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August 2022 Newsletter

Fire season is here. Keep up to date with MCFSC in this month's newsletter.

[BECOME A MEMBER TODAY!](#)

- Inside this Issue:
- Help us promote Mendocino Measure P -- to Prevent & Protect
 - Our 2021-22 Annual Report is now available
 - CA Fire Foundation awards grant to MCFSC in partnership with Westport Volunteer Fire Department -- and more
 - Tree Mortality Task Force takes shape in Mendocino County
 - Thank you, Katie!
 - Listen & Learn Opportunities
 - California Native Plant Society's Native Gardening 101: Firescaping

We Need Your Support to Get Mendocino Measure P Passed on the November Ballot

Measure P, coming up on the November ballot, is your opportunity to provide vital support for Mendocino County's mostly volunteer fire departments, and to bolster our efforts to improve county-wide prevention efforts -- all without increasing existing taxes. Please take some time to learn about it and consider how you might support it (beyond voting "YES") such as becoming an endorser, talking about it with your neighbors, or getting a yard sign. If you have ideas for groups we should ask for support, please get in touch. Please also pass this note along to other potential supporters.

You can find out all about it at the campaign website: www.yesonpmendo.com

[Yes on P Website](#)

For the short version, here is a preview of the ballot argument

Argument in Favor of Measure P
Measure P will help stabilize our fire departments and ramp up fire prevention efforts without raising taxes.

Measure P is Essential Support for our Fire Departments.
Our fire seasons have gotten more intense, and will continue to worsen. Local fire departments on the front line are dedicated professionals—largely volunteers—and on-call 24/7 because they care deeply about their local communities and neighbors.

They need your support now. Fire-related calls to our local departments are rising annually—by 52% over the past 5 years. Simultaneously, the costs of equipment, training, and insurance have skyrocketed (by law, each department must provide workers compensation and liability insurance). Our fire departments desperately need this funding to continue to provide high-quality emergency response within our communities. Measure P funds would help ensure that they and their volunteers have the support they need to continue to serve and protect their communities. 10% of the funding will also strengthen the Mendocino County Fire Safe Council (MCFSC)'s efforts to reduce or prevent wildfire losses.

Measure P Will Not Increase Your Taxes
Measure P will reallocate a 1/4 cent of an existing, sunseting sales tax (for Mental Health capital-improvement funding that is now fully collected) to be distributed 90% to our local fire departments and 10% to ramp up fire-prevention services for 10 years. Your current taxes will not increase.

Measure P Funds Will be Spent as Promised
Funding is intended to go directly to local fire departments using a formula that has already been established and agreed upon. There is no ambiguity or discretion. The watchful eyes of our 20 fire chiefs and their district boards will be on it. Since the tax sunsets in 10 years, voters will have the opportunity then to reassess the benefits of this tax allocation.



Elk Volunteer Fire Department at the Great Day in Elk parade showing support for Measure P with a yard sign on wheels

Its a Report! The all-new Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Mendocino County Fire Safe Council Annual Report is hot off the press -- you can be an early reader and get the scoop on what we have been up to with the online version. Our members can expect a copy in the mail in the next few weeks.

[Click Here to Read the Annual Report](#)

More Funding News

MCFSC in partnership with the Westport Volunteer Fire Department awarded CA Fire Foundation grant to install water tanks for fire suppression

The CA Fire Foundation awarded MCFSC a grant to increase water storage for fire suppression in the Westport Volunteer Fire Department (WVFD)'s district. WVFD currently only has one water-supply source above their fire station, but their response area is 209 square miles. In the event of a fire, water tenders must travel back and forth from the station to refill, which can severely impact firefighting capabilities, and further endangers firefighters. By strategically placing additional water tanks, WVFD will be able to significantly reduce the time it takes to refill water, increasing the safety of their firefighters and community.

The CA Fire Foundation also awarded a grant to Whale Gulch Volunteer Fire Department for fuel reduction and the purchase of a new-used chipper.

And there is more! The CA Fire Foundation is also providing the [Good Farm Fund \\$50,000](#) to support their fire relief and prevention grant programs on Mendocino County farms and ranches. Applications will open in November. This is an expansion of last year's \$25,000 in fire resilience grants that the MCFSC partnered with the Good Farm Fund to award last year.

A big thanks to the CA Fire Foundation for being such strong supporters of Mendocino County wildfire-resiliency projects!



Tree Mortality Task Force in Mendocino County

No matter where you live in Mendocino County, we have all noticed an increase in dead and dying trees. It's a complex issue that is not easily addressed. Drought, competition, insect damage and wildfires have all contributed to the increasing rate of tree mortality in Northern California. High rates of mortality adversely affect our watersheds, ecologically diversity, carbon sequestration, and wildfire risk.

Supervisor John Haschak from the 3rd District has started a Tree Mortality Task Force in Mendocino County to organize efforts to improve forest health countywide. Nearby counties including Lake and Napa are also using this working-group model to enhance collaboration and strategy. The first meeting included a presentation from Mike Jones, UC Cooperative Extension Forester, on bark-beetle infestation of conifers -- just one of the many issues impacting our forests.

Check out these documents below to help better understand the consequences of bark-beetle infestation.

"Native bark beetles are an important part of a healthy forest ecosystem. However, when landscape-scale outbreaks occur, the associated mass tree mortality can have significant economic and ecological impacts on forest ecosystems..."

[Bark Beetle Outbreaks & Conifer Mortality in the North Coast Region](#)

"Management to maintain tree health is best considered in the long term, and anytime is the right time to begin, even (and especially) when environmental conditions for tree health are great."

[Questions and Answers on Tree Mortality in Northern California](#)

Thank you to our GrizzlyCorps Fellow! We will miss you!



We are sad to say that it's time for our 2021-2022 GrizzlyCorps Fellow to move on. Katie Smith was our first Grizzly, and she has left big shoes to fill. Katie came to us with a can-do attitude and a broad range of skills, which she expanded while working for us. She spearheaded our [Emergency First Responder Maps](#) program, helped with our [Hopland CWPP](#) project, made countless maps for other projects and grant applications, and wrote this newsletter. Luckily for all of us, Katie is sticking around Mendocino County; she will be working full-time for the Mendocino County Resource Conservation District.

Listen & Learn

Brush up on your Firescaping knowledge with this video from the CA Native Plant Society



We're in fire season and talking about how native plants can support fire-resistant landscapes. Drawing upon a four-year research study, we'll look at the fire behavior of planted native landscapes, hydration, and mulches. View this for an enlightening discussion, especially if you live in fire-prone areas.



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