

Yosemite West Property &
Homeowners, Inc.
www.YosemiteWest.org

In the West

Newsletter
November 2008

In This Issue

- » President's Fall Message p.1-2
- » Holiday Open House p.1
- » *In the West* Publication p.3
- » YWPHI Meetings & Minutes p.3
- » Welcome New Members p.3
- » Online Mailbox Survey p.3
- » Newly Elected Board of Directors p.3
- » Membership Dues Increase p.3
- » Meet the Jackmans p.4
- » A Fed Bear is a Dead Bear Revisited p.5-6
- » 2008 Red Zone Survey Results p.6-7
- » Successful Completion of Two NPS-funded Fire Safety Grants p.7-8
- » Shaded Fuel Break map p.9
- » YWPHI Awarded New \$75k Fire Safety Grant p.10
- » Yosemite West Maintenance District Advisory Committee Update p.10-11
- » Yosemite West Planning Advisory Committee Vacancies p.12

President's Fall Message

by Tom Lambert, YWPHI President (2008-2009)

Still Standing

We survived another fire season! There were a few days this year when it looked like we might not, but in the end we lost nothing but our frozen food. Still, it was another reminder that fire safety has to remain at the top of our list as a community. At its most violent, this summer's flame front [the Telegraph Fire] was advancing at up to 30 miles per hour. Clearly, once a fast-moving fire is headed our way, it's too late to do anything. Advanced preparation is the only real defense. We have made great progress, but we're still a long way from having community-wide defensible space. Not one house in the neighborhood is fully compliant with the 100-foot defensible space law and Fire Safe standards. Perhaps more troubling, **one out of every five houses may not qualify to get firefighting resources allocated to them** (see p.6-7).

(President's Fall Message continues on p.2.)



Holiday Open House Saturday, December 27th 3:00 - 7:30 pm

Yosemite West Property & Homeowners, Inc. is happy to sponsor the 5th annual YOSEMITE WEST HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE. All community members and their guests are invited to attend any or all of the parties. Meet and greet old and new neighbors and enjoy tasty treats and libations at this festive annual event. The party will progress through the community visiting these three homes:

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| 3:00 - 4:30 p.m. | Appetizers at Don & Kay Pitts' home, 7509 Henness Circle |
| 4:30 - 6:00 p.m. | Main Course at Kirk Robinson & Dianne Sachau's home, 7244 Yosemite Park Way |
| 6:00 - 7:30 p.m. | Desserts at Jeff & Melissa Hornacek's home, 7509 Yosemite Park Way |

To avoid parking problems, carpool with a neighbor or walk.

No need to R.S.V.P., but call our party organizer Kay Pitts (☎ 209-372-4775) with any questions.

If we want to enjoy our community in the woods in years to come, we need to thin a lot of that wood. As you know already, we are the first Mariposa County community to complete a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). Many residents may not fully appreciate the importance of this. Yes, it's just a document and by itself doesn't make us any safer, but it's a blueprint for future projects and it makes it possible for us to obtain grant money for those projects, which leads to the second big announcement — YWPHI has been awarded another large grant (\$75,000), this time for fuel reduction within the neighborhood (see p.10). Once again, this grant was reeled in through the efforts of John Mock, chair of the YWPHI Fire Safety Committee and Kim O'Neil, our treasurer, webmaster and indefatigable laborer. We all owe them both a debt of gratitude for their many hours of work on these projects, but after last summer's scare I hope everyone will make a New Year's resolution to do some serious thinning on their properties (I am).

Neighborhood Fun

Another fire season survived is in and of itself cause for celebration. Furthermore, that dark and snowy part of the year is nearly at hand so everyone should plan a little social activity to cast some light into the darkness. To help everyone in their annual battle with Seasonal Affective Disorder, YWPHI is sponsoring a holiday open house (see p.1). I think it's the nicest neighborhood gathering all year. Unlike the other events, there are no pine needles to pick up or annual minutes to vote on. This is a purely social event and cheery and relaxing. If you haven't been to one of these parties, you should make every effort to attend (though I will miss it this year as it turns out). Everyone is welcome and it's generally a great way to meet your neighbors, catch up with people you haven't seen in a long time or get to know people better. Be there!

