



MEMORANDUM REPORT

DATE: January 10, 2024

TO: Board of Commissioners of the Los Altos Hills County Fire District

FROM: Magdalena-Summerhill Evacuation Route Project Team,
 Ryan Cronin – Technical Analyst & Project Manager
 Paige Russell – Operations Project Manager
 Andrew Harmon, Field Manager
 Eugenia Woods, Programs, Planning and Grants Manager

SUBJECT: Magdalena-Summerhill Evacuation Route Project Final Reports

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive Magdalena-Summerhill Evacuation Route Project Final Report

BACKGROUND

The Los Altos Hills County Fire District (District or LAHCFD) 2023-2027 Strategic Plan Goals & Strategies (Attachment 1), Strategic Goal 1 Prevention, Protection, Resiliency, aims to fund, develop and maintain programs to protect life, property and enhance safety to build a resilient community. Evacuation Route Hardening is an initiative of this goal. Integrated Hazardous Fuel Reduction (IHFR) programs identified in the LAHCFD Chart of Services (Attachment 2) include the Community-Focused Evacuation Route Hardening projects. These IHFR programs are based on fire science, the LAHCFD Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) Annex 4, and the expenditures allocated in the annual District budget. IHFR projects are designed to enhance community resiliency, educate District residents, and reduce community fire hazards. In accordance with Goal 1, staff identified high fire risk areas and initiated collaborative solutions with regional partners including the Santa Clara County FireSafe Council and the Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District (County Fire or Fire Department). The projects targeted roadside hazardous vegetation reduction on major transportation corridors such as Page Mill Road - Phase I and Phase II in 2020/2021, Moody/El Monte Roads in 2021, Altamont Road in spring 2022, Arastradero Road in fall of 2022, maintenance on Page Mill Road in 2023, and Magdalena-Summerhill Evacuation Route Projects in the fall of 2023. The fundamental goal of these evacuation routes and road hardening projects is to provide greater protection for life safety and to reduce property losses in the event of wildfire by providing safer egress and ingress for evacuees and emergency responders.

Santa Clara County FireSafe Council (SCCFSC) was the project manager for the Page Mill Road, Phase I and Phase II, Moody/El Monte Roads, Altamont Road, Arastradero Road, Page Mill Road maintenance and Magdalena-Summerhill Evacuation Route Projects in the fall of 2023 that were designed to remove hazardous vegetation from the roadside and thereby create multiple evacuation routes for egress and ingress in event of a wildfire or emergency incident. These LAHCFD evacuation route projects were successfully completed, resulting in greater public safety and alignment with LAHCFD's and Santa Clara County's evacuation initiatives.

The Magdalena-Summerhill Evacuation Route Project was initially selected because these roads provide a means of egress/ingress for a portion of western Los Altos Hills Community to reach I280 or Foothill Expressway in the case of a major evacuation.

The length of the project is within the District boundaries and will receive hazardous fuel reduction treatment. The treated areas are visually pleasing, with significantly improved visibility for roadside travelers including vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians.

Information about this project, and other District projects can be found on the website at <https://www.lahcfd.org/community-projects/>.

DISCUSSION

The Santa Clara County FireSafe Council Final Report for the Magdalena-Summerhill Evacuation Route project is Attachment 3. The District provides this Report and summary of costs for the project. The Magdalena-Summerhill Evacuation Route Project was successful in attaining the goal of reducing hazardous fuel to provide for a safer evacuation route.

The Magdalena-Summerhill Evacuation Route Project was limited in the depth of treatment by the nature of the residential community. Fences and ornamental horticultural were located near the roadways. Residents expressed concern that treatment within the easement area would be disruptive to their landscaping and privacy. District staff made a concerted effort to reach out to residents to address their concerns. Individual meetings were scheduled, properties were inspected, and treatment plans were agreed upon as concerns were addressed.

The volume of wildfire fuel that was removed was modest yet effective in improving life safety. Proudly, there were no injuries or traffic related incidents on this project.

