



Santa Ysabel Ranch Homeowners Association

Santa Ysabel Ranch—The winter rains are with us, and the native grass is growing rapidly creating a potential fire threat as we move toward summer. As we have seen with the recent California wildfires, these fires spread rapidly with devastating results. **Representatives of the SYR HOA met with CalFire in 2017 and 2018 to see what action we should take to improve our defenses as a community.** While we have done a good job at maintaining the native grass in key areas, they shared with us that more should be done. The real problem is when a fire jumps from the grass to the trees, a grass fire becomes a “wildfire” which is much more destructive and difficult to control.

Working with CalFire, we have identified 4 steps for wildfire protection for SYR and a plan to address each level:

1. **Defensible Space:** Each year Cal-Fire inspects SYR homes to ensure there is defensible space around your home, in case of a wildfire. During this review they also provide the HOA with possible open space areas that need to be prioritized.
2. **Lots with Homes:** As part of creating a defensible space, elimination of low hanging tree branches, dead wood and grass on these lots is critical as these are in direct proximity to homes. These issues were addressed with homeowners in 2018.
3. **Open lots:** These properties were the next priority as these lots are adjacent to existing homes and are often within the defensible space of neighboring homes. We aggressively addressed low hanging tree branches, dead wood and grass on open lots in 2018. We have had ~95% compliance from lot owners. However, there are still a few lots that need to be addressed and will be a top priority in 2019.
4. **SYR Open Space:** SYR is responsible to maintain about 140 acres of open space. In 2018, to understand the cost and effort to manage this property, we developed a plan to trim trees in our open space using available funds. We started with areas of easy access and high visibility so we could better assess the results. For 2019 we would like to address the remaining areas, as funding allows. We recognize that tree maintenance will be a major item this year, but costs should decline once these initial efforts are completed.

The ARC continues to follow up with CAL-FIRE and seek their input on our fire management efforts. We also keep abreast of the latest changes to address these issues implemented by the City of Paso Robles, Templeton Community Service District and the County to keep SYR safe.

Owner's Responsibility

It is the owner's responsibility to maintain their property, and by **May 15th** have the following activities completed for their *entire lot*:

- **Keep weeds and tall native grass maintained less than 12" year-round**
- **Remove dead trees, fallen trees and branches from your property**
- **Maintain all Oak branches 6' off the ground**

While these requirements effect all property owners, we recognize that most of the tree work was completed in 2018 and will need to be addressed only periodically. This year's focus will be primarily on maintaining the native grasses on your property, and ensuring your defensible space is maintained.

It is important to note that homeowners are responsible to maintain their lots regularly and year-round. When the native grasses reach 12" on your property, it needs to be cut. With the rains it is important that the grass is cut as soon as the ground is dry enough to accept the equipment. With the moisture in the ground, the grass will regrow and cutting will be required multiple times before the end of May. We do want to minimize mowing and tree work once we get into June as the fire danger from these activities increase. Typically, the grasses stop growing in June and stays at that level throughout the summer months.

How the HOA Can Help

If you need assistance and want the HOA to address these items for you the 2019 rates are as follow:

- Lots > 1.5 acres \$500
- Lots 1.5 acers or less \$400
- Partial lots 50% of the above rates
- Trees Quotes will be provided
 - Trimmed to 6' from ground
 - Removal of dead trees and wood from lots

Please register with Devin Langley, our management company representative (805-602-9113), Devin.Langley@managementtrust.com by March 17 so we can schedule your property with our open space work for greatest efficiency. Rates will increase by 10% starting March 18 for registrations made after that date. Invoices for the work will be sent in early June.

Lots not addressed by the owner by May 15 will be addressed by the HOA per CC&R's. There will be a 25% premium added to the costs listed above as well as a fine for non-compliance.