

Forest Health and Wildfire Committee Meeting

February 17, 2022 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Attendees: Joe Richards, Carmen Richards, Donna Barnes, Jerry Barnes, Marc Wilson, Michelle Blake

First Mitigation Project

- We will proceed with the Oak Park fuel break (# 3 on the CWPP list). Marc will spearhead the project.
- We will need to solicit bids from professional companies. This can be done via direct emails to ranch folks with equipment, and announcements on ND and the SFTR website. This first project will be done with commercial equipment.
- If/when the waiver/insurance issue is resolved then volunteers can help with extra work and annual maintenance.
- We will invite FPPFD to be present during the mitigation for training opportunities.

Use of a contractor for this first project is needed because there are still issues with the waiver/insurance. Professional contractors will have their own insurance, so we can get started right away and the work can be done very quickly (compared to folks with hand tools). We have a short window of time to do work before the insects (ips, pine) become an issue. (This is primarily a concern for pine and ponderosa, not Gambel oak, locust, or juniper.)

- As far as liability is concerned, it is not an issue if the work is done by professional contractors with their own insurance. When neighbors are informally helping each other, a waiver is not needed. However, if the projects are officially being done as the FHWMC, then the POA is now requiring a liability waiver and possibly additional insurance.
- The waiver provided by the SFTR lawyer is two pages, not project specific, and good for one year. Some potential volunteers have expressed that they may not want to sign it unless it has a time frame or is project specific.
- There is also the question of if the POA still needs additional insurance.
- We will ensure that everyone has viewed the training videos, signed that they viewed the videos, and has the proper PPE. This can supplement or be incorporated into whatever waivers are required.

Questions for the Board:

Right-of-Way for Mitigation: Does the road 15' easement allow mitigation efforts or is it just for utilities? (In the covenants it states just for utilities.) Either way, we conclude that coordinating with property owners ahead of time will help prevent conflicts.

Payment process. The POA does not have a purchase order form for contractor work. SFTR pays the invoice that the contractor provides when the work is complete. We plan

to seek a good faith estimate from any contractors engaged for any work, with upper limits specified. Should we use these estimates to have everything preapproved in writing, prior to work being done? Who does the approval (Nancy? Abby?) and does approval need to be coordinated with scheduled board meetings since the overall budget has already been set?

For some items property owners may need to front the money and then request a reimbursement from Abby.

Future Mitigation Projects

According to the current CWPP, Vista West (#1 priority) and then Alpine Meadows (#3 priority). See attached images.

- Selection of the projects may also be subject to volunteers wanting to chair the effort, the project size in acres (budget balance), number of residents on the road and other factors.
- The future CWPP report may recommend a new set of priorities, but in the meantime we plan to work with data from the current CWPP.

Community Wildfire Protection Plan

The CSFS has been chosen and contacted. They are moving forward with the CWPP. Michelle Blake is spearheading this project. Prior to the risk assessment site visits this summer it would be ideal to reach out to all owners to let know what is going on and what to do to prepare. We can put notices on ND and the SFTR website. Is there an email list we can use? Will the Communication Committee help spread the word?

Chipper

We need a volunteer or a team to determine where to store the chipper, maintenance of chipper, liability, training, protocol for use, chip disposal etc. Chips might be donated to Zeb for his community garden at high school. Perhaps bury the chips? Do we still want to do chipping day?

Water trailers:

It would be ideal to have some water trailers stationed around the ranch for rapid response to a fire start. These should be easily pulled with an ATV or some with a truck. They would have a small pump on the trailer. What is the cost? Weight limits? How to advertise their locations yet prevent theft. Jerry, Michelle and Carmen will look into costs, pros/cons etc.

Education

Smoke spotting class. Michelle will reach out to FPPFD tomorrow to see if they will do smoke spotting class. Perhaps invite our neighbors (Trinidad Lake Estates) to join us.

Outreach

Updates on SFTR website are underway. The Communication Committee has been

provided with all the minutes, committee goals, contact information, meeting schedule, suggested links and other images. We are hoping the pages moves from “Under Construction” to a robust informative page soon. Tracy is spearheading this effort. Also, the ranch has a new [rN](#)ewsletter, Ranch Ramblins’. The FHWMC has requested a spot where we can talk about fire safety and related topics in each edition. Who will write the articles?

Next Meeting

Next FHWMC meeting is at Joe and Carmen’s house March 17th at 6:30 p.m.

Table 4: Santa Fe Trail Ranch Potential Shaded Fuelbreaks and the Recommended Fuel Treatment Map provide the detail for the recommended fuel treatments.