A focused effort was afforded to improve visibility at roadway and driveway intersections as well as blind corners. The Town of Los Altos Hills municipal code Title 10, Chapter 1, Article 5, Section 1.507(f)(12) declares, "all shrubs and plants shall be pruned to a height not to exceed three (3) feet above the road level at its nearest point in an area bounded by the center line of intersecting roads or easements for vehicular access, public or private and a straight line joining points on such center lines eighty (80) feet distant from their intersection (see figure). All side limbs of trees in such area shall be pruned to a height of not less than six (6) feet above the road surface. The purpose of the provisions of this section is to provide an unobstructed view of approaching traffic on the intersecting roads." With this guidance overgrown vegetation in the described locations was addressed.

QUANTITATIVE RESULTS and EXPENSES

Magdalena / Summerhill							
Total Weeks Worked	Total Days Worked	Treatment Dates	Totals for the Treated Area Per Day			Acreage Information Totals	
			Linear Milage Treated	Linear Footage Treated	Average Depth Treated	Total Square Footage Treated	Total Acreage Treated
1	1	Monday, October 23, 2023	0.97	5119.08	15.00	76786.20	1.76
	2	Tuesday, October 24, 2023	1.37	7254.78	15.00	108821.70	2.50
	3	Wednesday, October 25, 2023	0.97	5119.24	20.00	102384.80	2.35
			3.31	17493.10	<-- Weekly Totals -->	287992.70	6.61

Total Linear Miles Treated	Total Linear Footage	Total Square Footage	Total Square Acreage
3.31	17493.10	287992.70	6.61
Average Linear Miles Treated Per Day	Average Linear Footage Treated Per Day	Average Square Footage Treated Per Day	Average Square Acreage Treated Per Day
0.17	5831.03	71998.18	2.20

Production volume and distance of treatment give insight to the work being performed.

Magdalena-Summerhill Expense Report

Contractor Costs (Per FSC Bills)	Contractor Invoices	12% Uplift	Total
BATS Traffic Control Plans	500.00	60.00	560.00
Dudek	2,471.56	296.59	2,768.15
Huertas	26,700.00	3,204.00	29,904.00
Traffic Mgmt.	12,381.08	1,485.73	13,866.81
			47,098.96

FSC Project Management (Payroll)	Total
For Services Provided Aug.	2,769.45
For Services Provided Sept.	3,143.70
For Services Provided Oct.	17,477.48
	23,390.63

FSC Other Costs (Mileage/Supplies)	25% Uplift	Total
Project Supplies	114.03	142.54
Personnel Mileage	540.37	675.46
		818.00

Other Vendor Costs	Total
Jackson Ricketts August Flyover	1,450.00
Folger Graphics Postcards	146.34
Folger Graphics ROE	738.95
Zoom Media Design Services - Postcards & ROE	1,025.00
Jackson Ricketts October Services for Magdalena	4,900.00
Eugenia Rendler Recorder fee and supplies reimbursement	184.37
	8,444.66

Total all Expenditures 79,752.25

Costs directly associated with the Magdalena-Summerhill Evacuation Route Project.

Successes

- With assistance of County Counsel, the project team completed CEQA compliance by filing a Notice of Exemption (NOE) through the Office of the Santa Clara County Clerk. By filing the NOE, LAHCFD utilized a process that notified the public of the proposed mitigation work, provided the public the opportunity to voice concerns, and if concerns were expressed, allowed for time to address, and remedy the concerns prior to commencing the project. No concerns were received, and the project commenced as planned.
- Recognition that the insurance industry is now incentivizing the high value of hazardous vegetation management programs to reduce the threat of wildfire and property losses. LAHCFD efforts strongly support the Office of the Insurance Commissioner's Initiative for the insurance industry to recognize wildfire mitigation efforts as a benefit to the insured.
- Appreciation is expressed for the dedicated support of the LAHCFD Board of Commissioners, the Fire Department, Town of Los Altos Hills, Santa Clara County FireSafe Council, County Roads & Airports, and the contractor, crews and traffic control involved in the success of the project.
- The Magdalena-Summerhill Evacuation Route Project enhances and refines staff experience necessary for improvement of future evacuation road projects. Future projects will seek more community input to guide the upcoming road evacuation route designs.

