

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE APPLICATION
FOR A DIABLO FIRESAFE COUNCIL DEFENSIBLE SPACE GRANT

WHEREAS Kensington is in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFSZ),

WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of property owners to maintain defensible space as mandated by the State of California,

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Board to seek all available funding to support public safety,

WHEREAS, the Board seeks to support community efforts to improve public safety,

LET IT HEREBY BE RESOLVED THAT:

- 1.) KPPCSD supports the application for the 2011 Diablo FireSafe Council grant for the purposes of creating defensible space and mitigating fire hazards in the South West corner of Kensington Park, as presented by resident Nicki Kaiser.
- 2.) If this application is successful, the KPPCSD pledges matching funding up to \$5,000 for the purposes outlined in the application.
- 3.) General Manager Greg Harman is directed to oversee all plans, approvals, expenditures and further volunteer actions related to this project.
- 4.) District Council will advise on the feasibility of using volunteer labor within the Park with appropriate liability waivers for invasive weed removal workdays.

Aye:

Nay:

Abstain:

Not Present:

Date:

Neighborhood and District Cooperative Support of Kensington Park Wildland Interface DFSC Grant

Neighborhood Support:

Neighbors listed will volunteer time, labor, funding and/ or tools to assist creation of a defensible space in the area of the park bordering their neighborhood. If allowed by the KPPCSD, volunteers will sign liability waivers and assist with the removal of smaller weeds under the direction of the General Manager or someone he assigns to this task.

Neighbor commitment to maintain bordering properties:

Neighbors at 4 & 6 Windsor and 79 Arlington will remove any existing gum eucalyptus, acacia, himalayan blackberry, cape ivy, english ivy, poison hemlock, sow thistle, milk thistle and star thistle from their own properties and monitor to prevent their reestablishment.

Neighbor Commitments beyond labor:

Donation of fire-safe native plants

Researched List of Fire-Safe Plants Suitable to Kensington Park

Donation of Additional Funds for Acacia Mitigation

District Support:

The KPPCSD pledges to match any funds received from the DFSC grant up to \$5,000 to create a defensible space in the South West corner of Kensington Park. The KPPCSD will also prepare a plan for future maintenance of defensible space and mitigation of highly flammable invasive species throughout Kensington Park.

Plan for Kensington Park Wildland Interface DFSC Grant

General Project Scope:

Create defensible space as mandated by the State of California within 100' of residences along the South West corner of Kensington Park. Mitigate highly flammable and invasive species, specifically focusing on acacia, himalayan blackberry, poison hemlock, cape ivy, English ivy, sow thistle, milk thistle and star thistle.

Paperwork:

Nicki Kaiser will prepare and file the application for this grant with the consent of the KPPCSD and the oversight of General Manager Greg Harman. If the grant is awarded, the General Manager will administer any legal and financial aspects of the grant, including the hiring of any needed landscape contractors. Nicki Kaiser will provide assistance to Greg Harman, as needed, with communication with neighbors and DFSC and any other aspects of this process that need support.

Planning:

If DFSC provides this grant application, the KPPCSD (District), represented by General Manager Greg Harman; the participating neighbors represented by Nicki Kaiser; and DFSC will jointly develop a specific plan for the creation of a defensible space within the South West corner of Kensington Park that meets defensible space fire safety requirements by mitigating highly flammable invasive species in a manner that makes the best use of available funds while minimizing impact on any native species. This work will be similar to, and a continuation of, previous hazard mitigation work on this parcel performed by the KPPCSD, but with increased attention to preventing re-establishment of the removed species to reduce long term fire-risks and costs. Choice of contractors will be at the discretion of the General Manager, but multiple bids for acacia mitigation are recommended.

An efficient planning process will hopefully enable work to begin within two to three weeks of grant issuance, assuming availability of contractors.

Any acacia designated for removal will be professionally cut at ground level. An approved anti-suckering compound will be painted on the fresh cuts to prevent re-growth. Removed acacia will be chipped. Chips will spread on site to discourage re-growth of invasive species. Any acacia material that is too large for chipping will be hauled off site. Himalayan blackberries, poison hemlock, ivy and thistles will be removed in a manner that includes as much root as possible with minimal soil disturbance. This method of removal is more effective than machete/weed whacking, especially if it is performed prior to seed formation. Green waste from these species will be hauled off site for high heat composting.

Existing coastal redwoods, oak and dogwood will be protected from damage. Other smaller native species will be protected.

Total time to create invaluable defensible space: approximately one to two weeks plus follow up small weed control.

Continuing Maintenance:

The listed supporters (neighbors and KPPCSD) commit to monitoring their respective properties for new acacia, gum eucalyptus, English ivy, cape ivy, himalayan blackberry and invasive thistles with the intent to prevent the return or spread of these hazardous species. Other neighbors will be encouraged to follow this lead.