State of the Association

With luck, the party will have a few more faces than it did last year. Reversing the recent trend, we picked up a few new members and some lapsed members have decided to join YWPHI again. Thanks to all members whether new, renewing or returning. In the last few newsletters, the Board of Directors has tried to make a greater effort to let everyone know what it is that YWPHI, that is to say *you*, does and how your dues and labor help get it done. I think YWPHI members have done a great job over the past few years in sponsoring and volunteering labor on large and small projects affecting basic community safety and quality of life. We have, however, perhaps not done such a good job until recently of telling people what we're doing and where their money goes. Many people didn't realize that our letter carriers were threatening to stop delivery to the neighborhood if the rural mailboxes weren't shored up, and they certainly didn't realize that there is no entity charged with maintaining those boxes. That's the sort of gap we try to fill.

With new homes being built, we're going to need to revisit the mailbox question yet again. We are conducting a survey to find out whether or not members think that this project is something that YWPHI should concern itself with. To do so would involve a significant outlay of our funds that would likely only be paid back over time. We are beginning with a **simple online needs assessment survey**, and depending on interest, we'll look into the project further. Please take a minute to participate (see p.3).

Finally, let me thank Kay Pitts for her service as president. Kay is finally getting a sabbatical from almost a decade on the Board. And also let me welcome and thank Rea Jackman for stepping up to serve and for agreeing to write a **Meet Your Neighbor** column (see p.4).

***In the West* Publication**

Thanks to these contributors to this edition of *In the West*: Moose Mutlow, Kay Pitts, John Mock, and YWPHI Board of Directors members Tom Lambert, Rea Jackman, and Kim O'Neil. Archived issues of the newsletter are available to download as a PDF at www.yosemitewest.org/archive.htm.

YWPHI Meetings & Minutes

Minutes from previous YWPHI Board of Directors' meetings are archived at www.yosemitewest.org/board.htm. Minutes from the August 1, 2008 meeting are now online.

The remaining 2008-2009 Board meetings are scheduled as follows:

- Wednesday, March 4th, 2009 at 7 p.m.
- Wednesday, July 8th, 2009 at 7 p.m.

Welcome New Members

We would like to welcome five new YWPHI members: Jack Borok; James & Lisa Prazak; William & Barbara Dahl; Hanford Community Hospital; and Bill & Ruth Duff.

We are especially pleased to welcome nine returning members: Neal and Carol Misener, Eric & Jessie Rotsten, Lawrence Crane, Peter & Judith Lang, Vito & Sharon Violante, Craig & Diane Mohar, Fred Ziffer, Brendan & Christen White, and Frank & Beverly Hutchinson.

Our membership growth is strong and we thank you all for supporting YWPHI. This is your homeowners association, so please let us know if there is something you'd like to see us working on.

Online Mailbox Survey

YWPHI is conducting a brief survey to ask its membership their opinions about the possibility of expanding the existing mailboxes. Please visit <http://www.yosemitewest.org> and click on the link to the **Yosemite West Mailbox Needs Assessment Online Survey**, which is in the *In the News* box in the upper right-hand corner. Completing the survey takes two minutes.

About YWPHI

YWPHI was established to promote and protect the best interests of the owners of land used for residential purposes in Yosemite West. YWPHI shall strive for the improvement and betterment of all facilities and services within the area, and shall promote and encourage maximum community and civic spirit, and foster good will and friendship among all residents of Yosemite West.

Newly Elected YWPHI Board of Directors (2008-2009)

The new YWPHI Board of Directors was elected at the meeting on November 9, 2008. The new board includes officers Tom Lambert (President), Kelly Rich (Vice President & Secretary), and Kim O'Neil (Treasurer). Returning board members are Jim Andrews, Todd "Kipper" Caranto, and Jeff Hornacek. We'd like to welcome Rea Jackman (see p.4) as a newly elected YWPHI Board member and soon-to-be full-time Yosemite West resident.

Tom Lambert will continue as newsletter editor, as will Kim O'Neil as webmaster, John Mock as Chair of the Fire Safety Committee, and Kay Pitts as head of the Hospitality committee.