Community Outreach

LAHCFD staff promoted this project, and the other programs of the District, through several outreach activities.

- Postcards and Letters were mailed to all property owners during the project. A live virtual community meeting was held and attended by residents and the FSC project managers. Residents were offered the opportunity to make inquiries, and have their property participate in the vegetation management efforts.
- LAHCFD and SCCFSC staff walked the project route, door knocking, and spoke with residents about the project, made ROE requests, and promoted other District programs.
- Sandwich board signs were posted at strategic entry points to the project, two weeks before the project commenced, alerting hikers, bikers, and motorists to the upcoming work.
- Spontaneous contacts and interactions with the community provided staff with the opportunity to educate citizens about the project as well as other District programs and services.

During these community contacts, recognition and gratitude from the community and agencies for the public safety benefits of the project were received.

Attachment(s):

1. LAHCFD 2023-2027 Strategic Plan, Goal 1
2. LAHCFD Chart of Services, V11, 3/01/2022
3. Santa Clara County FireSafe Council Final Report: Magdalena-Summerhill Evacuation Route Project



2023—2027 LAHCFD Strategic Plan

Mission	Protect the lives, property and environment within the District it serves through fire prevention, protection and emergency response services, and			
Strategic Goals	1. Prevention, Protection, Resiliency			
Objectives	Fund, develop and maintain programs to protect life, property and enhance safety to build a resilient community. Current Programs described in the District's Chart of Services.			
Initiatives	Harden Evacuation Routes and Emergency Access Roads	Support reduction of hazardous fuels by residents	Update CWPP, Annex 4	Contribute resources to support and enhance operations at SCC Central Fire
Strategies	Complete planning and preparations for additional evacuation routes	Continue targeted Chipping Program	Participate in County-wide regional committee on CWPP	Maintain contract for fire suppression and EMS services with County Fire
	Maintain completed evacuation routes	Provide monthly vegetation drop off		Fund additional seasonal fire crews (high risk event extra staffing)
	Implement vegetation mgmt services on emergency access roads in collaboration with Central Fire and Fire Safe Council	Continue Home Ignition Zone (HIZ) inspections and implement rebate program		Fund Station 8 to provide additional support and response
	Support and advance I280 vegetation mgmt project	Support Central Fire fuels crew work		Apply for grants in a manner consistent with Commission discussion 6/21/22 to leverage tax dollars and maximize community benefit

