

**Ridgeview Village  
Unit 9**

**Wildfire Fire Safe Plan**

**Prepared for:**

**Pacific States Development Corporation**

**Prepared by:**

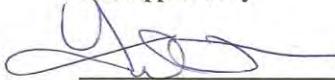
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**September, 2006**

# Ridgeview Village Unit 9

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Plan Approved by:



**Fred Russell**  
Division Chief-Fire Marshall  
El Dorado Hills Fire Department

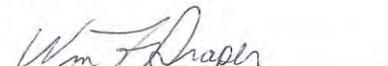
10-12-06  
Date



**Ben Scott, Battalion Chief**  
Fire Prevention  
California Department of Forestry  
and Fire Protection

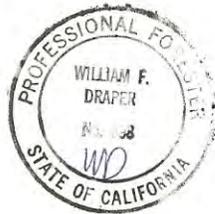
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Prepared by:



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## **I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

Communities are increasingly concerned about wildfire safety. Drought years coupled with flammable vegetation and annual periods of severe fire weather insure the potential for periodic wildfires.

The purpose of this plan is to assess the wildfire hazards and risks of this 22.8 acre development, to identify measures to reduce these hazards and risks and protect the native vegetation. There are moderate fuel hazards and moderate topography associated with this proposed development both on and adjacent to the project.

The possibility of large fires occurring when this project is complete will be greatly reduced. However, small wildfires in the open space areas and on the larger lots may occur due to the increase in public uses.

Incorporation of the fire hazard reduction measures into the design and maintenance will reduce the size and intensity of wildfires and help prevent catastrophic fire losses. State and County regulations provide the basic guidelines and requirements for fire safe mitigation measures and defensible space around dwellings. This plan builds on these basic rules and provides additional fire hazard reduction measures customized to the topography and vegetation of the development with special emphasis on the interface of homes and wildland fuels.

The scope of the Ridgeview Village Unit 9 Wildfire Fire Safe Plan recognizes the extraordinary natural features of the area and designs wildfire safety measures which are meant to compliment and become part of the development design. The Plan contains measures for providing and maintaining defensible space around future homes. Plan implementation measures must be maintained in order to assure adequate wildfire protection.

Homeowners who live in and adjacent to the wildfire environment must take primary responsibility along with the fire services for ensuring their homes have sufficient low ignitability and surrounding fuel reduction treatment. The fire services should become a community partner providing homeowners with technical assistance as well as fire response. For this to succeed, it must be shared and implemented equally by homeowners and the fire services.

## **II. FIRE PLAN LIMITATIONS**

The Wildfire Fire Safe Plan for this development does not guarantee that wildfire will not threaten, damage or destroy natural resources, homes or endanger residents. However, the full implementation of the mitigation measures will greatly reduce the exposure of homes to potential loss from wildfire and provide defensible space for firefighters and residents as well as protect the native vegetation. Specific items are listed for homeowner's attention to aid in home wildfire safety.

### **III. WILDFIRE FIRE SAFE PLAN**

#### **1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

This 22.8 acre project is located within the unincorporated community of El Dorado Hills on a generally flat to west facing slope. This project will create 48 lots ranging in size from approximately 11,758 square feet up to 33,345 square feet. The property lies west of the Promontory and Powers Drive. Access is from Powers Drive. Beatty Drive and Julie Ann Way are the primary streets serving this unit. Julie Ann Way will be extended and intersect with Beatty Drive. Patricia Court will be built to provide access to 5 lots in the northeast corner of the development. The Villa Dora development is south of Unit 9.

Structural fire protection is provided by the El Dorado Hills Fire Department and wildland fire protection by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF). A fire hydrant system will serve the new area.

#### **2. PROJECT VEGETATION (FUELS)**

For wildfire planning purposes the vegetation is classified as follows:

- (a) ground fuels- annual grasses, buckeyes and scattered down trees and limbs
- (b) overstory- Gray Pines, white oaks

The flashy grass fuel loading is throughout the property. There are a few down trees. The problem of fuel laddering is very significant. Gray pines are extremely hazardous from a fire ignition and sudden deterioration. These trees and the large quantity of ground fuel set up a highly flammable situation. Protection of the oak overstory is very important.

#### **3. PROBLEM STATEMENTS**

##### **A. The ground fuels on the west facing slopes will ignite and have a rapid rate of spread.**

Fire in the ground fuels on the slopes is the most serious wildfire problem for this project.

##### **B. A percentage of the project has moderate slopes, which increases the rate of wildfire spread.**

Wildfires rate of spread increases dramatically as slope increases. This project has moderate grassy slopes.

##### **C. Risk of fire starts will increase with development.**

The greatest risk from fire ignition will be along roads, in the open space areas and on large lots as human use on these areas increase.

##### **D. Provisions must be made to maintain all fuel treatments.**

The wildfire protection values of fuel reduction are rapidly lost if not maintained. Annual maintenance by June 1 of each year is necessary.