Fire-safe plants will be donated to the park to help replace removed invasive species. Placement of new plants will be in accordance with defensible space requirements. A list of recommended fire-safe species suitable to this location will be provided to the KPPCSD for consideration for future plantings.

Benefits of Kensington Park Wildland Interface DFSC Grant

As the neighbors at most immediate risk from the "torchwood" acacia, himalayan blackberry, cape ivy, english ivy, poison hemlock, sow thistle, milk thistle and star thistle fuel loads in the "wild" section of Kensington Park, we are organizing and supporting this effort to protect our neighborhood and the larger community of Kensington by encouraging the creation of sustainable defensible space along the wildland interface. Without this grant neither the neighbors nor the KPPCSD could fund this project. This area contains a dense stand of highly flammable and resinous acacia as well as stand of blue gum eucalyptus, both of which pose risks of explosively hot canopy fire, large amounts of flammable litter and flaming brands that could travel far beyond our neighboring homes. The tinder laden South West corner of Kensington Park could serve as a stepping stone for a wildfire from Wildcat Canyon to spread into areas of Kensington otherwise separated from the wildland.

Because houses in Kensington are extremely close together, the households closest to the Kensington Park wildland interface can serve as either a buffer or a fuse for the rest of the neighborhood. By keeping our own properties free of particularly hazardous species and assisting the KPPCSD in its efforts to create defensible space we can help protect the community as a whole. Our efforts will also help to educate the community in identification and correct methods of mitigation of hazardous vegetation while providing examples of safer alternatives.

Reduction of dangerous invasive species will also allow for ongoing restoration of the park wildland that will benefit park visitors and wildlife through increased safety and improved wildlife habitat. This area currently contains native oaks and a large redwood grove that must compete with the rapidly spreading acacia, eucalyptus and other invasive species. Fire resistant native species such as big leaf maple, madroñe, oak, currant, elderberry, miners lettuce and giant clover could thrive in this area, if there were not oily Australian pests blanketing the ground with millions of seeds and phytotoxic chemical containing leaf litter that suppresses the growth of many native species. Annually, by late summer an impassible sea of dry 6' tall weeds with hypodermic-like thorns smother any native plant that does make a brave appearance in the "open" area. In the past when crews have been sent in to machete the giant weeds, it has been after the thistles have gone to seed. Removing these noxious and combustible menaces before they require machetes would be both wise and economical.

Please, help us protect our community by providing funding for forward thinking and effective fuel load mitigation.



2010 – 2011 Defensible Space Fuel Reduction Project Funding

www.diablofiresafe.org

Program Description

The Diablo Fires Safe Council (DFSC) is sponsoring defensible space fuel reduction projects for 2010 – 2011 funded courtesy of a National Fire Plan grant through the California Fire Safe Council. Cost-share assistance of up to \$5,000 per project is available to groups or individuals to reduce fuel loads and create defensible space on their property. Emphasis will be on areas prioritized in the Contra Costa County Community Wildfire Protection Plan or where homeowners associations, civic organizations and other groups are organized and available to promote fire safe efforts. Projects can include:

- Chipping or green waste removal of homeowner cut material,
- Mowing or “weed whacking”
- Tree thinning (cutting of small trees) or “limbing-up”
- Brush cutting
- Grazing

Immediate funding will be available for chipping or removal of homeowner cut materials. Projects that have possible environmental concerns or the potential to disturb protected species will be reviewed for impacts prior to funding. Best management practices will need to be incorporated into all ground disturbing fuel reduction work.

APPLICATION SUBMITTAL SCHEDULE

Applications will be reviewed for funding on a rolling basis once every quarter.

Jul 9, 2010	Early bird applications due
Aug 13, 2010	2QTR 2010 application due
Oct 15, 2010	3QTR 2010 application due
Jan 14, 2011	1QTR 2011 application due
Apr 15, 2011	2QTR 2011 application due
IF NEEDED (if not all funds dispersed)	
July 15, 2011	3QTR 2011 application due

See Diablo Fire Safe Council web site www.diablofiresafecouncil.org for more information on selection criteria and an application. Or contact Cheryl Miller Executive Coordinator DFSC
email: DFSCMiller@comcast.net Phone: (510) 536-0143



www.diablofiresafe.org

2010 – 2011 Defensible Space Fuel Reduction Project Funding

Selection Criteria For Project Funding

OVERALL GOALS

Project reduces hazardous fuels that, if left untreated, would generate high intensity burning adjacent to structures or communities at risk, or produce large quantities of airborne burning embers that could carry into communities or other important resources.