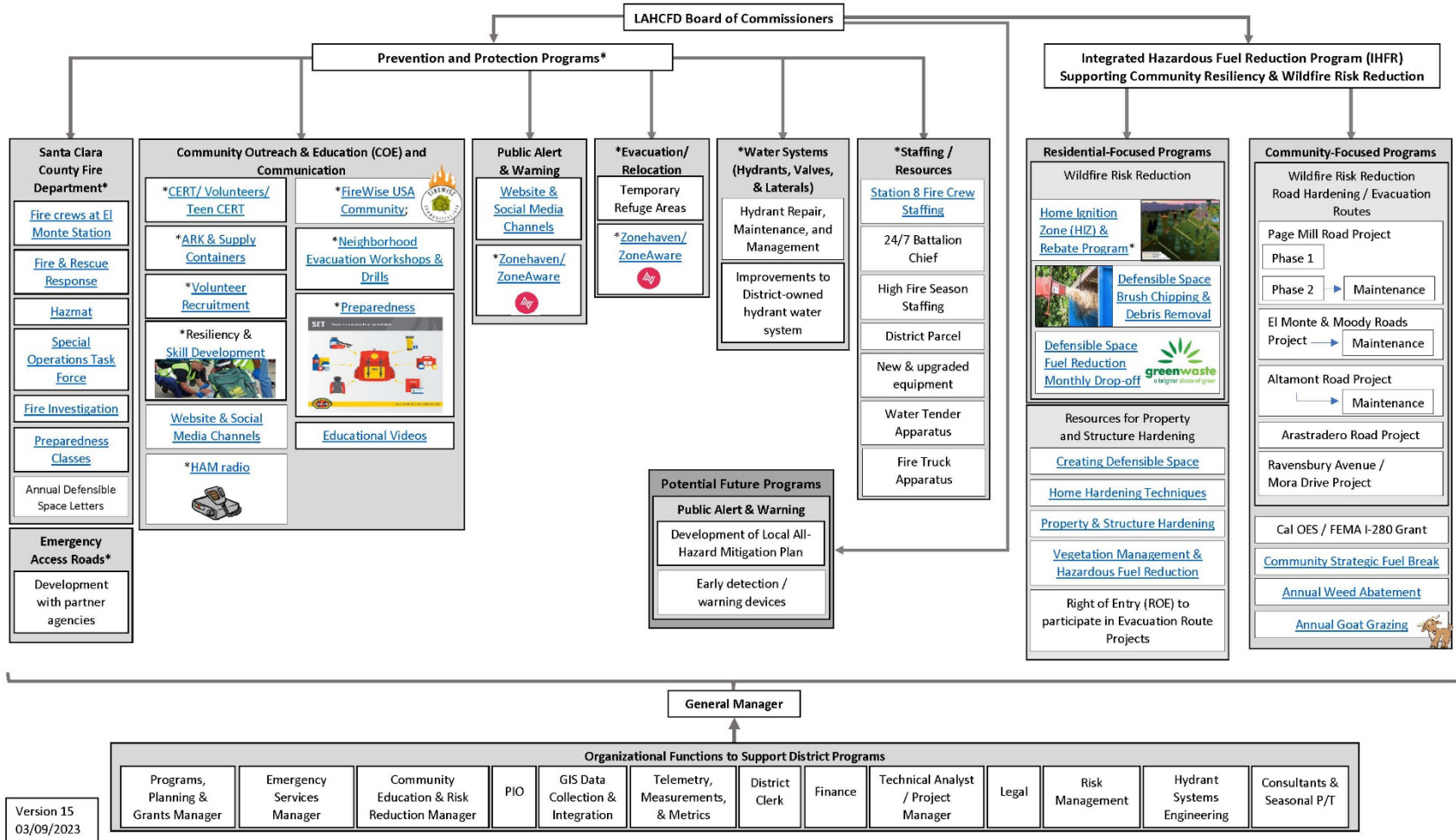
ATTACHMENT 2

LEGEND
 *Indicates programs are delivered in collaboration with partner agencies
Underlined text indicates a clickable link

LAHCFD Chart of Services

Built on Fire Science & LAHCFD CWPP Annex 4
 Guided by Strategic Plan 2023 – 2027 – Resourced by FY Budget

For more information on LAHCFD Programs and how to participate, please visit: www.LAHCFD.org
 An interactive version of this chart can be viewed here: www.lahcfcd.org/governance/ForwardLookingCommunityResiliency



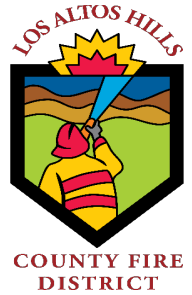
Version 15
03/09/2023



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ATTACHMENT 3

FINAL REPORT

Magdalena-Summerhill Evacuation Route

January 10, 2024

Introduction:

Magdalena Avenue and Summerhill Avenue in Los Altos Hills, California, provide a significant route for evacuation for the residents of the Los Altos Hills Community in the event of a fire. The Magdalena Ave. portion of the project will provide a continuation of the evacuation route along Ravensbury Ave., which leads away from Rancho San Antonio Park, while the Summerhill Ave. portion of this project will help ensure an alternate route to Interstate 280 in the event the interstate access directly on Magdalena Ave. is inaccessible. To secure the integrity of these egress/ingress routes, Los Altos Hills County Fire District and Santa Clara County FireSafe Council propose a roadside treatment of hazardous fuels.