Membership Dues Increase

Members voted at the YWPHI annual meeting on August 31, 2008 to approve an increase in the YWPHI membership dues from \$25 to \$35. This is the first dues increase in many years and will take effect starting for the 2009-2010 membership year (9/1/2009-8/31/2010).

We'd like to thank all of our renewing members. However, about 10% of our membership has yet to renew this year. We'd appreciate your ongoing support. Please read about our latest grant (p.10) if you have any concerns about the benefits of YWPHI membership. YWPHI is working hard for you.

Meet the Jackmans

by Rea Jackman

Jerry and I will be married forty-seven years this month. Thirty of those years we spent our vacations hiking in the Tuolumne Meadows high country in Yosemite.

As we have traveled the world over there is no other place that has touched our hearts and dug as deep into our souls as Yosemite. Among my most memorable visits was a day I spent in Tuolumne Meadows with the late Dr. Carl Sharsmith, a renowned park naturalist and ranger, while Jerry was backpacking from Devils Postpile to Tuolumne.

Twenty years ago we purchased our lot on Yosemite Park Way with the intent of retiring there someday – for it to have become a reality is a miracle. The last two years have been spent building “The Jackmans’ Treehouse.” We will be forever grateful to our Yosemite West neighbors the Chapins, whose generosity and kindness made the process of building much easier.



We have two children and six grandchildren and they all love the mountains. Our oldest granddaughter Nicole is twenty-six and has cerebral palsy. We made our cabin accessible for her, so she too can experience the beauty of Yosemite.

Both of us are retired now. Jerry worked as a mechanical engineer designing heart valves for Baxter/Edwards Lifescience and I worked in corporate America. Besides our passion for Yosemite, Jerry enjoys woodworking and stained glass projects. He also loves to bike. I enjoy painting, playing the piano, and gardening.



I look forward to serving on the YWPHI Board of Directors. We are both looking forward to making new friends in Yosemite West and gaining more knowledge about the surrounding area.

A Fed Bear is A Dead Bear Revisited

by Moose Mutlow

Plenty of bear activity in the West this fall – at least eight individuals (adults, sows with cubs and yearlings) have been observed in and around the neighborhood. Local apple trees appeared to have low production this year – possible because it has been so dry and the bears are definitely looking to find calories to help get up to their denning weights. Out in the trees, the ground is peppered with areas turned over as they search for food in the last days of fall.

Bears have increasingly been seen in and around houses, occasionally getting rewarded by poorly stored trash and food left by contractors at building sites. Two bears (one 200-pound black phase and a slightly larger cinnamon colored bear) in particular are increasingly testing the boundaries of acceptable behavior. They are foraging with little fear of humans, spending time investigating around houses and outbuildings, as well as vehicles. This is a sign that these bears need to be redirected and discouraged from getting into trouble.

In the case of bears breaking into property, California Fish and Game Department does not have a relocation policy for the bears it captures. Even if relocation were an option, there are a number of challenges including displacement of existing populations, liability of introducing a “trouble” bear into an area and the fact that in many cases bears will travel enormous distances to return to their home ranges. Given their intelligence and strength, once bears have begun to associate a developed area with food they become extremely hard to redirect and, as a result, euthanasia remains typically the only option – this happened in the West in the last five years.

Bear behavior changes once they tap into alternative food sources – some remain active throughout the winter with no periods of dormancy. They learn to break into cars at

night and will actively cruise areas when they know garbage might be left unattended on a porch. Often sows with cubs in tow will look for easy feeding opportunities at this critical time of the year. These early interactions around people and development reduce the bears’ natural fear of people, making it more likely for confrontations to occur. Living in an area with so much wildlife right in our backyards is an incredible privilege that comes with great responsibility.



The local coyote group had a successful year. The resident pair pupped in a culvert next to my house and at least two of the pups made it through to their first winter. Coyotes are excellent opportunistic predators and scavengers. Our resident coyotes are extremely conditioned to humans – they step off to the side of the road when a car goes by and barely alter their course when they meet walkers or runners.

