

# THE WOODS

A NEWSLETTER FROM THE CASCADEL WOODS  
PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION



VOLUME 22 SEPTEMBER 2017

## IN GRATITUDE AND SYMPATHY

This is now two years in a row our community has dodged a bullet regarding wildfire. The



Fork Fire last year and the Willow Fire the year before, were narrowly avoided catastrophes.

Although many factors came into play, the quick response, readiness and resource availability to the fire professionals, mainly Cal Fire, saved our homes and community.

This year the Mission Fire was not as forgiving. We are sad to say that some of our neighbors lost their homes due to this fire. Three homes were total losses, two homes in Cascadel Heights and long time area resident Mr. Morgan also lost his home, his was the house by the cell tower.

What we are fortunate to report is that there were no serious injuries or homes seriously damaged within the Cascadel Woods subdivision. The only damage that we know of was to a smallish out building including some items being

stored outside and a meter box with power pole that serves a Water Co.



property near the top of Vista Dr.

For our good fortune we owe a huge debt to the firefighters who responded under the already debilitating circumstances of multiple fires burning in the area. In fact some Fresno fire stations were reduced below their required minimum staffing to respond to our community. We also should be proud and grateful for how our community has come

together to mitigate the devastation of the tree



mortality in Cascadel Woods. Every small act has played a part in making our community fire safe.

In speaking with fire officials at the Incident Command for the Mission Fire, all were unanimous in their conclusion that if it were not for the recent efforts in dead tree removal, brush clearing and general fire preparedness, particularly with fuels reduction on the front end of Cascadel Woods nearest the Archway, the result of this fire would likely have been devastating to our community.

There are a few people we would like to recognize for their efforts to this cause:

- All of the Members of the Cascadel Woods Fire Brigade; these folks devote time every month to keeping Cascadel Fire Safe, maintaining fire equipment and keeping us focused on fire preparedness. They are: Carol Eggink, Stan Eggink, Aimee Cox, Warren Cox, Simon Elman, Carol Pace, Ken Wood and Susie Odry.
- Forrest Negrete, for always helping out with his tractor to remove logs, spread wood chips or whatever needs done. He was last seen spreading some of the dirt and restoring some of the damage done to the meadows during the evacuation.
- Simon Elman, for his constant and consistent work maintaining the grounds around the Clubhouse and his work on the Fire Brigade and Red Cross.
- Carol Eggink, the “lean mean weed eating machine” for her diligence in weed eating



nearly everywhere in the subdivision, organizing weed eating “parties” with Cascadel Heights residents to brush the road sides down Road 233 and now serving as the Firewise Committee Chairperson.

- Stan Eggink, for serving on the Fire Brigade mowing the meadows, and most importantly; implementing and coordinating nearly all the work performed under the various Grants to fire safe our community.
- Aimee Cox, without her professionalism, tenacity and grant writing skills we would not have secured over \$200,000 in Fire Safe Grants. Among all the other stuff she does.
- The Yosemite-Sequoia Resource Conservation Council, who have been instrumental in securing multiple fuel reduction grants for our community.
- The Foundation for Resource Conservation, Inc. who have helped us secure our most recent fuels reduction grant for nearly \$130,000.
- John Taylor for taking care of the horses and other animals left behind due to the time constraints on evacuating.

### **MISSION FIRE STATISTICS**

As of September 10, 2017 the fire is at 1,039 acres and 78% contained. Crews are busy repairing damage done during the active suppression of the fire including removing slash and debris, clearing drainages, re-establishing berms, creating water bars, smoothing bulldozed areas and scattering lopped vegetation on cleared soil to prevent erosion. There are 1739 personnel assigned to this incident including 180 National Guard troops specially trained as fire fighters.

Additionally, Madera County Sheriff's Department along with Madera County Public Works Department are providing free disposal of food waste for residents affected by the power outage due to the fire.

### **RAILROAD FIRE**

As of September 10, 2017, this fire is 12,358 acres and 70% contained. AIMEE COX (Editor) has been working this fire, up to 16 hour days, as a Resource Advisor (trainee) known as READ, together with other resource specialists to minimize fire

suppression impacts to cultural and other natural resources such as archeological sites, wildlife habitats and rare plant population, This local team has information on the location of these resources within and near the fire and works with on-the-ground operations and other units on the fire or avoid damaging these areas with heavy equipment like dozers. The teams have a varied background in fisheries, silviculture, engineering, recreation, range management, wildlife and botany.

