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Butte County Fire Safe Council continue watershed and forest health projects

Preemptive efforts taken to reduce risk of wildfire

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Magalia>>The Butte County Fire Safe Council, a non-profit community organization, has recently undertaken two projects in an effort to decrease the consistency and severity of wildfires in our area: Little Butte Creek Forest Health Project Phase II in the Little Butte Creek watershed and Paradise Pines Fuel Reduction Project taking place in the Middle Butte Creek drainage area.

The Little Butte Creek Forest Health Project Phase II serves as the collection area of drinking water supply for the Town of Paradise. The project will complete fuel treatments on

176 acres of overgrown forest lands owned by the Paradise Irrigation District and USFS to reduce wildfire risk, protect watershed tributaries to water storage facilities, and promote watershed health. The project is made possible by a grant from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, an Agency of the State of California.

The second project, the Paradise Pines Fuel Reduction Project, will complete fuel treatments on 77 acres of overgrown forest lands owned by the Paradise Pines Property Owners Association.

“The projects improve wildfire safety for both Magalia residents and the watershed and helps fulfill the mission of the Paradise Ridge and Butte County Fire Safe Councils,” Executive Director Calli-Jane DeAnda said. “We hope community members will consider joining in efforts like these by joining their local Paradise Ridge Fire Safe Council.”

Work on these projects will continue through the winter into the spring and will be completed by a variety of crews including; the California Conservation Corps, CAL FIRE, Butte County Sheriff Work Crews and private contractors.

According to DeAnda, treatment methodologies include thinning, pile burning, chipping, masticating, and pruning of overstocked conifer forest. Due to lack of alternative biomass utilization infrastructure, material will be scattered or burned.

The Council aims to improve forest conditions and quality of groundwater by reducing the chance of intense wildfires and subsequent soil erosion, opening the forest for better water absorption, and encouraging native species and more diverse wildlife habitats.

“If overgrown forests catch, the thermal updraft is so intense it results in significant damage to the soil,” Field Coordinator Chuck Marshal said. “Once that fire is out, the only thing that can grow back is invasive species. If we control the human aspect, wildfires won’t be nearly as destructive as we’ve seen in the past.”

Partners to the Council in these efforts include: Paradise Ridge Fire Safe Council, Paradise Pines Property Owners Association, Paradise Irrigation District, US Forest Service Plumas National Forest, Bureau of Land Management, California Conservation Corps and CAL FIRE.

Project work is being guided by recently published Magalia Forest Management Plan, available to the public online at <http://www.buttefiresafe.net/>. The California Conservation Corps (CCC) is actively recruiting corps members. If interested in joining the CCC Butte Fire Center Please call 530-894-2313. For more information about the projects call the Butte County Fire Safe Council at 530-877-0984.

URL: <http://www.paradisepost.com/general-news/20171202/butte-county-fire-safe-council-continue-watershed-and-forest-health-projects>

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