Conditioned animals are still as unpredictable as any wild animal. Once they become dependent on handouts they can quickly lose their condition and their continued survival is compromised.

In order to preserve these bears’ and coyotes’ continued healthy existence a few proactive measures will help conserve and protect them.

✓ Keep food sources away. Close dumpsters, keep pet food indoors and empty tasty and scented items out of vehicles at night. If you

have bird feeders place them well away from the ground and in an area where they cannot be reached. If you have a fruit tree in the yard, harvest the fruit before it hits the ground. This will remove potential foraging areas in proximity to your house. Instruct any contractors working for you to pack out all their food trash daily.

✓ Keep at least 50 feet away from wildlife. (The bear pictured on p.5 is too close to this Yosemite Park Way deck.) Getting close breaks down the natural boundary that bears enjoy. They are meant to be treated with respect; you do not see deer getting close to bears for a very good reason. Bears are extremely fast, very strong and they are predators. Even making noises from your deck to get them to look at you for a good photo opportunity does not convey to the bear that they should move on.

✓ Police the area. If you see potential problems try to get involved. The majority of people simply do not know what to do. Tell others about the bears euthanized in previous years and ask for their help in making sure it does not have to happen again.

✓ If you have a bear interaction, remember you as a human are in this case the dominant animal. Be assertive, do *not* run away. I have been using a cow bell at my house with good results – the jarring clang seems to really startle the bears effectively. Throw rocks, shout and once the animal turns, pursue it at a safe distance to make sure it understands you are the boss. Typically, aggressive bear behavior is either a bluff or the result of an animal feeling threatened. Sows will charge if they feel their cubs are in danger. Make sure that the animals have a genuine escape route before hazing them.

Read more about “Living with Bears” at <http://www.yosemitewest.org/bears.htm>.

Do your part to **KEEP BEARS WILD !**

2008 Red Zone Survey Results

by John Mock, YWPHI Fire Safety Committee

Mariposa County Fire Department (MCFD) conducted the first RED ZONE FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT of Yosemite West in 2004 (please refer to Section 5.0 on the CD of the Yosemite West Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) that was mailed to all Yosemite West property owners of record in August 2008 and is always available at <http://www.yosemitewest.org/ywcwpp.pdf>). A second Red Zone Survey was conducted in August 2008 with funding provided by a National Fire Plan grant awarded to YWPHI from the National Park Service through the California Fire Safe Council (see www.yosemitewest.org/grants.htm for further information on this grant).

MCFD compiled this year’s survey results and generated a 2008 RED ZONE SURVEY report for each house in Yosemite West, which was mailed to homeowners on November 15. (Property reports for some Henness Circle area and Henness Ridge Road homeowners and for those who constructed houses after 2004 have not yet been mailed, but will be sent shortly.)

The survey data yields a numerical Hazard Value ranging between 1 (the lowest risk) to 150 (the highest). These numerical values correspond to color-coded zones illustrating the risk: Green Zone (least risk), Yellow Zone (some risk), Orange Zone (high risk), and Red Zone (extreme risk).

Red Zone Fire Risk Assessment of Yosemite West					
Hazard Zone	Hazard Value	2004 Survey	2008 Survey	Change	Goal
		% of Structures			
Green	0 - 34	0%	0%	0%	0%
Yellow	35 - 69	24%	23%	(1%)	100%
Orange	70 - 104	64%	57%	(7%)	0%
Red	105 +	12%	20%	8%	0%

The 2008 Red Zone Survey for Yosemite West (refer to table on p.6) shows only 23% of structures are in the target zone (Yellow Zone) and that 77% of structures are in high-risk zones (Red Zone and Orange Zone). Structures in the high-risk zones require immediate action by homeowners. **No property in Yosemite West is in the Green Zone.** Here are some key points from the survey.

→ The highest (most risk) Hazard Value is 139, with five houses higher than 120, and more than 20 houses in the Red Zone.

→ The lowest (least risk) Hazard Value is 50, with fewer than 10 houses rated in the 50s, and only 25 houses in the Yellow Zone.

→ The median Hazard Value is 79.

