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Tehama County Fire break

Special to the Daily News

Wildfire protection is being created around Tehama County through several fuel break projects. Recent wild fires have stimulated landowners to band together to provide wildfire protection by building strategically placed fuel breaks near the timber line on the eastern slope of the coast range, through western Tehama County.

Fuel breaks allow access by fire fighting personnel to attack wildfires through direct contact using water or retardants, said Tom McCubbins, watershed coordinator with the **Tehama County Resource Conservation District**. Fuel breaks provide a safe point from which backfires can be lit that eliminates wildland fuels in a controlled manner, slowing or stopping an advancing fire.

There are now 87 miles of 300-foot-wide fuel breaks in brush land reaching from Elder Creek near Colyear Springs to near Highway 36 in the vicinity of the Wild Horse Mesa recreation area near Platina.

Fuel break projects have been completed or are ongoing in Manton and Paynes Creek and on Ponderosa Way, near Manton.

The Manton Fuel Break is 16 miles on 144 acres.

Roads included in project work were Manton School Road, Powerhouse Road, Cedar Ridge Road and Lanes Valley Road, which connects Manton Road with Highway 36 near the Paynes Creek community.

The Paynes Creek Community Fuel Break is roughly 10.5 miles or 120 acres.

Treatments were conducted along Plum Creek Road between the Paynes Creek community and the Lyman Springs to the south.

This project was completed in an efficient manner and left over project dollars are being utilized by the district to assist CalFire in the completion of its Little Giant Mill Fuel break being developed along Little Giant Mill Road.

The Ponderosa Way Fuel Break project is being completed along Ponderosa Way near Manton between the Shasta County line about six miles south of its intersection with Forward Road.

There are several forms that are used for different types of landscapes, McCubbins said. Simple fuel breaks that are created using dozers or hand crews who cut vegetation are often created in chaparral bush lands and simply clear an area for access.

In a fuel break project in western Tehama County a different method is being used.

The 20 mile fuel break in progress around the Tedoc mountain and Pattymocus look-out is being constructed using a ball and chain method.

hanging over the side of the mountain. The chain crushes brush flat, leaving about a 150-foot area one side of the ridge to the opposite side of the ridge making another 150-foot path ending up in creating a 300-foot crushed area.

This winter the crushed bush will be burned, creating a fire safe area to prevent wildfires from moving through the area or at least giving fire fighters an access area to backfire or use other techniques to control catastrophic conditions.

Two landowner organizations have been instrumental in establishing the Tedoc Mountain Fuel Break.

The Sunflower Coordinated Resource Management team of 65 landowners, coordinated by Bill Burrows and the Tedoc Coordinated Resource Management team of 35 landowners, coordinated by Dennis Bebensee, planned and worked together to finance the fuel break expenses.

The organizations have written grants to the California Fire Safe Council, the Tehama County Resource Advisory Board and the Tehama-Glenn CalFire organizations to finance the fuel breaks.

Fiscal coordination has been provided by the Cottonwood Creek Watershed Group, the **Tehama County Resource Conservation District** and the Tehama-Glen CalFire.

Many rancher and landowner homes and recreation areas will be protected by more than 100 miles of fuel breaks once the Tedoc Mountain fuel breaks are completed.

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