



The Bonita Highlander

October 2025

Quick Reminder From the Board



This is a quick friendly review of the information presented in 2023 when these Yellow Door Hangers were introduced as a cost and time saving solution to notify homeowners about observed conditions of their property.

- After 45 years of staff members having to take time to write up formal letters and mailing them to homeowners, the BHHA BoD implemented the use of these simple Yellow Door Hangers to replace this labor intense and costly effort.
- They are intended to be “Friendly” communications with homeowners to notify them of property observations that need to be addressed to keep homes in compliance with the BHHA Rules and Regulations.
- They are far more economical and more than 95% of them are effective, as homeowners respond positively and/or communicate with the BHHA on their plans to resolve the situation.



Please do not be offended if you receive one of these Friendly Reminders, and if you have any questions, please contact the BHHA.

Looking for Board Candidates

Last month's Newsletter provided the timeline for the BHHA Board of Directors (BOD) elections for 2026-2027, which will take place on March 2, 2026. As noted in that article, the process starts this month for those homeowners who wish to run for one of the five Board officer billets.

The BOD are five volunteers who work in conjunction with the five Staff Members to oversee the successful execution of the BHHA activities in accordance with the governing CCRs, Rules and Regulations, and stated and local laws. The ultimate goal is to help maintain the Bonita Highlands as a safe and beautiful place for families to live.

The BOD attends 11 monthly meetings held at the Fire Station on Bonita Road the second Tuesday of every month (except for July). They participate in the annual BHHA budget review process (OCT-DEC) and approve the subsequent year's budget. They monitor the BHHA budget monthly and approve any expenditures outside of the planned budget. They chair the monthly meeting, review the Staff Member's monthly reports, and addresses any concerns comments received from homeowners. They may also interface with homeowners outside for the monthly meetings when required to address their concerns.

Homeowners interested in running for a BOD position should request a Candidate Qualification Form from the BHHA Recording Secretary at bhighlanderhoa@gmail.com.

October Open Space Update!

Open space mowing has been completed but there are a couple areas that border natural areas which we'll be following up on in October and November.

October is also a great month to check irrigation timers to reduce watering and check for leaks. With cooler weather and the sun heading into the Southern Hemisphere, irrigation systems can run for a shorter time. The BHHA will be reducing water on green belts (warm season lawns that go dormant in winter). These measures result in cost savings for homeowners both at home and at the BHHA.

We are also be addressing deferred maintenance in cul-de-sac areas focusing on cultivated areas.

This is also a great time to begin preparing your property for the rainy season. This includes installing or cleaning gutters on your house and cleaning the brow ditches that run through your property — that portion of the brown ditch is the homeowners responsibility to clean. Some homeowner lots have been short fenced and they do not think they need to keep those brow ditches cleaned. If you are not sure if your yard is short fenced, and if a brow ditch is your responsibility, you can check your property line on the county property line maps which can be found at the following website: <https://sdgis.sandag.org/>

Homeowners with brow ditches within their parcel lot are required to clear the brow ditches on their property per Section 5.4 of the BHHA Rules and Regulations to maintain the brow ditch and keep it clear of obstructions to facilitate drainage and avoid liability for damages caused. Obstruction in the brow ditches can lead to flooding and erosion. Please see <https://bonitahighlands.org/association-documents> "Please ensure your brow ditch is clear of debris and not blocked where it adjoins the open space or your neighbor. The brow ditches in the Bonita Highlands were installed by the developer to ensure proper drainage of the open space and resident lots to the street."

Section 5.4 also addresses storm water (rain) drainage from residence lots as being "toward the street." Storm water drainage from lots to the trail entrance, onto trails, or into the open space is prohibited. The only exception is lots where storm water drains to a brow ditch.

The BHHA is responsible for all the brow ditches that are outside the homeowner's property line. The BHHA OSC is already working with the landscape maintenance contractor to clean these brow ditches in October of leaves and debris to ensure proper drainage from the Open Space to the street. The BHHA also works with San Diego County to keep the curb drains clean where the brow ditches dump.

Open Space Committee Updates!

The Open Space Committee has been diligently working on the 2026-2029 3-Year Open Space Plan, designed to enhance fire safety and maintain the beauty of our 127-acre open space, 7.5 miles of trails, and the community greenbelts. Guided by the latest 2025 Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ) recommendations, our Open Space Committee is prioritizing fire risk mitigation while preserving our natural surroundings. Our first priority will be to identify dead or diseased trees in each of the Open Space areas as well as removing eucalyptus saplings in areas of overgrowth.

For more details regarding fire hazard zones, view the FHSZ map at the following website: <https://fire-hazard-severity-zones-rollout-calfire-forestry.hub.arcgis.com>

The goal of the 3-Year Plan is to build “efficiency” into our landscape maintenance across the Bonita Highlands, i.e., tree work, tail maintenance, and mowing will be bundled whenever possible for cost-effectiveness, with a focus on high-risk areas like those between Blacksmith and Steeplechase.

How You Can Help

- **Maintain Your Property:** Trim trees, grasses, weeds, and overhanging branches within 6-8 feet of home. Trim trees on your property line per BHHA rules. Remove trees, shrubs, or debris that are listed as high risk in the CALFIRE guides.
- **Report Hazards:** Notify the BHHA about dead, diseased, or hazardous trees near trails or homes for prompt action.
- **Adopt Fire-Smart Landscaping:** Choose fire-resistant plants like lemonade berry, manzanita, or succulents for your yard, especially within 50 feet of your home.

Join the fire prevention/mitigation effort by creating a 5-foot ember-resistant zone around your home, upgrading vents, and clearing debris under decks—you can help protect our community and potentially lower your insurance costs.

Learn more at www.insurance.ca.gov/Safer-from-Wildfires.

Our ultimate goal is to be recognized as a Firewise USA® Community. Together, we can make Bonita Highlands a safer, stronger community!

BHHA BOD and OSC

The Bonita Highlander is the monthly newsletter of the Bonita Highlands Homeowners' Association (BHHA), a California non-profit corporation. The Newsletter is distributed (postage paid) or emailed to each residence within the Bonita Highlands. Information for publication should be sent to the recording Secretary & Editor, Mary Ellen Phillips at bhighlanderhoa@gmail.com by the 15th of the month, for publication the following month. The Association reserves the right to edit any copy submitted for publication.

**BHHA
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The BHHA documents, forms, meeting minutes and notices can be found on its website: bonitahighlands.org



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The next monthly BHHA meeting will be held on ***Tuesday, October 14, 2025, at 6:00 PM***, in person at the Bonita Sunnyside Fire Station. All homeowners are welcome to attend.

1. Call to Order, Roll Call, Introduction of Board members, Pledge of Allegiance, Announcement of the Next Meeting, Adoption of Minutes from the last monthly meeting.
2. Homeowner appearances for appeals to notices, fines, or requests for structural alterations.
3. Homeowner Open Communications.
4. Committee and Staff Reports: ACC-A (SCRs), ACC-C (violations), Financial Officer, Open Space Chairperson, and BHHA Communications.
5. Old Business: Committees, BOD Election,
6. New Business: Communication with property owners, Budget Reviews,
7. Community Items of Interest.
8. Board Member Comments.
9. Adjournment.
10. Board Executive Session (if required).



The BHHA Board of Directors (BOD) welcomes and encourages e-mail and letters from homeowners. Any letter sent to the Board may be published in this newsletter. Any opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the author or other contributor, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the BOD or any Staff Member.