### **CWPOA BOARD NEWS**

The CWPOA and CMWC held a united meeting of the Boards last month. During the CWPOA portion of the meeting, Susie Odry was appointed to fill a vacancy on the Board. The Board welcomes Susie and look forward to the knowledge she brings with her to our community, Susie served on the Sugar Pine Board of Directors on two separate occasions and is still involved with their community. Susie is retired from the aerospace industry and enjoys her retirement here in Cascadel Woods. She served as a volunteer for many years with the Yosemite Conservancy in Wawona and the Mariposa Grove Museum. Susie is also an active member of the Cascadel Woods Fire Brigade. She looks forward to helping out in the community and shares our commitment of keeping the community Fire Safe and healthy.

### **BOIL YOUR WATER!**

The “BOIL ORDER NOTICE” issued during evacuation of the subdivision remains in effect. Those residents who are served by the Cascadel Mutual Water System must boil their water before use for consumption. For any questions regarding the Boil Order please Call Water Operator Ken Wood (559) 676-5387 or contact the Madera County Environmental Heath Division.

### **WATER SYSTEM IN EMERGENCY MODE**

As anyone could imagine, when there is a fire threat or long-term power outage the Cascadel Mutual Water System goes into Emergency Mode. Depending on the severity of the conditions there are many options to offset the challenges faced during an emergency. The Mission Fire took us to the very limit of our systems capabilities.

After being notified of a wildfire possibly heading our way and the subsequent loss of power, quick thinking Water Operator Brian Curtis increased the flow rate from our spring in an effort to keep our reserve tanks full for firefighting capabilities. This was done to offset the loss of water from our wells, which require electricity to operate. The spring is gravity fed and does not require electricity to function.

By the next morning it was clear that the evacuation was going to be long term and that the required disinfection of our spring source would soon (if not already) be below state requirements, Madera County Environmental Health Division was notified and it was agreed that a boil order would be required for residents returning to their homes.

That same morning Water Co. representatives contacted the Mission Fire Incident Command to offer assistance in providing water for firefighters and to determine if they were currently drawing water from our system. It was quickly determined that they were using our water and that an increase in system output would likely be necessary to keep up with demand. The Water Co. operators were given emergency access to the community and allowed to monitor the system throughout the evacuation.

Upon first inspection, our emergency reserves were nearly depleted. Firefighters had used nearly 130,000 gallons of water in the previous 24hrs. Water Operators opened valves to make maximum use of spring output increasing system production to nearly 110,000 gallons per day (in normal operation our system only uses 25,000-30,000 at this time of year). This increase was just enough to keep up with demand and refill our reserves over the next few days.

Without the aid of automatic systems to control water flow and production (no power), Water Operators had to make manual adjustments to the system several times a day to ensure optimal performance. Upon the return of power on September 9, chlorination was returned into service. But, with Water trucks still refilling from our hydrants, causing short-term losses of pressure, the possibility of contamination to the water

supply is still a concern and Boil Orders will remain in effect until our system has returned to normal operation. Normal Operation cannot occur until emergency services have stopped refilling from our hydrants. Then water testing will be performed to determine there is no contamination of the water supply and Madera County Environmental Health Division has given us the all clear to lift the Boil Order. Hopefully, this will occur no later than Friday Sept. 15.

The only damage to the water system caused by the fire was destruction of an electrical service box and pole feeding one of our wells. This damage should be repaired within the next few days. As of Sunday September 10 the Water Co has supplied roughly half a million gallons of water towards the firefighting efforts. Our emergency plans and procedures have worked flawlessly to maintain the water system and reserves thanks to the quick access, cooperation and impeccable leadership from everyone at the Combined Agency Incident Command, the Madera County Sheriffs, and everyone that came to our aid during this emergency. We cannot thank everyone enough.

### **Firewise Committee/Brigade**

The next meeting will be on Sunday, September 17 at the clubhouse, starting at 9 AM. We will be doing a Fire Debriefing and touring the subdivision.

One Fire Box was destroyed during the fire and has gone out for repairs.

The next training day for the Brigade will be in October. If you are interested in joining the committee or just helping out as a volunteer when you can for the work days, please call Carol Eggink at 559-877-6290.

Or email her at [egginks@netptc.net](mailto:egginks@netptc.net)

### **EVENTS and MEETINGS**

- **Cascadel Firewise/Brigade**  
Sun. Sept 17, 9:00 AM Clubhouse
- **CWPOA ANNUAL MEMBER'S MEETING**  
Sat. Sept 23, 10:00 AM Clubhouse

### **Your Newsletter**

We hope you enjoyed The Woods Newsletter. Send any submissions for the October Newsletter to Carol Eggink by September 27 at [egginks@netptc.net](mailto:egginks@netptc.net).

Crews addressing a spot fire in Cascadel



Last shot before evacuating our home.



Fire Damage Near the Arch



National Guard Units for their unwavering devotion to duty.

Leaving Cascadel Woods



The fire crosses Cascadel Road



Outside Cascadel Woods Arches



Our heartfelt thanks and gratitude to the many Fire Crews, Police, Sheriff Department's as well as the