→ 63% of houses have less than 50 feet of defensible space and **no houses are in full compliance with PRC§4291**, the state law that requires 100 feet of defensible space (http://www.fire.ca.gov/communications/communications_firesafety_100feet.php) from all structures.

→ 76% of houses have vegetation near the roof (i.e., branches within 5 feet, overhanging branches, and/or debris on the roof itself) that needs to be removed.

→ 63% of houses do not have street address signage or have only non-reflective signage, which needs to be replaced with reflective signage *visible at street level*.

The Mitigation Notes towards the end of the reports are an educational tool designed to be a to-do list to improve your RED ZONE HAZARD VALUE. No matter what zone your property is in, everyone can improve.

MCFD's ideal goal is to have every Red Zone and Orange Zone property improve to the Yellow Zone. **Mariposa County Fire**

Department generally will not commit firefighters and equipment to any structure classified in the Red Zone, hence, it is in everyone's interest to have zero properties in the Red Zone.

YWPHI and the MCFD are planning to repeat the survey in summer 2009, so please contribute your effort to lower your Hazard Value. Thank you for supporting our efforts to create communitywide defensible space and make Yosemite West a Fire Safe community.

Successful Completion of Two NPS-Funded Fire Safety Grants

by John Mock, YWPHI Fire Safety Committee

This fall marks the successful completion of the two grants, totaling more than \$56,000, awarded to YWPHI in 2006 with funding provided by a National Fire Plan grant from the National Park Service through the California Fire Safe Council.

One grant provided funding to complete the Yosemite West Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) and establish a Fire Safe Program. We reported on the approval of the CWPP in the July issue of *In the West* and in the July 18, 2008 issue of the *Mariposa Gazette*, and in late August YWPHI mailed a CD with the Yosemite West CWPP to every property owner of record in Yosemite West.

The other grant provided funding to create a shaded fuel break on the north and west perimeter of Yosemite West. This process consisted of removing ladder fuels and thinning the forest using a lop-and-scatter technique with the hopes that any crown fire moving uphill towards the community would drop to the forest floor where firefighters could combat the fire and hopefully save lives and property.

A map (see p.9) of the shaded fuel break shows its approximate location and dimensions. We encourage all property owners to take a look at the shaded fuel break, and, if possible, walk the entire length of it.

Our Sincere Appreciation

We have many people to thank who contributed valuable time and resources to these fire safety projects during the almost five years from the time they were conceptualized in December 2003 through planning, funding and completion in November 2008.

Please take a moment to read the names of the dozens of people from federal, state and county agencies, the private sector and volunteers who have worked on behalf of Yosemite West and its future.

Thank you to the National Park Service:

Mike Tollefson, Superintendent; Kelly Martin, Chief of Fire and Aviation Management; her predecessor, Tom Nichols; Deron Mills, Deputy FMO; Mike Beasley, Fire Use Manager; Jun Kinoshita, archeologist; Christie Neill, Deputy FMO; Don Coffman; Gary Wuchner, Fire Education and Information Manager; Deb Schweizer, Fire Information Specialist; Jeff Panetta.

NPS consultants Dan O'Brien and Carl Douhan from Wildland Fire Associates, and Esther Mandeno from Digital Mapping Solutions.

From CalFire: Fire Chief Mikel Martin; Kevin Smith, Mariposa Battalion Chief; Roger Simma, Battalion Chief; Ryan Williams, Pre-Fire Engineer; Karen Guillemín, Fire Prevention Specialist; and Fire Prevention Captains Paul Alvarez and Brian Cacho.

From the U.S. Forest Service: the retired Smiley Tierney; Dan Tune; and John Brinley, Fire Prevention Technician.

From the California Fire Safe Council: Dan Lang, Sierra Region Grants Manager; and his predecessor, Brenda Rightmyer.

From the Mariposa County Fire Safe Council: Jan Hamilton, Kimberly Bullock, and Sean Rankin and his Terra Firma crew.

From Mariposa County: Fire Chief Jim Wilson; his predecessor Blaine Schultz; Deputy Fire Chief Jim Middleton, and Sheriff Brian Muller.

