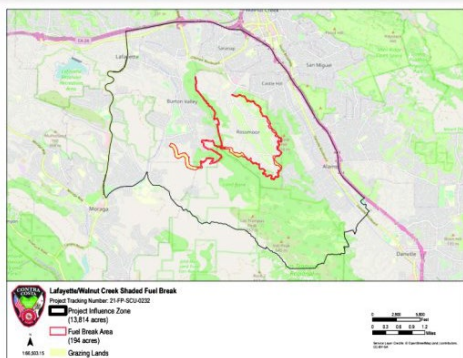


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Con Fire receives \$3M Lafayette/Walnut Creek Shaded Fuel Break Grant from Cal Fire

By Jennifer Wake



Contra Costa County Fire Protection District on June 3 announced receipt of a \$3 million California Climate Investments Wildfire Prevention Grant from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. The grant is for creation of a shaded fuel break across southern Lafayette and Walnut Creek, that will, when completed in 2024, afford significant protection from wildfires for residents in the communities of Rossmoor and southern Lafayette.

The project area will encompass 194 acres along some 11 miles of open space in the East Bay, and work is expected to start in approximately 120 days. The grant directly supports Con Fire's efforts to quickly suppress fires in densely-populated wildland-urban interface and hard-to-access grassland areas before they are able to threaten homes, businesses and other property.

"We're pleased to announce receipt of this grant, which will contribute immensely to our ability to protect communities we serve," said Con Fire Chief Lewis Broschard. "The construction of this fire break across southern Contra Costa County will allow us to immediately reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires in Rossmoor and Lafayette communities such as we have seen around the state in recent years."

The LWCSFB will significantly reduce the threat by reducing fuels - understory vegetation, dead and dying trees, and highly combustible brush - critical to the spread of a wildfire. The tree canopy formed by healthy mature trees will remain largely intact to reduce the future growth of brush and understory vegetation to include invasive non-native plant species. The desired result is to restore fuel loading to more natural levels that can be maintained by the periodic introduction of prescribed fires. According to Con Fire, this fuel break will provide essential opportunities for firefighting success by providing areas of lower fire intensity and enhanced fire lines.

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