

Foothill Resource Management

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Amador Fire Safe Council
Proposal for Amador City Fuelbreak

Landowner name: C.J. & Lisa Rendic

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Project Location: Township 7 North, Range 11 East, Sections 29, 30, 31, 32, 33 MDB&M
Turner Road, Amador City, CA
At the gate on Turner Road: Lat. 38° 25' 05", Lon. 120° 48' 33"

APNs: 015-210-002 (264.16 ac.), 015-210-012 (480 ac.), 015-220-002 (156.88 ac.), total acres = 901 ac.

Project Description: Construct a shaded fuel break of approximately 3 miles in length by 300-400 feet wide for an estimated acreage of 125 acres. The fuel break would be strategically located and constructed on primary ridges, most of which are northwest/southeast trending ridges. The vegetation types on the ridges where the fuel break would be constructed are oak woodland (interior live oak, buckeye, gray pine) interspersed with heavy whiteleaf manzanita, toyon and ceanothus brush. Brush and smaller hardwood trees would be removed, leaving live oaks and occasional conifers with diameters >12" DBH spaced from 20 to 30 feet apart. Residual trees would be pruned to an approximate height of 10 feet. No streamcourses exist on the area to be included in the fuel break. The fuel break will be constructed using masticating machines, hand falling and lopping, tractor piling and burning of some slash.

Amador City and Sutter Creek are both within 1.5 miles of the central portion of the proposed fuel break. The vegetation types that are between the Rendic property and the proposed fuel break are oak woodland and oak savannah. The oak woodland type is highly flammable and has a high resistance to control under wildfire conditions. The oak savannah type will burn intensively in a wildfire, but has a lower resistance to control. The Rancheria Fire of 1961 burned over the entire area of Amador City, Sutter Creek and the Amador Creek and Rancheria Creek watersheds. North wind events are particularly dangerous in this area and the towns of Amador City and Sutter Creek would be susceptible to catastrophic losses in the event of a wildfire that originated to the east and northeast of those two towns.

The benefits that will accrue from the construction of this fuel break are that the towns of Amador City and Sutter Creek will gain an increased measure of fire hazard protection. In combination with the Rendic's plan to initiate a total property vegetation management plan wherein areas outside of the fuel break will also be thinned and have the oak woodland made more fire safe and productive for livestock, a large area will be established with reduced fuel loading from which a wildfire originating to the east and/or northeast of the Rendic property could be more successfully attacked. Firewise Communities to the north, south and east (Cassineli, Quartz Mountain and Burke Ranch) have organized to work on fuel hazard reduction. This project helps to connect the dots between those Firewise Communities.

Maintenance of the fuel break will be accomplished by the landowners using targeted grazing by horses and cattle. The Rendics are initiating a fencing project to allow them to utilize grazing in a prescribed manner. The goals of the Rendic's ownership are to ensure sustainable rangeland management, high quality forage production for livestock, soil and water protection, wildlife habitat protection and fuels management.

The city councils of Amador City and Sutter Creek will be approached to ask for their support of this project. Adjacent landowners will be approached where their properties constitute a logical and strategic extension of the fuel break.