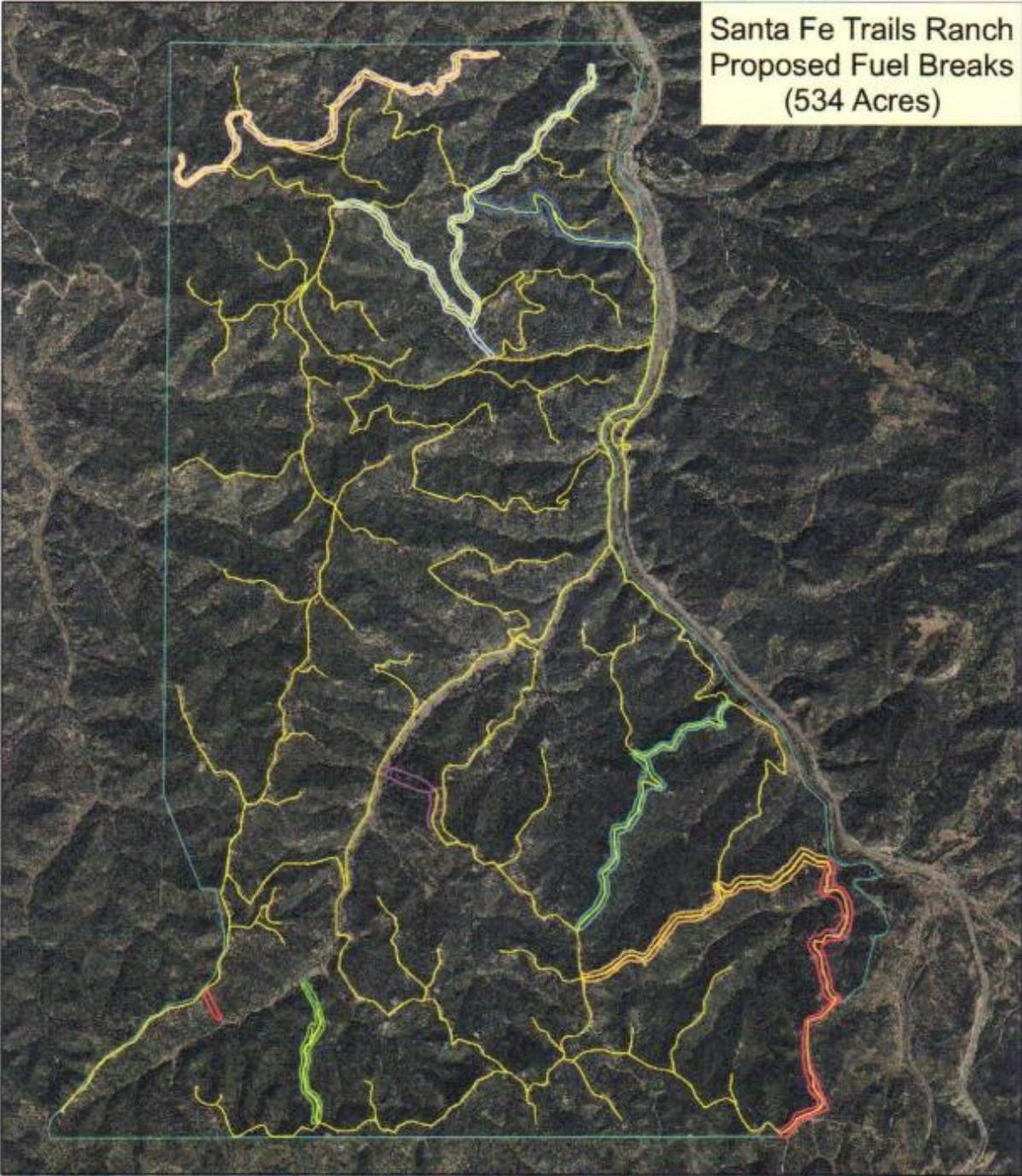
This is a greatly reduced shaded fuel break program from what was initially identified in 2006 due to the 10 years of work that has been accomplished. The fuel reduction that has been done improves fire control opportunities along strategic ridges and begins to break up the hazardous fuel continuity on the Ranch. SFTR has a good start but there is much work yet to do.

Table 4: Santa Fe Trail Ranch Potential Shaded Fuel breaks

Fuel break Name	Acres	Estimated cost (\$)	Priority
Vista West Drive	79.8	65k	1
Alpine (North-South)	82.8	50k	2
Elk Park – Oak Park	100.4	70k	3
Little Bear	45.3	40k	4
Fishers Peak – Alpine(East-West)	83	60k	5
Big Springs Overlook - Gallinas	31.3	22k	6
Conservancy – Mountain View (lot H9)	5.1	3k	7
Coyote Track - Conservancy	31.5	19k	8
Timber Park – Old Mission	74.9	48k	9
Total	534	377k	-

An alternative would be to work within the sixty (60) foot total right of way along the roads. The entire eighty-three (83) miles of road in the Ranch could be thinned within the ROW for approximately \$250,000. This will provide a good place for fire personnel to burn out or backfire as needed, but this approach does not afford much protection during more volatile fire conditions.

**Santa Fe Trails Ranch
Proposed Fuel Breaks
(534 Acres)**



Legend

- | | |
|--|--|
|  Conservancy-Mountain View (Lot H9)-5.1 Acres |  Timber Park-Old Mission-74.9 Acres |
|  Coyote Track-Conservancy-31.5 Acres |  Little Bear-45.35 Acres |
|  Alpine (North-South)-82.85 acres |  Elk Park-Oak Park-100.4 Acres |
|  Fisher's Peak-Alpine (East-West)-83 Acres |  Vista West-79.8 Acres |
|  Big Spring Overlook-Gallinas-31.13 Acres | |