Project reduces hazards along strategic emergency access and evacuation routes, or other critical infrastructure.

Project includes vegetation modification treatments that will reduce the threat of unacceptable impacts of high intensity fire to high value ecosystems, sensitive watersheds and high concentration recreation areas, including regional parklands and state or federal lands.

ELIGIBILITY

Funds are targeted for fuel reduction projects that result in a group of homes that meet the defensible space requirements set forth by local fire codes or Public Resource Code 4291. To be eligible for funding a project must be:

1. Located within Contra Costa County within a local fire hazard area, CALFIRE identified *Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone*, or Federal listed *Community at Risk*.
2. Focus fuels reduction in the 100' defensible space radius that surrounds homes, or clear vegetation from along access routes or other critical facility.
3. Have the support of local fire department (e.g. inspection notice, letter of support, email).

SELECTION CRITERIA.

Projects will be ranked by DFSC's selection committee according to the following criteria:

1. Application is clear as to what the project entails and supports DFSC's Overall Goals
2. Well defined project tasks and timeframe
3. Realistic budget that maximizes fuel reduction for minimal investment
4. Measurable goals (e.g. complete compliance for defensible space)
5. Includes a plan for maintenance into the future
6. Strong commitment from multiple neighbors to participate
7. Designated organizer and support person who will keep records of participation, provide a final report within 2 weeks of project completion and before/ after photos.
8. Project will lead to further neighborhood fire safe activities

Extra Points for: 1. Matching funds. 2. Projects that have considered means for re-use of woody biomass. 3. Attendance of organizers at a DFSC workshop. 4. Project assists underserved senior or disabled community members. 5. Project continues or extends work that was previously done by neighborhood.

For further information contact
Cheryl Miller, DFSC Executive Coordinator at DFSCMiller@comcast.net or (510) 536-0143
Or your local Fire Department Representative.



www.diablofiresafe.org

Request to Participate

The Diablo Fires Safe Council (DFSC) is sponsoring defensible space fuel reduction project funding for 2010 – 2011 funded courtesy of a National Fire Plan grant through the California Fire Safe Council. Cost-share assistance of up to \$5,000 per project is available to groups or individuals to reduce fuel loads and create defensible space.

DFSC may assist Contra Costa County property owners with vegetation management projects that will lead to compliance with their local fire department’s defensible space requirements in areas designated as Priority Hazard Zones.

Contractors will be hired directly by property owners with DFSC funds augmenting private property owner contributions. Diablo Fire Safe Council will maintain a list of Contractors to aid the property owners with selection and scoping of project work.

Contractors and homeowners will not contract directly with the Diablo Fire Safe Council.

*To have your project considered for funding
please complete the following information:*

1. Designated Project Coordinator: Kensington General Manager Greg Harman and Resident Nicki Kaiser
Harman 510-526-4141
 Phone: (Daytime) Kaiser 510-323-4765 (Evening) _____ (Cell) _____
 Email: gharman@kensingtoncalifornia.org nickibk@gmail.com

2. Neighborhood/ Street Names: South West corner of Kensington Park at North End of Windsor Ave.
 Project Address: next to 4 Windsor Ave. and 79 Arlington Ave. APN: 572040011

3. Number of households or volunteers involved (minimum 5): _____
 Names and address of household or volunteers involved (attach an additional sheet if necessary):
 - 1) see attached
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
 - 5) _____
 - 6) _____
 - 7) _____
 - 8) _____

Diablo Fire Safe Council is not obligated to provide services and is not liable for its failure to provide services, nor for the performances of services under this program.

4. Describe your project and what you plan to do to achieve Defensible Space within 100 feet of your homes, anticipated tasks and timeframe (attach an additional sheet if necessary):

- Chipping of homeowner cut material
- Weed whacking/ mowing*
- Tree thinning (cutting of small trees)*
- Tree "limbing up"*

- Green waste removal of homeowner cut material
- Needle/ leaf removal
- Brush cutting*
- Grazing*

**Note: Your project may be located where there are federally protected species or other environmental concerns. Ground disturbing projects as indicated by * will require environmental review by DFSC and the funding agency. Best management practices will need to be incorporated into all ground disturbing fuel reduction work.*

See attached.

5. Briefly describe the services or funding your neighborhood can provide. Services may include: time spent organizing your neighbors for a work-day, follow-up weed control, tools or supplies needed for the project. If you are providing matching funds, indicate amount.

See attached.

6. Briefly describe how your project will help protect your neighborhood from wildfire.

See attached.

I certify this information to be true and correct and that the information provided is subject to verification. If my group is selected, we agree to work with Diablo Fire Safe Council to further define the scope of the project. We understand that we will be responsible for hiring a contractor for the work.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

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