Cooperators:

There were multiple agencies, contractors, property owners, and organizations that contributed to the project; Santa Clara County Fire Safe Council, Los Altos Hills County Fire District, Dudek, Huerta's Tree Service,, Traffic Management Inc, the County of Santa Clara, Cal Trans, and the Town of Los Altos Hills to name a few.

Goals For This Project:

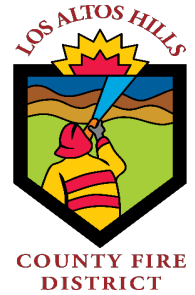
1. Trim woody vegetation and weed whip grasses and weeds adjacent to the road.
2. Remove dead or dying wood debris of less than 8 inches DBH.
3. Reduce ladder fuels around larger trees.
4. Remove dead, diseased, or damaged trees smaller than 8" DBH posing a hazard.
5. At street corners where vegetation is thick and blocks visibility, trim and remove to meet standards of shrubs less than 3 feet high and trees limbed up to at least 6 feet above ground. Per Los Altos Hills Municipal Code Title 10-Zoning , "shrubs and plants shall be pruned to a height not to exceed three (3') feet above the road level at its nearest point in an area bounded by the center line of intersecting roads or easements for vehicular access, public or private and a straight line joining points on such center lines eighty (80') feet distant from their intersection. All side limbs of trees in such an area shall be pruned to a height of not less than six (6') feet above the road surface."



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Project Site:

This evacuation route project will treat two roads:

1. The Magdalena Avenue portion of this evacuation route project will begin at the intersection of Magdalena Avenue and Ravensbury Avenue (37.34963° N, 122.11138° W) and end at the intersection of Magdalena Avenue and Summerhill Avenue (37.35613° N, 122.10247° W).
2. The Summerhill Avenue portion of the evacuation route will begin at the intersection of Magdalena Avenue and Summerhill Avenue (37.35613° N, 122.10247° W) and continue along Summerhill Avenue ending at the intersection of Summerhill Avenue and El Monte Avenue. (37.36558° N, 122.11546° W)

Approximate Project Lengths:

1. Magdalena Avenue portion is approximately 0.7 linear miles in length, which equates to 1.4 miles of treated vegetation when considering both sides of the road.
2. Summerhill Avenue portion is approximately 1 linear mile in length, which equates to 2 miles of treated vegetation when considering both sides of the road.