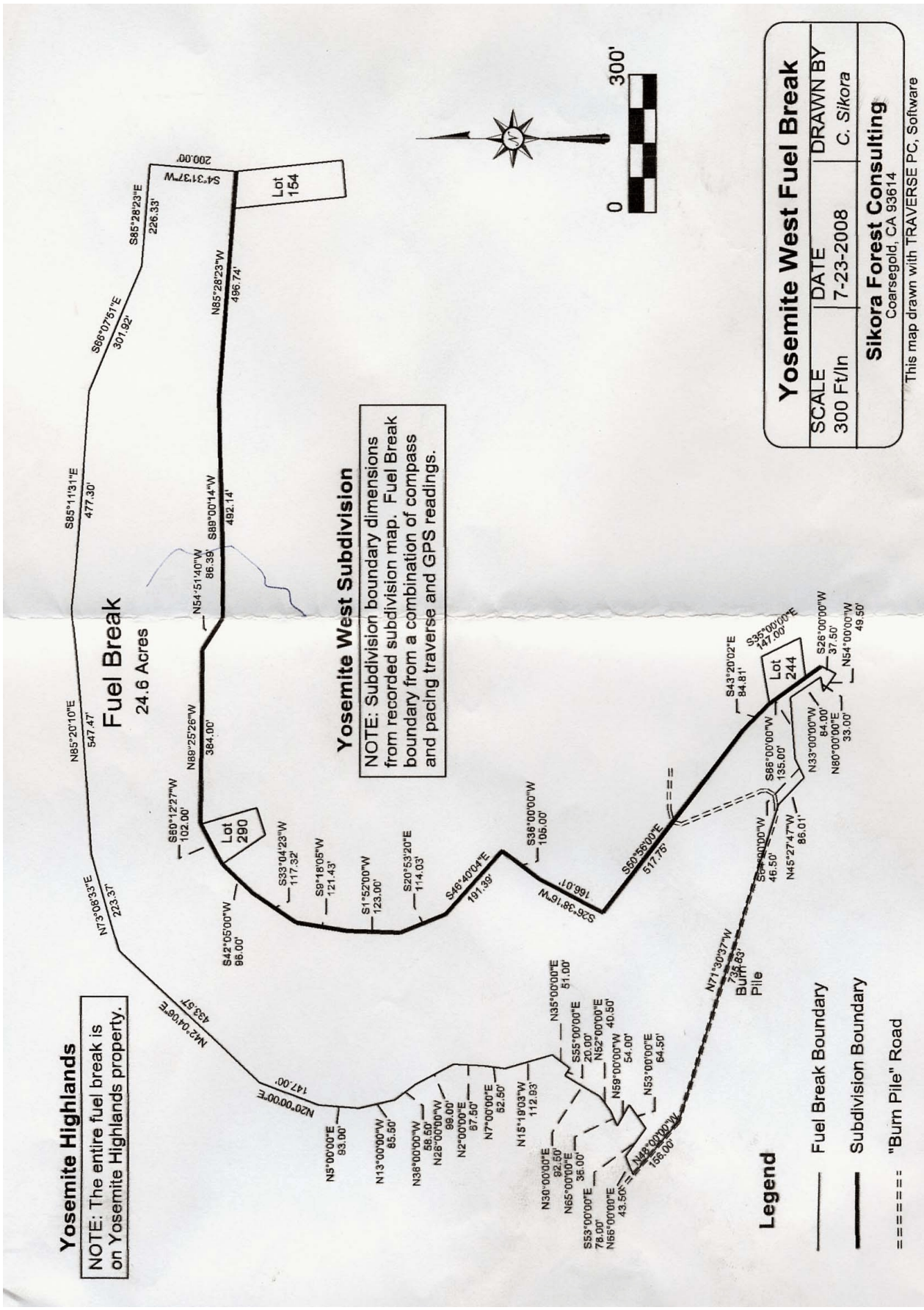
From the University of California at Berkeley's Center for Fire Research: Max Moritz, Director; Faith Kearns, Ph.D., Casey Cleve; Stephanie Waite; and their team of field researchers.

