

Banner Mountain News

Fall 2010



BANNER MOUNTAIN HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION EARNS NATIONAL FIREWISE RECOGNITION

The Banner Mountain Homeowners Association earned National FireWise recognition and received Special Congressional Recognition from Rep Tom McClintock on June 26, 2010 at the Annual FireWise Awareness Meeting.

Inside this issue:

- BMHA receives award
- Banner Mountain is now a FireWise community
- 3rd Firewise meeting
- Update on our fire tower
- Update on NID pipeline project
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- Other News

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Attaining a "FireWise Community" status is a gratifying achievement to be proudly shared with all of our Banner Mountain residents. The FireWise approach involves a series of practical educational steps that help individual homeowners and communities work together to protect themselves and their property from the hazard of wildfire.

Fire prevention begins with the understanding of what you can do to protect your home from ignition. Wildfires are much less likely to ignite a home if the home has been prepared with defensible space, firewise landscaping techniques, and home improvements designed to reduce exposure of its external materials to flames and firebrands.



In addition the BMHA has also been designated as a FireWise community as a result of the efforts and activities of the BMHA Board. These activities include the annual FireWise Day that has been held in the spring the last couple of years and the Scotch Broom Days organized to remove Scotch Broom from roadsides in our community.

Third Annual Banner Mountain Firewise Community Program



Frans Velthuisen presentation

At the meeting Frans Velthuisen, discussed the consequences of a wildfire in your neighborhood and how a typical home can catch on fire. Then, in more detail, he addressed what you can do to make your home more fire resistant. A few of these improvements included: Class A rated roofing materials, enclosing or boxing eaves, underside of decks, and soffits, screening vent openings with 1/8” mesh, double paned or tempered glass windows, fire-resistant building materials on exterior walls and enclosed gutters. He also had some samples to show and some “how-to” handouts.

You are the Firewise Community. BMHA continues to emphasize the importance of wildfire prevention on Banner Mountain and the ongoing efforts of many. When all of us have taken measures to prepare homes to survive a wildfire, the fire service is able to focus its resources on the main body of the fire instead of individual structures. The question is... “ARE YOU PREPARED?”

Other speakers included David Jaramillo, a registered professional forester, who discussed the high fire danger in Nevada County and public safety issues related to wildfires. In addition, Joanne Drummond, Executive Director of the NCFSC¹, acknowledged the BMHA for its efforts to promote wildfire preparedness and Chief Fike, NCCFD¹, discussed the importance of reducing the fuel potential around homes and roads. e.g.. Scotch Broom.

Banner Mountain Scotch Broom Removal



Joanne Drummond (NCFSC) and Terry McMahan (NCCFD)

Scotch broom is an invasive, non-native plant that is highly flammable and can present a serious fire hazard along evacuation routes. For the last several years it has been spreading along roads on Banner Mountain but this year seems to have been particularly favourable for Scotch Broom. In April and October the BMHA and neighbourhood volunteers participated in the NCFSC’s Scotch Broom Challenge and removed a substantial number of plants along Gracie road. The BMHA, in cooperation with the FSCNC, intends to continue efforts to remove as much of this hazardous plant as possible.

