RIDGE COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION

Because of the acute awareness of the RECOA Board of Directors of the ever present wildfire risk to the Ridge Community at large, Standards and Actions called for in this document are deemed as MANDATORY for the Owner. The objective is to pursue actions that reduce the risk of loss of life and property. Note that occasionally, we will use the terms *May, Shall* or *Should* and the like. These words are not intended to diminish the objective importance of the action(s) being addressed but are used to qualify levels of effort required to achieve the desired outcome while achieving the wildfire protection goal.



The Ridge at Eagle Crest (The Ridge) resides within an area prone to open wildfire risk. It is bordered on three sides by highly-flammable juniper habitat, associated shrubs and grasses. Since 2014, The Ridge community has been designated and is certified annually as a Firewise Community. This national designation acknowledges communities that have, and maintain, established wildfire protection plans and programs with direct community support.

The Ridge Community Wildfire Protection Program (RCWPP) includes policies and standards that apply to private property owners (Owners) and associations within The Ridge as governed by RECOA. Owners' properties include single family residences and lots, Ridge common properties, and Neighborhood common properties. The RCWPP supports the objectives of Deschutes County and the *Greater Redmond Community Wildfire Protection Plan.*^{7,1}

It is a goal of RECOA to continue the effort to improve and maintain a wildfire protection environment on The Ridge. Under the Oregon Forestland-Urban Interface Fire Protection Act (known as Oregon Senate Bill 762), each county identifies "Wildland Urban Interface" areas according to fire risk. The classifications range from "low" to "high density

Wildland Urban Interface Area: a zone where structures (homes) and other human development meet and intermingle with wildland and vegetation fuels.

extreme". Although Oregon Senate Bill 762 punitive measures do not apply to Eagle Crest Acquisition Group (ECAG) directly at this time, Deschutes County and RECOA recognize the importance of the standards in the legislation to help reduce the adverse effects of wildfire.

The *Greater Redmond Community Wildfire Protection Plan* is one of seven wildfire protection plans maintained by Deschutes County and reviewed on a 5-year cycle. This plan relies on the participation of property owners to achieve the goal of turning Wildland Urban Interface properties into less volatile zones where homes can survive and firefighters may more safely and effectively defend homes from wildfire damage or destruction.

During the 2022 Deschutes County classification process, Ridge properties were classified as "**Moderate to High**" based on the proximity of wildland fuel on public lands and the lack of

Defensible Space: a fireresistant area around a home, deck, other structures, trail corridors and roads to prevent fires from starting or spreading. **Defensible Space** on Ridge private properties. In addition, the *Greater Redmond Community Wildfire Protection Plan* classifies vacant lots on The Ridge as "**Moderate to High**".

Recognizing the threat, the RECOA Board of Directors sanctioned and underwrote the RCWPP. Further, to address

the reality, in 2013 the Board established the Community Wildfire Protection Committee (CWP

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Ridge at Eagle Crest Owners Association Board of Directors Amended and Adopted October 23, 2023 Committee) and identified nearly 230 acres of RECOA common area for the establishment and maintenance of wildfire defensible space. The wildfire protection treatment areas were expanded in 2020 to include an additional 112 acres of unirrigated Ridge golf course area directly adjacent to Owner and RECOA properties. This is an effective collaboration with Eagle Crest Golf Maintenance. The CWP Committee now oversees and participates in the continuing monitoring and wildfire protection treatment of those areas shown in *Figure 1* and *Figure 2*.

The Ridge CWP Committee is supported and served by its Owner volunteers, RECOA Board of Directors, Ridge Golf Course maintenance, Ridge Community Services, Ridge Architectural Review Committee, Oregon Water Utilities, Bureau of Land Management (adjacent land owner), Deschutes County Project Wildfire, Oregon Department of Forestry, Oregon State Fire Marshall, Redmond Fire and Rescue and the City of Redmond. The principles of the RCWPP are derived from the guidelines and support from these agencies and helps assure program success and greater safety in The Ridge community. The National Fire Protection Association now recognizes The Ridge at Eagle Crest as a **Firewise Community** for efforts taken to reduce wildfire risk.

Ember Showers from a fire within The Ridge or from adjacent public lands are a particular threat as embers could quickly ignite vegetation fuels and spread rapidly to homes and other structures. Creating Defensible Space around homes, on Ridge and Neighborhood common areas, and other structures is critical to reduce the risk of wildfire damage.

Ember Showers: hot, smoldering embers from a nearby fire that can land in gutters, roof valleys, on or under decks, in vents, firewood piles, on furniture and flammable vegetation where they ignite and cause damage to a home. These embers can travel miles from the original fire to ignite other fires.