From the Yosemite/Sequoia Resource Conservation and Development Council, YWPHI's fiscal sponsor without whom this process would not have been possible: Bob Pickard, President; Robyn Smith, Director; Nancy Buck, bookkeeper; and Peter Thai, volunteer.

And thanks to Chuck Sikora of Sikora Forest Consulting. Lastly, thanks goes to *you*, the property owners who each year rake pine needles, haul debris to the burn pile, reduce ladder fuels, participate in the chipping program, attend the community educational presentations, and help your neighbors. We apologize if we have omitted anyone's name from this list – it was clearly a dedicated team effort.

Visit <http://www.yosemitewest.org/grants.htm> for a summary of these projects. Please email firesafety@yosemitewest.org with any questions you may have.

“You can have a lot of codes and laws and ordinances,” said Jim Smalley, a program manager for Firewise Communities (<http://firewise.org>), an organization that seeks to reduce wildfire risks and damage. “But the problem is that compliance with those codes is voluntary. **It's a social-contract issue, both in understanding where you live and what the hazards are and what you can do about it.**”



Yosemite Highlands
 NOTE: The entire fuel break is on Yosemite Highlands property.

Fuel Break
 24.6 Acres

Yosemite West Subdivision
 NOTE: Subdivision boundary dimensions from recorded subdivision map. Fuel Break boundary from a combination of compass and pacing traverse and GPS readings.

Yosemite West Fuel Break	
SCALE	DATE
300 Ft/In	7-23-2008
DRAWN BY	
C. Sikora	
Sikora Forest Consulting	
Coarsegold, CA 93614	

This map drawn with TRAVERSE PC, Software

- Legend**
- Fuel Break Boundary
 - Subdivision Boundary
 - ===== "Burn Pile" Road

YWPHI Awarded New \$75,000 Fire Safety Grant

On November 6, 2008, we received word that YWPHI has been awarded a new \$75,655 grant for fire safety. Funding is from the U.S. Forest Service through the California Fire Safe Council. This is the third fire safety grant YWPHI has been awarded in the past three years.

The grant is to improve defensible space within the community by helping fund fuel reduction on parcels within Yosemite West. This is different from our previous grant, which funded a shaded fuel break on land outside of and around the perimeter of Yosemite West.

The primary goal is to reduce the amount of flammable fuels on vacant lots and create defensible space around all structures so that spot fires are less likely to occur, and when they do occur, fire fighters have a greater probability of suppressing them. Property owners will treat hazard fuels around their structures, their parking areas and driveways and on their vacant lots and along roads to create as much defensible space as possible. This will reduce the amount of fuels that could easily ignite and spread a wildland fire and improve access for firefighters. The work will be done using the standards outlined in PRC§4291 and in publications by the Fire Safe Council or Firewise Communities.

Please refer to the Yosemite West Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) for additional information about this project. The project (#1) is summarized in Appendix H - Projects Summary. Appendix H also contains a Phase I Projects/Parcel Map that shows the area (YW-006) included in this project.

The grant agreement is not yet signed, but should be soon. Once this administrative process is complete, we will start the planning phase. We will schedule planning meetings with property owners during the winter and early spring 2009 to

enlist voluntary participation and explain the details of this project. We expect work will take place between May and July 2009.

The project's measurable objectives include:

- the number of parcels that participate translated into total acreage treated; and
- improvement in the Hazard Values of structures from the 2008 Red Zone Survey results, which were mailed to homeowners on November 15, 2008 (see p.6-7).

Upon hearing the news, Mariposa County Fire Chief Jim Wilson said, **“Congratulations on the successful grant. Thanks to YWPHI, Yosemite West is becoming a model community in Mariposa County.”**

Feel free to email any preliminary questions you may have to firesafety@yosemitewest.org.

Yosemite West Maintenance District Advisory Committee (YWMDAC) Update

The YWMDAC held its first meeting in three years on Friday, October 31, 2008. Dana Hertfelder, Director of the Mariposa County Public Works Department, chaired the meeting, which was held at Don Pitts' house. Carl Casey, Public Works Administrator, and all members of the committee attended.

The YWMDAC approved the minutes of the last meeting, which was on October 21, 2005.