¹ NCFSC - Nevada County Fire Safe Council

² NCCFD – Nevada County Consolidated Fire District

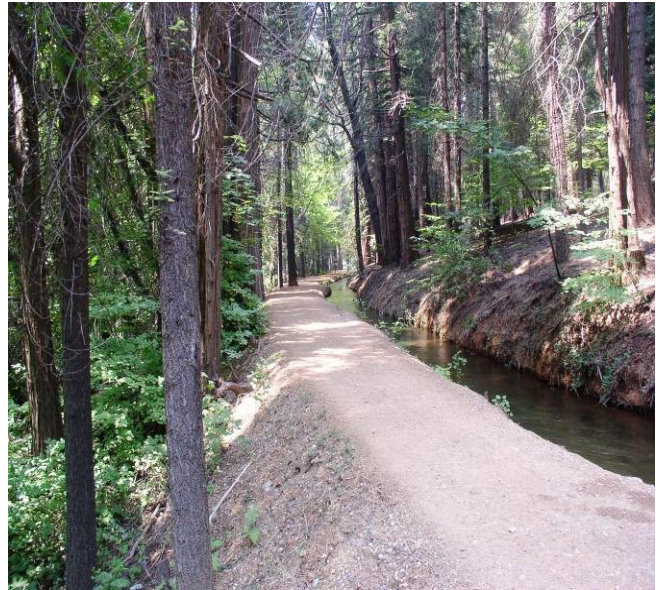
Cascade Canal Pipeline Construction

NID decided to replace some of the canals with pipelines to meet anticipated water demands about 10 years ago. In 2007 NID made a commitment to minimize the impact of these changes and adopted an MMRP¹. The mitigation plan will preserve the Cascade canals although water flow will be reduced. NID also agreed to make provisions for those living along the canals to ensure their wells were not adversely affected. Currently, some monitors are in place to determine if wells near the canal are receiving water seeping from the canal.

This summer NID began to install the 48-inch diameter pipeline that will connect to NID's existing Clipper Creek Siphon pipeline on Opalite Way, south of Red Dog Road and Banner Lava Cap Road. The pipeline is to

be routed via Wings of Morning Drive, Banner Lava Cap Road, Idaho Maryland Road and Lee Lane to the Loma Rica treatment plant. Due to the fall in elevation along the route, the pipeline will flow under pressures of up to 300 psi.

unsafe manner, dust, road closures, etc. Up-to-date information on the pipeline construction can be found on the BMHA webpage at: <http://www.bannermountain.org/> or you can go directly to NID's website at <http://www.nidbannercascade.com/index.htm>. In addition, the latest information on Banner Cascade pipeline is always available at <http://bmha-nid-pipeline.blogspot.com>. If you wish to create a new post, you can sign into the blog as pipeline@bannermountain.org with the password banner33. The post will be reviewed before it goes live. We reserve the right to edit posts. You can also post by sending an email to: mailto:bob2401.bannerpipeline@blogger.com.



Cascade canal and hiking path

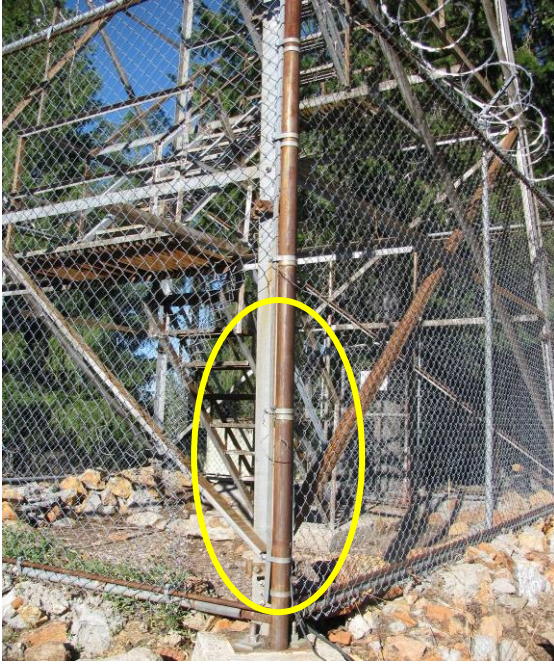
Our Lookout

The Banner Mountain Lookout Tower is a vital component to the early detection of wildfires in our area. Each volunteer spends an average of one four-hour shift per week scanning the surrounding area for signs of smoke. New volunteers work 12 to 15 shifts the first year to become proficient in tower operation. If you are interested, please contact Igor Raven at 478-5821.

This year the Banner Mountain Lookout provided five first reports and sixteen crosses on other lookout reports. Of the fires reported from our lookout, in two cases aircraft were on scene before the first 911 call was received due to the Banner Mountain Tower report.

