

COUNTY OF NEVADA
STATE OF CALIFORNIA
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS



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May 18, 2015

County of Nevada
Board of Supervisors
950 Maidu Avenue
Nevada City, CA 95959

DATE OF MEETING: May 26, 2015

SUBJECT: Discussion and possible direction to staff to modify the Hazardous Vegetation Abatement Ordinance to include a requirement for fuel breaks on unimproved parcels

RECOMMENDATION: Direct staff to bring a draft ordinance to the Board amending the Hazardous Vegetation Abatement Ordinance to include a requirement for fuel breaks on unimproved parcels.

FUNDING: None

BACKGROUND:

On May 13, 2014 the Board adopted Ordinance #2380, which added Article 7 of Chapter IV to the General Code regarding Hazardous Vegetation Abatement. The intent of this section was to provide fire officials with an enforcement tool to help owners of improved property to satisfy defensible space requirements when the required clearance extended over the property line to a neighboring parcel.

This proposal is for a discussion and possible action to modify the ordinance to include a requirement for fuel breaks on unimproved parcels to the extent that the boundaries of the unimproved parcel are contiguous with improved parcels. For example, if an unimproved parcel has a boundary 1000 feet in length and 100 feet of it are contiguous to an improved parcel, there would be a requirement for a 100-foot fuel break.

The increasing fuel load on unimproved parcels constitutes a growing threat to occupied ones. The threat is made more serious by the number of absentee landowners who own unmanaged property in the unincorporated areas of the county. It makes little sense to require homeowners to conform with state defensible space requirements when in many cases the adjoining, unimproved property constitutes a fire hazard to the neighborhood. The recommended action will provide the local fire departments and CAL FIRE the necessary tools to deal with this particular threat.

Respectfully submitted,


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