Maintenance District Report Summary

Dana Hertfelder presented the maintenance report; the key points follow:

- The county will install a generator to maintain water pressure in the Henness Circle area in the event of an extended power failure.
- The county will rent a large generator to power the pump that brings water from the

well to the community water tanks in the event of an extended power outage.

- A second water conditioner will be installed to better address acidity in the community water supply.
- The community water tanks will be cleaned and a regular maintenance schedule followed to keep the tanks clean.
- The county will prepare a repair cost estimate detailing the percentage of badly damaged roads in Yosemite West to determine which require repaving, and which require patching.

Financial Report Summary

Carl Casey presented the financial report; the key points follow:

- Revenue for the Yosemite West Maintenance District comes from a fixed Proposition 13 percentage (0.6%) of countywide property tax, and from usage fees on property owners for road, sewer and water.
- The district typically shows a loss on sewer and water, which is offset by a “profit” on roads due to deferred maintenance.
- The county will develop proposals to make water and sewer self-sustainable, so that road maintenance can be accomplished.
- The county will investigate if the road fee can be adjusted without a ballot.
- The county has replaced the old water meter reader with a new wireless meter reader.

Sewer Funding Project Update

Dana Hertfelder and Carl Casey presented the proposed resolution regarding excess construction funds from the Yosemite West Wastewater Treatment Facility project (for

background information please see the article on p.6-7 of the November 2006 issue of the community newsletter *In the West* at <http://www.yosemitewest.org/archive.htm>) and/or the article “Sewer Project Funding Conflict” posted on November 14, 2006 at <http://www.yosemitewest.org/news.htm>).

Dana and Carl discussed the two letters from the San Francisco law firm of Jones Hall, which served as Bond Counsel for the wastewater project. Dana Hertfelder had requested Jones Hall to describe the county’s options regarding the unused amounts remaining in Improvement Fund (County Fund 545) for the wastewater treatment facility, and to evaluate the county’s proposed course of action regarding the unused funds. Based on the opinion of Jones Hall, the county proposed a resolution regarding the remaining funds.

This resolution proved controversial, and the YWMDAC voted unanimously *not* to accept the resolution. The county agreed to provide detailed accounting for the entire wastewater project (County Fund 545), and to meet with County Counsel to discuss the legal issues of the proposed resolution. The two letters from the law firm of Jones Hall both dated August 28, 2008 are posted online at <http://www.yosemitewest.org/ywmdac.htm#wwtf>.

Roles & Responsibilities

As a reminder, YWPHI reports about activities of the YWMDAC as a service to the community and is *not* involved with the committee’s activities. YWMDAC is a liaison between Yosemite West property owners and the Public Works Department, which is responsible for daily operation of the maintenance district. YWMDAC’s recommendations are not binding; Mariposa County Public Works Department reviews any recommendations and proceeds with those they feel have merit. Any major activities or policy issues generally go before the Mariposa County Board of Supervisors for approval. Mariposa County posts official minutes of YWMDAC minutes after they are approved.

Homeowner Tip: Keep an old-fashioned landline telephone on each floor of your house in the event of an extended power outage. During the summer 2008 Telegraph Fire, Yosemite West lost power for almost two weeks, and a landline became the primary communications method to get news from the outside.

Yosemite West Planning Advisory Committee (YWPAC) Vacancy

The Yosemite West Planning Advisory Committee (YWPAC) has two vacancies. Anyone interested in serving on the committee should contact District 1 Supervisor Brad Aborn (☎ 800-736-1252, 209-966-3222, baborn@mariposacounty.org).

YWPAC Board of Directors (2008-2009)

Tom Lambert, President; Kelly Rich, Vice President & Secretary; Kim O'Neil, Treasurer; and Members Jim Andrews, Todd "Kipper" Caranto, Jeff Hornacek and Rea Jackman.

YWPAC Committees (2008-2009)

Tom Lambert, Newsletter Editor; Kim O'Neil, Webmaster; John Mock, Fire Safety; and Kay Pitts & Rea Jackman, Hospitality.

☐

Yosemite West Property & Homeowners, Inc.
7585 Henness Ridge Road
Yosemite National Park, CA 95389-9108

Address Correction Requested