¹ MMRP - Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program

Our Lookout cont'd



Hole cut in chain link fence around tower

Earlier this year the tower was vandalized during the offseason and rendered unsafe. The trapdoor was damaged and the fence around the bottom of the tower was cut. In addition several items were stolen. Unfortunately, the tower receives little or no funding. Luckily, several generous citizens and organizations stepped up to keep the tower functioning. They were: Judi Wright, M.D. provided a new chair; the San Juan Fire Department provided new binoculars; Banner Mountain Textiles provided a new flag and rope; Larry Pettit repaired window damage; Cal Fire provided a new fire extinguisher; Sharon Beckenbach provided a new clock and the BMHA will be providing funds for a more secure trap door.

2010 Chipping Program

The 2010 chipping program differs from the 2009 program. The program was changed because too few Banner Mountain residents were willing to pay for the service even with the discount.

The NCFSC now has its own truck, chipper and crew in an effort to address this problem. A donation is suggested but the NCFSC does not want people to avoid chipping because of the cost. There are no time restrictions and the chipping crew will chip until the chipping job is completed.



Trees properly piled for chipping crew

The original chipping program was funded by grant from the State of California. The grant has run out and there is little likelihood that it will be renewed in the foreseeable future.

Chipping can be scheduled through the FSC at 272-1122. However, because of funding problems, a \$50 donation (for up to one hour of chipping) is requested to defray expenses.

Additional details regarding costs and arrangements for chipping will be posted on the BMHA webpage (www.bannermountain.org)

Upcoming Elections

BMHA Board of Directors

This year represents a change in the BMHA Board of Director elections. Because the general membership meeting is now held in conjunction with the Spring FireWise meeting voting will now be done by email and mail. All members with email will receive a ballot by email and those without email will receive a paper ballot with the names of those standing for Board of Directors. Paper ballots should be mailed to: BMHA, **Ballot**, PO Box 833, Nevada City, CA 95959 Email ballots should be sent to sylvia@bannermountain.org. **The deadline for receipt of ballots has been extended to February 15.**

If you wish to be considered for a seat on the BMHA Board of Directors please submit your name to Helene Hall at helene@bannermountain.org or to the BMHA Nevada city address so your name can be placed on the ballot. **The deadline for submitting your name has been extended to January 31.** Candidates must be current BMHA members in good standing. Board of Director members serve two year terms.

There are seven Board members. The current Board members are: Jim Bair, Bob Bogart, Hosea Bostic, Helene Hall, Willy Kollmeyer, Sylvia Pichitino and Chuck Staetz.

The Board terms expire on alternate years to provide continuity on the Board. This year the following residents are standing for election: Helene Hall, Jim Bair, and Hosea Bostic.

If more names are received to stand for election to the Board three (3) candidates receiving then the highest number of votes will be Board members.

By-Laws

The current by-laws were written in 1994. During the intervening 16 years there have been many changes in technology and the Banner Mountain community. As a result, the by-laws have been examined and several changes have been proposed to bring them into line with the current environment. The proposed changes to the by-laws have been sent to all BMHA members so that all members can review the changes and then vote whether or not to accept these changes. The deadline for receipt of the ballots regarding by-law changes (by email or paper ballot) has been extended to February 15.

Important Dates

- January 25..... Board meeting
- **January 31.....Deadline for submitting name to stand for Board of Directors**
- **February 15.....Deadline for receipt of Board of Director ballots**
- **February 15..... Deadline for receipt of ballots for by-law changes**
- March 22.....Spring Newsletter
- May 21..... Annual meeting and FireWise Event
- October 25..... Fall Newsletter

Membership: Dues are only \$15 per year. To join or renew your membership in the BMHA just go to <http://www.bannermountain.org/becomeamember.html> and fill out the "e-form", mail in a membership form that's available on the website, or renew at the; spring meeting or contact any board member.