##### **E. Typical home design and siting often does not recognize adequate wildfire mitigation measures.**

A review of many wildfires has conclusively shown that most home losses occur when: (1) there is inadequate clearing of flammable vegetation around a house, (2) roofs are not fire resistant, (3) homes are sited in hazardous locations, (4) firebrand ignition points and heat traps are not adequately protected and (5) there is a lack of water for suppression.

#### 4. **GOALS**

- A. Modify the continuity of high hazard vegetation fuels.
- B. Reduce the size and intensity of wildfires.
- C. Ensure defensible space is provided around all structures.
- D. Design fuel treatments to minimize tree removal
- E. Ensure fuel treatment measures are maintained.
- F. Identify fire safe structural features.
- G. Help homeowners protect their homes from wildfire.

#### 5. **WILDFIRE MITIGATION MEASURES**

Wildfire mitigation measures are designed to accomplish the Goals by providing and maintaining defensible space and treating high hazard fuel areas. Fire hazard severity is reduced through these mitigation measures. The Wildfire Fire Safe Plan places emphasis on defensible space around structures.

The streets in Unit 9 will be 26.5 feet wide plus gutters and sidewalks. This unit sitting below the existing houses on Powers Drive removes an additional wildfire threat. Until development to the southwest of lots 501-509 is built there will be an ongoing threat from wildfire to this area. Pruning of the oak trees to raise the canopy level is important. All limbs hanging within 8 feet of the ground need to be trimmed off to provide adequate clearance under the trees. The separation of the ground fuel and tree limbs minimizes the chances for fire to get into the tree canopy. Landscaping of the yards will also reduce the potential fire threat from the wildland adjacent to Unit 9.

Fire safe construction standards need to be incorporated in the build out of this unit due to the minimal setbacks used. El Dorado Hills Fire Department shall be consulted for building requirements. Lots 501-509 shall have a 30 foot setback from the rear property line. These lots shall have non-combustible fencing along the rear property line. Lots 502, 505 and 507 shall have a lockable pedestrian gate for emergency access to the wildland.

Unit 9 shall not have any access gates across the roads at Beatty Drive or Julie Ann Way. The fire agencies and the public shall have unrestricted access. There shall not be any speed calming devices on any of the roads within Unit 9.

All vacant lots and any open space areas within Unit 9 shall have the annual grasses and ground fuels treated annually by June 1. Trees in this zone shall have their canopy pruned up at least 8 feet as measured on the uphill side of the tree (See Appendix B).

#### **Mitigation Measures:**

- Lots shall be landscaped to Firescaping Standards Zones I and II (to the property line-See Appendix A).
  - a. Responsibility- homeowner within one year of occupancy
  
- All fences that border on the open space areas (lots 501-509) shall be of noncombustible material. Pedestrian gates to the open space shall be provided and may be lockable.
  - a. Responsibility- homeowner
  
- All homes shall have Class A listed roof assembly and siding of fire resistant material. One/two coat stucco over foam insulation is not acceptable.
  - a. Responsibility- homeowner
  
- Decks that are cantilevered over the natural slope shall be enclosed.
  - a. Responsibility- homeowner (See Appendix C for guidelines)
  
- El Dorado Hills Fire Department Weed Abatement Resolution shall apply to vacant lots adjacent to lots with structures.
  - a. Responsibility- lot owner and Fire Department

**6. OTHER FIRE SAFE REQUIREMENTS**

- A. Every 5 years the Fire Department shall review open space areas with the HOA to determine if additional fuel hazard reduction work is necessary.
  
- B. A Notice of Restriction shall be filed with the final map which stipulates that a Wildfire Fire Safe Plan has been prepared and wildfire mitigation measures shall be implemented.
  
- C. The project shall meet all the Public Resource Codes 4290 as amended (the 1991 SRA Fire Safe Regulations- Article 2 Access, Article 3 Signing, Article 4 Water, Article 5 Fuels), County and Fire Department ordinances.
  
- D. A legal entity (CSD) shall be empowered with authority for maintaining and enforcing all fuel treatment mitigation measures if homeowners fail to implement or maintain. Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions must be developed to ensure the enforcement of the structural Fire Safe regulations. The CC&R's shall be enforced by the CSD.
  
- E. The water hydrant system shall meet the California Fire Code specifications to water volume and pressure.

- F. The homeowner/property owner is responsible for any future fire safe or building code changes adopted by the State or local authority when a new building permit is issued.**
- G. The builder is responsible for contacting the El Dorado Hills Fire Department prior to designing a house for specific fire safe construction requirements.**
- H. Driveways over 16% grade shall be paved.**
- I. All driveways must be a minimum of 12 feet wide.**
- J. A construction parking plan shall be submitted to the El Dorado Hills Fire Department prior to any building for approval.**

## **F. Appendix**

## Appendix A

### RIDGEVIEW VILLAGE UNIT 9 FIRESCAPING STANDARDS

Firescaping is an approach to landscaping to help protect homes from wildland fires. The goal is to create a landscape that will slow the advance of a wildfire and create a Defensible Space that provides the key point for fire fighting agencies to defend the home. This approach has a landscape zone surrounding the home containing a balance of native and exotic plants that are fire and drought resistant, help control erosion, and are visually pleasing. Firescaping is designed not only to protect the home but to reduce damage to oaks and other plants.

