding the Emergency Evacuation Plan through the newsletter.

The committee will work closely with the Board to ensure that on going issues are resolved and that clearing of designated areas remains on schedule.

## **NEEDED FROM THE BOARD**

### **Support for the following activities:**

**Designate evacuation routes. The first four listed in this plan require no upgrading, and are currently usable. - Board of Directors, (BOD)**

A **commitment** to ensure that the roads designated evacuation routes, will be accessible and the gates remain **unlocked** or **all homeowners are issued keys to the padlocks.** -BOD

Will Dorell, our forester, will mark the trees which need to be removed within the park. The Board will designate or employ persons to remove the trees. The trees can then be cut by residents for firewood. -BOD

Buy and install signs to mark evacuation routes. -BOD

A fire prevention person shall evaluate the park and designate the areas which need clearing. Prioritize the areas of greatest concern and begin a program to remove the fuel. Establish a time line for when each area will be addressed. -The Evacuation Plan Committee EPC and BOD

Work with the Highway 108 Fire Safe Council in securing grant monies to reduce the fuel load in the park and to provide clearing and thinning along the designated evacuation routes so they will be safe routes of travel. -EPC

Permit wood cutters to go into designated areas and remove down trees. This will be done on a predetermined schedule, one area at a time, following the guide lines of the forest service regarding cutting down wood in the forest. - Schedule may be made by the Board or the EPC and approved by the BOD

Investigate the establishment of an Emergency Response team. These volunteers may be trained to assist fire personnel with traffic control or other issues which may arise in case of emergency. This would need to be coordinated with the Mi Wuk Fire Station-BOD or EPC

Test the current horn/siren in the park and determine if it can be heard in all parts of the park. If it cannot be heard in all parts of the park, consider installing another similar device where needed. Determine who is responsible to sound this alarm and when the signal will be used. An ongoing (monthly or quarterly) testing cycle could be determined to ensure it is working. EPC working with BOD