Ladder Fuels: flammable vegetation that can provide a direct path for fire to travel along the ground to structures or up into trees.

In an urban forest environment such as The Ridge, controlled burning of large areas to reduce Ladder Fuels is impractical and dangerous. Alternatives to burning are necessary to protect properties and encourage general vegetation community health. Manual removal, thinning and mowing of flammable vegetation, although labor intensive, are highly effective techniques when

applied uniformly and consistently throughout The Ridge community.

Owners should consider reducing the threat of wildfire damage to their property within the **Home Ignition Zone**, emphasizing the first 30 feet from their house eaves, deck and other structures. This may require working with neighbors to create defensible space and reduce the risk of wildfire damage. The *Are you prepared for wildfire?* 7.2 brochure, by FireFree.org and shown in *Figure 3*, provides ways to help Owners prepare their properties for the threat of wildfire.

Home Ignition Zone: the area around a house and associated structures that is most vulnerable to a wildfire. Embers, surface fires and canopy fires along with small flammable debris (dry leaves, needles, dry grass) pose a threat.

RECOA WILDFIRE PROTECTION STANDARDS

The RECOA Wildfire Protection Standards are derived from the *Greater Redmond Community Wildfire Protection Plan*. Because The Ridge property is classified as "**Moderate to High**" for wildfire hazard risk, RECOA is committed to reducing the risk of loss of life and destruction from wildfire for Owners. This will be done by implementing the standards set forth in Oregon Senate Bill 762 and subsequently in the Greater Redmond Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

