



DIAMOND MOUNTAIN FIRE SAFE COUNCIL **September 2023 - Projects Update**

The projects here are derived from the foundational documents of the **DMFSC 2019 Risk Assessment** and **DMFSC 2020 CWPP-Community Wildfire Protection Plan**. Several challenging projects have been successfully completed. New projects have been developed by the DMFSC Executive and Steering Committees based on learning best practices, and on direct experiences from the September 2020 Glass Fire, which burned 70% of our Council area.

DMFSC Continuing Projects 2023-2024

Project 1

Sharp Road/Heidi Ranch Road Emergency-Only Ingress/Egress: Further Surface Work along Sharp Rd from DMR to Kortum Canyon is in Progress – Currently coordinating with Sharp Road/Heidi Ranch Road private landowners, Sonoma RCD, Cal Fire and Napa Firewise to improve an emergency-use-only, unpaved private road.

A description for this appears in the NCFP Five-Year-Plan: “*Sharp Road is a critical connector from the Diamond Mountain community (Napa County) to Petrified Forest Road (Sonoma County) ...this is a high priority evacuation route for Napa County Fire & Cal Fire... to create an all-weather surface for future use for what has become an important corridor for emergency use.*” **New work currently in progress fall of 2023 with a CalFire grant via Napa Firewise. Note that this unpaved road has locked gates on both ends, to be unlocked in case of fire.**

Project 2

Kortum Canyon Fuels Reduction - Lower Kortum Canyon received roadside fuels reduction treatment in 2022, but the project to clear the ravine was still incomplete. Ravine clearing of hazardous fuels has been defined as a priority and this work is currently being coordinated by DMFSC with landowners and Napa Firewise in fall of 2023.

Project 3

Maintenance of Completed Fuel Reduction Work - Already-completed fuel reduction projects, see below, along the roadsides, and on private property/ravines needs to be maintained going forward, and invasive, opportunistic plant species need to be suppressed. Continue to identify funding to pay for maintenance projects, and continue to support the Napa Firewise [Defensible Space Cost-Share Grant](#), and the Napa County Fire Department [Free Chipping](#) program for homeowners.

Project 4

Shaded Fuel Break in Bothe Napa State Park south of Tucker Acres - Phase 2: Continue in a working group to collaborate with State Parks, along with the St. Helena and Spring Mountain Fire Safe Councils and Napa Valley State Parks Association, to develop a comprehensive plan for Bothe. Including a wish for a true Shaded Fuel Break on the Tucker/Bothe border.

Project 5

Ridge Top Fuel Breaks - Coordinating with Napa Firewise on a county-wide project—and our local landowners—to discover old, existing ridge top corridors through private and public lands on and around Diamond Mountain, in order to propose future shaded fuel breaks and restore and map old dozer lines and unpaved roads on the ridges.

Project 6

Develop Additional Alternate Routes for Emergency Ingress / Egress

1. Evaluate connecting Tucker Acres to Peterson through existing vineyard roads.
2. Explore evacuation from Tucker Acres through Bothe State Park.
3. Maintain the existing unpaved road between top of North and South Forks of DMR, the "DM Ridgetop Road."
4. Continue to explore other back road / vineyard road emergency ingress/egress options.

Project 7

Identify Emergency Refuge Sites - While acknowledging **evacuation** in a timely way is still the best course of action, form a Project Group and do neighborhood meet-ups to research, identify and map potential vineyard and other open space sites.

Project 8

Roadside Turnouts on DMR - Napa County executed a first pass on a pavement overlay and some culvert and ditch repairs for DMR in spring 2023, with a second and final pavement overlay scheduled for spring 2024 after salvage logging is completed. DMFSC is planning funding some gravel and clean up for turnouts after the salvage timber logging and the second pavement overlay is finished in mid-2024.

Project 9

Signage - DMFSC has installed multiple signs, educated residents, made site visits, and is mentoring other fire safe councils in 911 address and road sign design and installation. Currently working on completing the installation of information stickers for address signs to show turnarounds, pools, hydrants and your Evacuation Zone number.

Project 10

Emergency Communications -

- **Phone Alert System** - DMFSC contracts with **Bright Arrow** to operate a Phone Alert System. Key Communicator neighbors are supported with continued refresher trainings in 2022 and 2023.
- **GMRS** - General Mobile Radio Service - A group of volunteer neighbors and DMFSC has started training on the use of hand-held radios to be used in case of emergency if cell phones don't work. Coordinating with a similar group from the Calistoga Fire Safe Council in the Palisades, and another group in Knight's Valley, DMFSC and these groups are "meeting" once a week on the radios in a radio "net" check-in to practice.

Project 11

Education on All Aspects of Fire Safety - Continue to update the DMFSC website diamondmountainfiresafe.org with resources and safety information, including house hardening, defensible space, fuel reduction, and information for live links during a fire incident, etc. Continue to send out important information via e-newsletters.