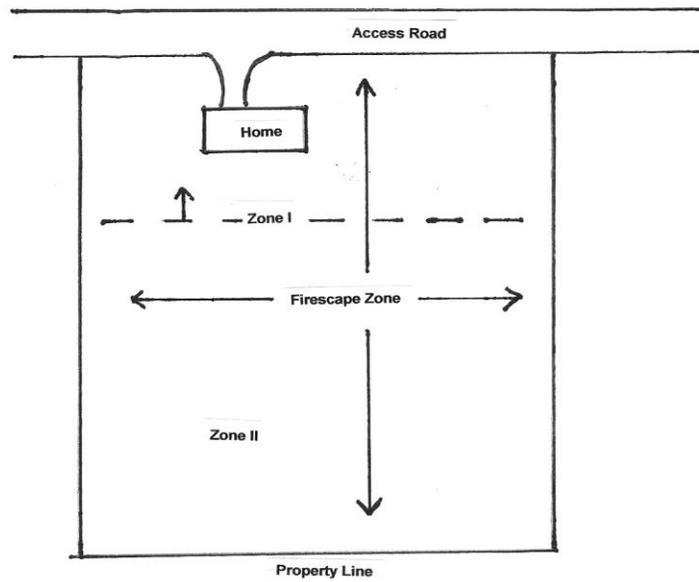
#### Zone I

The zone extends to not less than 30 feet from the house **or to the property line** in all directions and has a traditional look of irrigated shrubs, flowers gardens, trees and lawns. All dead trees, brush, concentrations of dead ground fuels (tree limbs, logs etc. exceeding 1 inch in diameter) are removed. All native oak trees and brush species are pruned up to 6-8 feet above the ground as measured on the uphill side but no more than 1/3 of the live crown. The plants in this zone are generally less than 18 inches in height, must be slow to ignite from wind blown sparks and flames. Such plants produce only small amounts of litter and retain high levels of moisture in their foliage year around. Native and exotic trees are permitted inside the Zone except for Gray pines, but foliage may not be within 10 feet of the roof or chimney. Grass and other herbaceous growth within this zone must be irrigated or if left to cure must be mowed to 2 inch stubble, chemically treated or removed. Such treatment must be accomplished by June 1, annually. This zone has built in firebreaks created by driveways, sidewalks etc.

#### Zone II

This Zone adds the remaining undeveloped footage of the lot to Zone I, extends from the house in all directions **to the property line** and is a transition area to the outlying vegetation. The zone is a band of low growing succulent and ground covers designed to reduce the intensity, flame length and rate of spread of an approaching wildfire. Irrigation may be necessary to maintain a quality appearance and retain the retardant ability of the plants. All dead trees, brush, concentration of dead ground fuels (tree limbs, logs etc.) exceeding 2 inches in diameter are removed. Annual grasses are mowed after they have cured to a 2 inch stubble by June 1, annually. Native trees and brush species are preserved and pruned of limbs up to 8 feet above the ground as measured on the uphill side. Gray pines are not permitted to remain in this zone.

**APPENDIX A-1  
FIRESCAPING ZONES  
EXHIBIT**



**Typical Lot in Oak Woodland**  
(schematic, no scale)

## **APPENDIX B**

### **RIDGEVIEW VILLAGE UNIT 9 FUEL TREATMENT SPECIFICATIONS**

**For**

### **OAK WOODLAND VEGETATION**

**Within The Designated Fuel Treatment Areas**

1. Leave all live trees **EXCEPT** Gray pines.
2. Remove all dead trees.
3. Remove all brush.
4. Prune all live trees of dead branches and green branches 8 feet from the ground as measured on the uphill side of the tree, except no more than 1/3 of the live crown is removed. All slash created by pruning must be disposed of by chipping or hauling off site.
5. Annually by June 1, reduce the grass or weeds to a 2 inch stubble by mowing, chemical treatment, disking or a combination of treatments.
6. Mature, multi stem Live Oak trees: remove all dead limbs and stems, cut off green limbs at 8 feet above the ground as measured on the uphill side that arch over and are growing towards the ground.

## **APPENDIX C**

### **RIDGEVIEW VILLAGE UNIT 9 ENCLOSED DECK GUIDELINES**

The purpose of enclosing decks that are cantilevered out over the natural slope is to help prevent heat traps and fire brands from a wildfire igniting the deck or fuels under the deck.

1. Does not apply to decks that are constructed using fire resistant materials such as concrete, steel, stucco etc.
2. Applies to decks one story or less above natural slopes.
3. Combustible material must not be stored under the deck.

# Ridgeview Village Unit 9