****Total project length is approximately 1.7 miles, with a total vegetation treatment length of 3.4 linear miles. ****



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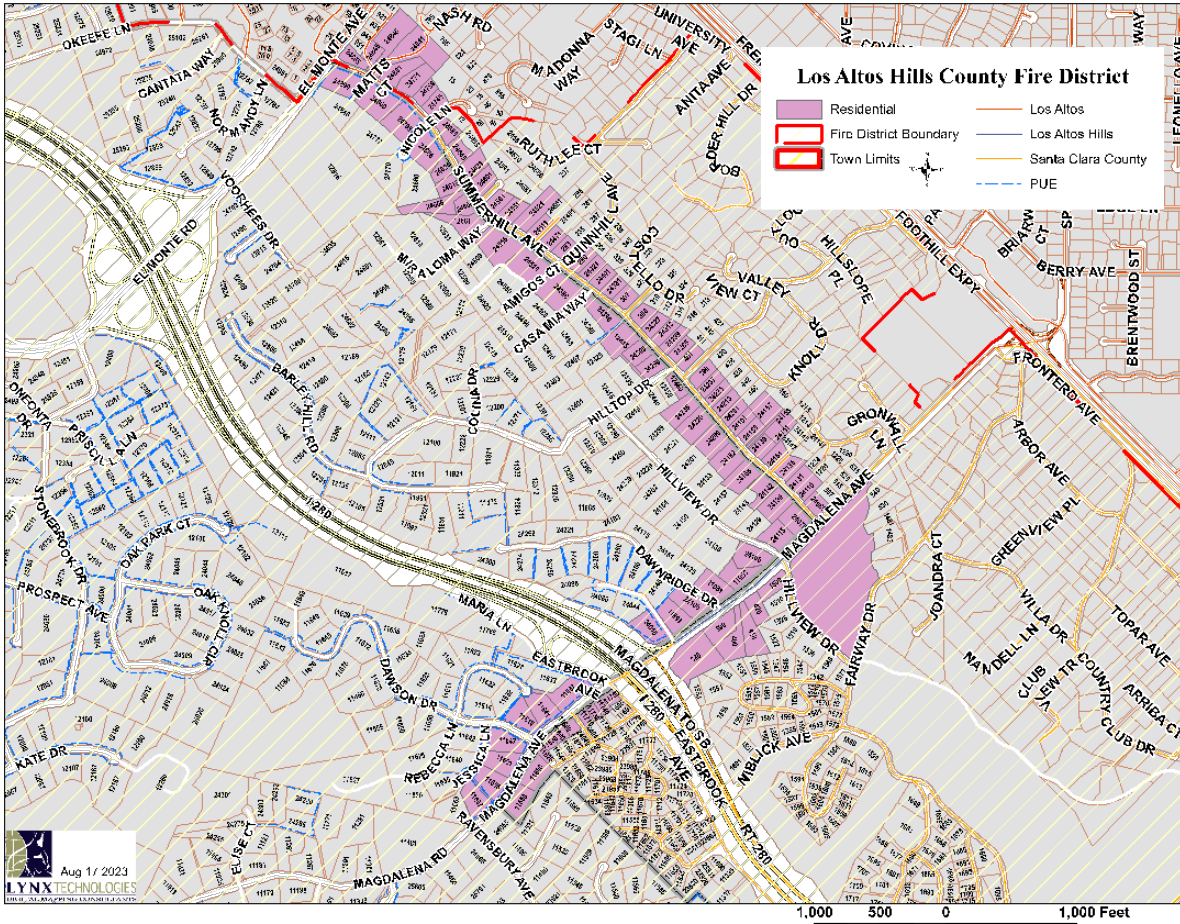
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COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT

Magdalena-Summerhill Evacuation Route Project Map



Permissions:

One of the biggest challenges in these types of projects is getting permission to treat the properties. During the planning of the project, we conducted an extensive public outreach effort to get the permissions needed. It included mailers, newspaper articles, door-to-door visits, and a social media campaign. We were able to include 16 of the 101 parcels involved. Prior to the project, LAHCFD staff conducted a survey of the area to identify key parcels within the project scope. We always strive for 100 percent participation, but every project has a few property owners with reservations. An average participation rate is around 15% for first time maintenance projects (with the goal of 100% participation). SCCFSC's timeframe for ROE forms to be returned was 14 days with a due date of October 19th,



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2023. LAHCFD Staff went out to conduct door knocking 2 weeks prior to the project start date.

Biological Precautions:

As with all our projects, protecting the biodiversity of the area is a high priority. A Biological Survey was conducted on October 16th, 2023, by Dudek Inc, 6 days before the project started. The biologist identified and flagged wood rats' nests, active birds' nests, and any habitat within the treatable area. The biological review was completed within the nesting season. Heritage trees were identified during the field verification stage and were not included in the work plan. Finally, a buffer of 25 feet was implemented along stream beds and seasonal waterways.

Project Duration:

The project started on Monday October 23rd, 2023 and was completed on Wednesday October 25th, 2023. A total of 3 days. We did not encounter any red flag days or any rain days.

Jurisdictions And Funders Involved:

Santa Clara County Fire Safe Council, Los Altos Hills County Fire District, Santa Clara County, Caltrans, and Town of Los Altos Hills.

Contractors Selected:

Dudek Inc, was selected for this project due to availability and competitiveness of the bid.

Huerta's Tree Service was selected due to their availability, familiarity with evacuation route projects within SCCFSC, and for rotation of contractors selected for LAHCFD projects.

Traffic Management Inc provided a traffic control plan and provided four flaggers and traffic control for project duration.