Project 12

Community Firewise Certification - DMFSC received this certification in 2022 from the [National Fire Protection Association-NFPA/Firewise USA](https://www.nfpa.org), after a lengthy application process—based on our many combined volunteer hours, property owners' fuel and home mitigations, and money spent on improved fire safety. One goal in obtaining this certification is to improve chances to retain property insurance coverage, or possibly even reduce premiums, by demonstrating how much we have done in our community to mitigate fire risk. Official **Firewise Community** signs are installed on the three main DMFSC roads. This certification needs to be updated annually by DMFSC.

Project 13

Post-Fire Restoration and Shifting Forest Species from Conifer to Woodland - This will continue to be a priority given the opportunity created by the 2020 Glass Fire, which burned 70% of DMFSC area. Many parcels are being logged of dead Douglas fir via private emergency use permits. Continue work to develop a long-term plan for post-fire restoration and continuing understory fuel reduction.

Project 14

Owner Contacts and Property Data - Continue reaching out to residents to update confidential contacts and property data, to be updated and available to Cal Fire and Calistoga Fire Department, for First Responders for use in emergencies. You can update your personal and property information [here](#).

Project 15

Establish Community Water Tanks - Explore the feasibility of installing strategically placed tanks to serve as quick refills for Fire Department tankers. Create a Project Group to explore locations, water sources, and feasibility.

DMFSC Completed Projects 2019-2022/23

1. Emergency Use Sharp Road Connector: DMR North Fork to Sharp Rd - With signed owner agreements, and a combination of resident fundraising and funding partnerships including \$20,000 from NCFF and \$7,000 from The Mountain Station Foundation at Sonoma Fire Station 6, DMFSC executed graveling and grading, established water bars, and installed emergency signage and gates to the unpaved, private connector road between the top of DMR North Fork and Sharp Road. This was successfully used during the Glass Fire emergency.

Heavy winter weather in 2022 and 2023 has since washed out the first phase of the above work, and a more robust project is underway, see top of 2023-2024 list above.

2. Fuel Reduction - Create Shaded Fuel Breaks Along All Main DMFSC Roads and Remove Hazardous Trees. Huge roadside fuel reductions and removal of hazard trees was completed in fall 2022, with DMFSC coordinating closely with landowners for signed permissions, and Napa Firewise project managers, funded by grants from the Dodd 2021 fundraiser and County / Cal Fire grants. Projects were defined by DMFSC with grants administered by Napa Firewise.

- Lower Kortum Canyon received roadside fuels treatment only in 2022, and the grant request to clear the ravine is still in progress. Ravine clearing has been defined and this is being coordinated in fall 2023. See above.
- Diamond Mt Rd had funding from a Dodd grant and Napa County/NCFF grants for roadside fuel reductions along the length of DMR. Major work was completed during fall of 2022.
- Tucker Acres has defined grant projects and executed some fuels clearing in ravines in 2022 and DMFSC worked with Napa Firewise to direct Dodd grant funds to successfully reduce fuel on unoccupied properties along Hwy 29 in 2023.

3. Signage -

- Multiple 911 compliant green and white reflective address signs and multiple highway-type directional and emergency information signs were installed on main roadways and on private, emergency egress roads in the entire DMFSC area in 2020-2023. Further community outreach is needed to complete reflective address signage for all addresses in our area, including the installation of additional information stickers for address signs to mark turnarounds, pools, hydrants and your Evacuation Zone number.
- Mentored a Napa Firewise pilot program, helping to design the roll-out and do large volunteer trainings in 2022 and 2023, to educate residents on how to order and receive free reflective 911 address signs and to install them throughout the city of Calistoga.

4. Emergency Communications - DMFSC contracted with **Bright Arrow** to operate a Phone Alert System (PAS). Key Communicator neighbors were identified and first trained in August 2021. Residents were emailed detailed information, and a system-wide test was implemented. The Phone Alert System was operational as of September 2021. Additional training refreshers occurred during summer 2022, and again in fall 2023, see above.

5. Defensible Space South of Tucker Acres in Bothe Napa State Park - Working with CA State Parks personnel, permits were obtained and a 130-foot Defensible Space was completed in January 2021, funded by residents' tax-deductible donations through NCFF. Currently participating in a long-term working group focusing on developing a shaded fuel break in Bothe Park along the border of the Tucker Acres neighborhood.

6. Community Firewise Certification - DMFSC received this certification in December 2022 from the National Fire Protection Association-NFPA/Firewise USA, after a lengthy application process—based on our many combined volunteer hours, property owners' fuel and home mitigations, and money spent on improved fire safety. One goal in obtaining this certification is to improve chances to retain property insurance coverage, or possibly even reduce premiums, by showing how much we have done in our community to mitigate fire risk. This certification needs to be updated annually by DMFSC.

7. Part-Time Administrative Assistant - Contracted with a free-lance assistant to help manage outreach on property profiles, database and contact lists, fundraising mailings, the Community Firewise Certification application, and maintaining DMFSC website improvements and updates.

September 2023 - For more information, please contact admin@diamondmountainfiresafe.org