

There will be fire mitigation effort and cleanup of the common area commencing 14 March 2019.

This event is at NO cost to the HOA and was arranged by the former board in 2018. The Elizabeth Fire department, Team Rubicon, and Elbert County Emergency Management office are involved and coordinating this work. At the 01 March 2019 board meeting approval was voted by all present board members. The Email included below is provided for reference. As soon as we receive the power point slides that were presented by the Elizabeth Fire Department, these will be posted as well.

The fire mitigation work will be contained to the area within the common ground posts unless the board obtains permission on a case by case basis to touch dead trees that may be on personal property.

**From:** Lenderink, Brandon

**Sent:** Sunday, February 24, 2019 2:12 PM

**To:** [saddlewoodBOD2019@gmail.com](mailto:saddlewoodBOD2019@gmail.com)

**Cc:** [nika.hermes@teamrubiconusa.org](mailto:nika.hermes@teamrubiconusa.org); Alex Jakubowski <[alex.jakubowski@elbertcounty-co.gov](mailto:alex.jakubowski@elbertcounty-co.gov)>; [kara@elizabethfire.org](mailto:kara@elizabethfire.org); [kara@elizabethfire.com](mailto:kara@elizabethfire.com)

**Subject:** Saddlewood March 2019 Wildfire Mitigation Project Update

Good afternoon everyone,

Saddlewood has partnered with [Team Rubicon](#), Elizabeth Fire Department and the Elbert County Office of Emergency Management to assist with wildfire mitigation within our community. Team Rubicon, is a nonprofit international disaster response team. Team Rubicon's members are skilled and experienced military veterans, LEOs, First Responders, and civilians with a deep desire to serve their communities. Through continued service, Team Rubicon seeks to provide its team with three things: a purpose gained through disaster relief; community, built by serving with others; and identity, from recognizing the impact one individual can make.

Saddlewood has a high risk and high probability to experience a wildfire. Due to the high fuel load and lack of mitigation the likelihood of property and environmental loss in a wildfire is high. Fuels directly threaten many homes whose property borders the area as well as the surrounding properties and communities. This poses a high burn probability, high burn speed and overall high wildfire risk to the community. If Saddlewood is not assisted quickly, our risk continues to increase significantly given the Red Flag weather come

Spring and Summer, the common steady high winds and gusts of 30+ mph. Elbert County is in a constant state of concern, especially during the dryer, hotter seasons of the year. Team Rubicon's capabilities can drastically reduce these community's risks and potentially aid local first responders in being able to contain a fire while providing safe staging areas for the resources they utilize.

The project for Saddlewood would be a phased approach with Phase 1's area of interest being the Saddlewood common area, which is located through the middle of the subdivision in between homeowner properties. Boundary of common area is approximately 1.5 miles long from West entrance to East entrance. Width is 20'ft to approximately 60'ft+ in some areas. Phase 2, 3 and so on would be based upon interested homeowners by using a methodical assessment process to prioritize continued mitigation projects. All of this work is FREE. Yes, free. All that's required is community team effort, and time and energy to educate, coordinate and communicate. All of this put together will lower our communities risk and increase our chances of saving life, property and the environment in a wildfire.

### **Project Summary and Timeline:**

- September 2018: Initial meetings with Team Rubicon and identified stakeholders (Fire, OEM, Saddlewood, Rubicon)
- Sept - Jan 2019: Ongoing planning efforts, communication and coordination between Rubicon, Elizabeth Fire, Elbert County OEM, and current Saddlewood Board.
- Team Rubicon completed two assessments of the open space, developed an initial situation report, and is finalizing their operational order. Deployment dates are March 14th - 17th.
- The majority of the logistical and operational functions are being handled by Team Rubicon.
- Team Rubicon will split their members into several strike teams in order to operate at Saddlewood and Gambel Oaks simultaneously. The exact number of personnel will fluctuate daily dependent on the needs of each communities area of operation for that day.
- Teams are staying at the Elbert County Fairgrounds during those dates and food is being organized by their logistics chief.
- Team Rubicon is to provide: heavy equipment for debris management, chipper capabilities, sawyer operations, and ladder fuel removal to the affected areas.
- Project completion and after action review

- Upon completion of the project Saddlewood should begin the discussions and evaluation for moving into Phase 2, 3.....

## **Next Steps**

- Communicate and educate coming project to Saddlewood community
- Present project at HOA meeting on March 1st from Team Rubicon & Elbert County Office of Emergency Management.
- Saddlewood Project Support
  - Identify gaps and needs to support event.
  - How can our community support our veterans not only for their service to our country but our community.

Lastly, Saddlewood does not have a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) in place but does offer community education to homeowners regarding fire mitigation requirements and a Wildfire Action Plan. A neighboring community "Gambel Oaks" has developed a CWPP for their specific community. While ongoing updates have been needed, they hope to have their Fire Protection Plan approved and adopted by the state. Make note that if Saddlewood was to move toward some type of Fire Protection Plan or CWPP it would reduce not only risk but has additional benefits such as reducing homeowners insurance rates. Gambel Oaks has also partnered with Team Rubicon and is also conducting a wildfire mitigation project the same dates as Saddlewood. This should be on the boards future agenda for discussion and evaluation.

Thank you Saddlewood Board for your time and attention to this project and willingness to support fire mitigation in our community. I appreciate those of you who were able to meet yesterday and taking time to get caught up on this project. Please feel free to contact me directly with any further questions or concerns.

Best,

Brandon Lenderink

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