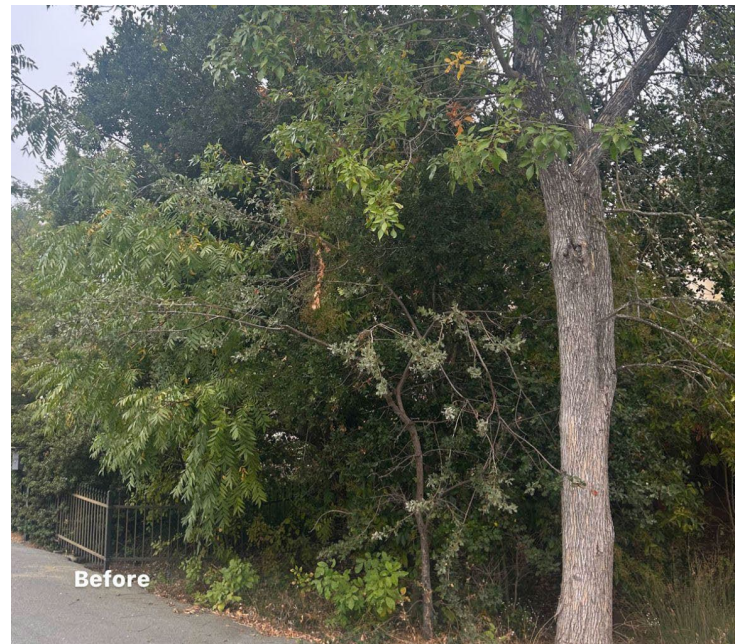
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Project Photos:

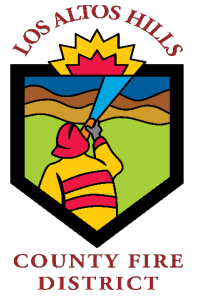




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COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT

By The Numbers:



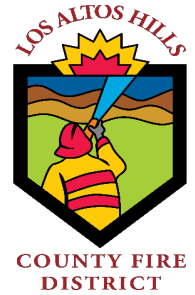
- Area treated – 3.22 miles total area treated for both sides were treated during this project. Most of which was treated 15 to 30 feet from the edge of the road unless



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marked for riparian area. On ROE properties treatment extended 30-50 feet from the edge of the road if needed. The daily average was 1.07 miles per day.

- Acres treated = 7.80 acres with an average of 2.60 acres treated per day.
- No poison oak was treated during this project.
- 3 days of treatment conducted by Huerta's Tree Service.

We overcame many challenges to complete this critical part of growing the evacuation route and vegetation treatment system in Santa Clara County. This project also supports goals in the LAHCFD CWPP annex as well as the overall Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

We would like to acknowledge the contribution made by Huerta's Tree Service, Dudek Inc, and Traffic Management Inc. All entities were committed to assisting Santa Clara County Fire Safe Council with the project from start to finish.

Traffic Management Inc provided four traffic control personnel every day to make sure that the work could be done in a safe manner. Magdalena Ave and Summerhill Ave are commuter roads with multiple driveways, high bike and foot traffic routes; the fourth traffic control personnel was necessary for the safety of the tree crews, SCCFSC staff, LAHCFD staff, general traffic, and bicyclists in the Los Altos Hills area. Huerta's Tree Service provided a translator each day to ensure maximum communication capabilities in an effort to provide complete safety coverage for the crews working and additional personnel on site. I'm happy to report, with Traffic Management Inc., traffic control coverage and the safe working practices of Huerta's Tree Service, we were able to finish the project with no reported injuries or incident reports. In addition to that, Los Altos Hills County Fire District granted permission for the project crew to use their parcel for a staging area.

Safety briefings were held by the safety officers, Zaid Ortiz and Irene Armstrong each morning before start of work to discuss traffic control, personal protective equipment, local emergency services, environmental hazards, and weather conditions.

We would like to thank all the cooperators and property owners for all their support. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to direct them to:

Zaid Ortiz – Project Manager
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Phone: (408) 679-5307

Amanda Brenner-Cannon –
Program Director
e-mail: abrennercannon@sccfiresafe.org