

SUN PEAK FIRE NEWSLETTER

JULY 17, 2023

The Sun Peak Fire Safety Committee (SPFSC) is composed of the following five volunteer homeowners:

- Co-chairmen - Jorge (George) Velarde & Chuck Mollard
- Board representative – Roger Sawyer
- Additional members – June Volk & Gary Drage

The following is an update from the Sun Peak Fire Safety Committee:

Wildfire mitigation work completed or in progress:

1. The HOA awarded a contract for Pile Burning/Biomass Removal of piles resulting from Phase I of the fire mitigation work completed in 2022 comprising approximately 20 acres of open space. Total number of piles has been determined to be approximately 630 piles:

- Millennium Trail – ~90 piles (4.58 acres)
- Rob’s Corridor – ~120 piles (3 acres)
- Southern Fuel Reduction – ~420 piles (12.5 acres)

2. As advised in April 12 “Fire News”, the following steps have been taken to minimize any adverse effects resulting from pile burning:

- a. Establish standards for the contractor to follow before commencing pile burning and to cease burning (if possible) when and if conditions deteriorate. This included a requirement that pile burning will only be done if a “clearing index” is at 400 or above.
- b. Improved communications to better inform Sun Peak homeowners of expected fire mitigation efforts and pile burning by implementing the following steps:
 - Arranged for an article to be published in the Park Record regarding Sun Peak’s wildfire mitigation efforts.
 - Installed informative signs along trails in Sun Peak open space regarding pile burning.
 - Distributed notices to homes with potential to be affected by intended pile burning.
 - Emailed Sun Peak homeowners the day prior to when pile burning was expected to occur.
 - Held a community educational open house at the Sun Peak club house during the day of pile burning along SR 224.
 - Installed illuminated signs along SR 224 when pile burning along SR 224.

3. By following the steps described above we had a very successful pile burning this past May:

- Millennium Trail – burned all 90 piles
- Rob’s Trail – 90 burned

4. Planned pile burning this coming Fall/Winter resulting from Phase I wildfire mitigation work completed during the summer of 2022:

- Rob’s Trail – 30 piles
- Southern Fuel Reduction of approximately 210 piles in the section joining the Enclave and 210 piles comprising the fuel break behind Sun Peak homes in the Southern section of the HOA

open space.

Effect of wildfires in the wildland urban interface on homeowner's insurance:

The Sun Peak HOA Board started its focus on wildfire safety and mitigation activities in order to protect lives and property.

As recently reported, wildfires and associated risk have created challenges to the insurance companies. Significant increase in premiums, declines in coverage, policy discontinuance, and some companies leaving the market are being seen. In Sun Peak, all of these have already happened, and it is happening around Park City, throughout Utah and in many other western states. Nobody knows what the future holds. But it helps to see what other states are doing. Recently, some states adopted regulations requiring insurance companies to adopt rates that reflect homeowner and community wildfire mitigation activities, acknowledgement of communities identified by the National Fire Protection Association as Firewise and use of best practices for local fire planning.

Fortunately, the steps that Sun Peak has taken mirror these requirements and we expect it will have a long-term benefit to the community and homeowner insurance coverage.

Review FEMA grant and status of RFP

A Request for Proposal for Fuels Reduction of Phase II, prepared by our wildland fire consultant has been sent to three licensed and insured fuels reduction specialists. The proposal deadline is July 25, 2023, at 5:00 pm. The Fire Safety Committee, Board of Trustees, and the Summit County FEMA representative will review the final bids upon receipt to determine the contractor to be awarded the contract. We plan to execute Phase II of the project later this summer.

Areas determined to be the most critical to provide a needed firebreak and protect adjacent homes – (Phase II) – approximately 26.2 acres:

- Northeast Fuel Reduction - adjacent to homes on Kidd Circle, Mahre Drive and Heuga Court
- Northwest Fuel Reduction - adjacent to homes on Bear Hollow Drive, (above Mahre Drive) and Bear View Drive
- Southwest Fuel Reduction - adjacent to homes on Bear View Drive and upper Bear Hollow Drive
- Western Fuel Reduction - adjacent to home on Northwestern side of upper Bear Hollow Drive

On June 26th we conducted a “walk in the forest”, led by our fire expert and consultant Brad Washa, to show homeowners the effect of the recent pile burning. We also walked some of the areas where the Phase II fuels reduction activities will take place. On June 27th we held a community meeting to show interested homeowners a drone video footage of the Phase II areas. Brad Washa highlighted the type of vegetation in these areas, mainly gamble oak and mahogany. There are hardly any conifers or aspens in the Phase II areas.

The Fire Safety Committee will continue to provide updates on the wildfire mitigation work after a contractor has been selected to continue Phase II of the FEMA grant and the extent of the future work is better defined.

Sun Peak HOA | 1950 Bear Hollow Dr., Park City, UT 84098

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