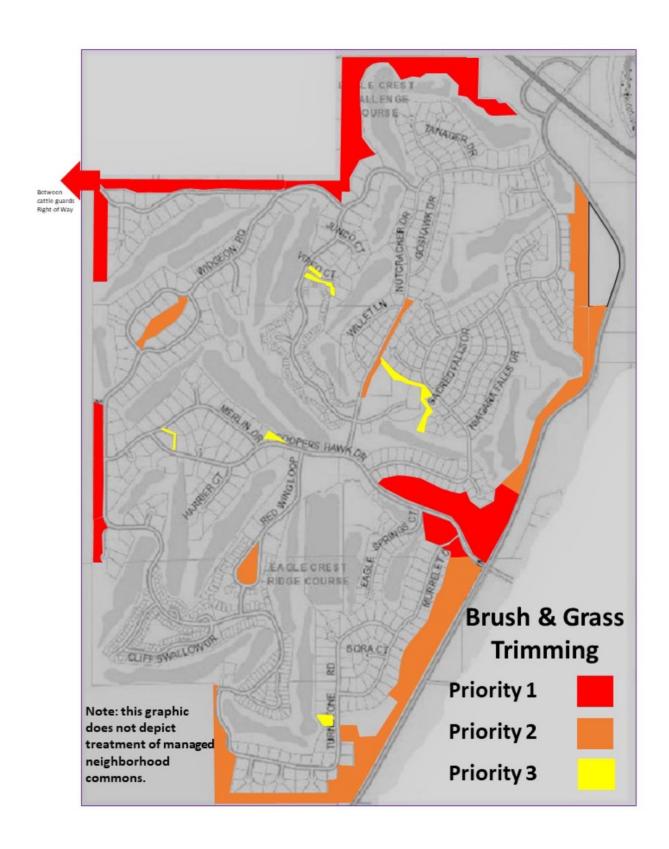


Figure 1: RECOA Commons Treatment Areas, Phase IV Plan, for East Ridge

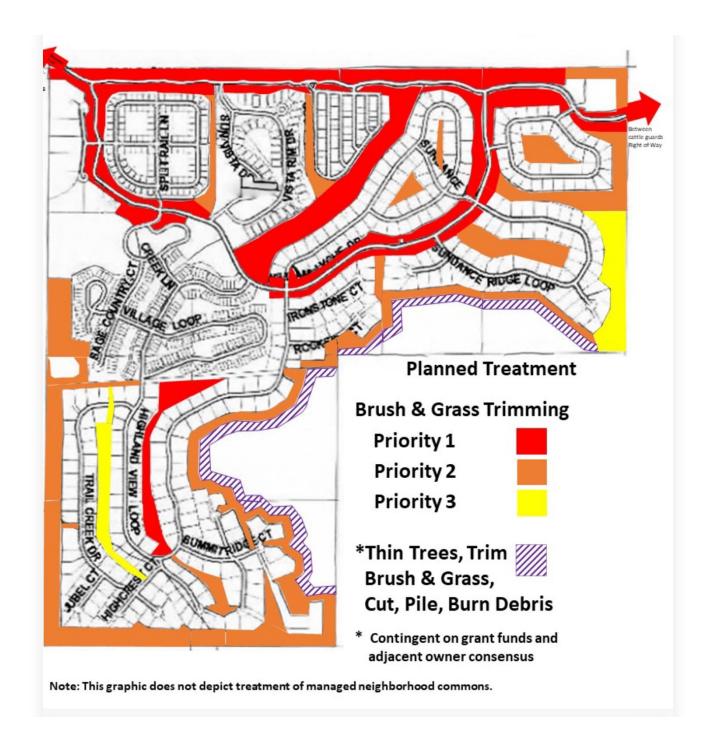


Figure 2: RECOA Commons Treatment Areas, Phase IV Plan, for West Ridge



Figure 3: Tips for Owners to reduce wildfire hazards

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Ridge at Eagle Crest Owners Association Board of Directors Amended and Adopted October 23, 2023 To address this risk, the RECOA Board established The Ridge Community Wildfire Protection Committee (CWP Committee) as a standing committee to advise and assist the Board in the implementation of this program. The committee consists of volunteer Ridge Owner members appointed by the Board plus two Board members, as required by the RECOA Bylaws.

To create defensible space against wildfire for properties in the "**Moderate to High**" category, the following 14 standards shall be followed to reduce the risk of damage or destruction to homes and other property on The Ridge:

- 1. Owners are encouraged, with proper permitting, to pursue a 30-foot fire-resistant space around homes and structures, wherever possible within the property boundary.
- 2. To enable emergency vehicle access for homes with driveways longer than 150 feet, remove obstructions over and along the sides of the driveway surface. Vertical clearance should be at least 13.5 feet and horizontal clearance at least 12 feet. Even for driveways shorter than 150 feet, Owners are encouraged to meet this standard.
- 3. During construction of a new home, Owners are required to remove existing juniper trees within 15 feet of the building envelope and adjacent structures (including eaves, decks, and enclosures) at the time of lot preparation prior to construction. Additionally, if building adjacent to a vacant lot, Owners are strongly encouraged to remove any juniper tree within 15 feet of the adjacent lot's buildable envelope.
- 4. Owners are encouraged to remove **highly flammable vegetation** within 15 feet of their home and/or neighboring homes including eaves, decks and enclosures (see *Fire-Resistant Plants for Home Landscapes* ^{7.3} and *Highly Flammable Plants and Fire-Resistant Plants* ^{7.4}). If not removed, Owners should comply with the Wildfire Defensible Space Standards on Private Property in Section 3.0 of this document.

Highly flammable vegetation: plants that ignite quickly and burn readily such as dead and dried leaves and twigs, plants that are high in oil and resin and dense foliage.

- 5. Trim all highly flammable tree branches at least five feet from the roof line of the house or structure. Remove branches that are over the roof and remove accumulations of dry leaves, needles, twigs, and other flammable debris on the roof and in gutters.
- 6. Keep the space near, on and under wooden decks, exterior stairs, enclosures and foundations free of flammable shrubs, trees, bark dust, dry leaves, needles and other debris.
- 7. No placement of bark dust, mulch or other flammable material within 18-inches of the house foundation.
- 8. Firewood must be stored in a fully-enclosed space.
- 9. No open fires on residential properties. Propane fire pits are allowed.
- 10. Cigarette butts or other burning materials must be completely extinguished and discarded in appropriate receptacles per RECOA policy.
- 11. Igniting fireworks is prohibited throughout The Ridge.
- 12. Vacant lot Owners shall maintain their property in accordance with the applicable Wildfire Protection Standards.

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- 13. Changes to existing Owner property landscaping may require a review and permit from The Architectural Review Committee.
- 14. Primary emergency evacuation and access corridors will receive wildfire protection treatment in accordance with the Bureau of Land Management and standing local Fire Marshal requirements.

RIDGE COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PROGRAM (RCWPP)

Compliance with the RCWPP standards is mandatory for Owners. The RCWPP consists of six sections including Program Application, Program Permits, Wildfire Defensible Space Standards on Private Property, Disposal of Debris, Program Enforcement, and Program Review and Amendments.

1.0 PROGRAM APPLICATION

To maintain a balance between the urban community and the natural environment, RECOA sets forth and adopts the following standards to reduce Ladder Fuels vegetation and create defensible space against wildfire on all Ridge properties and within the unirrigated areas of the golf courses directly adjacent to Owner residential property lines:

- 1.1 New or revised landscape plantings within 15 feet of any structure (including eaves, decks and enclosures) or within 15 feet of an adjacent lot's buildable envelope must be fire-resistant varieties. Plantings of highly flammable vegetation (e.g. conifers, junipers, arbor vitae, bitterbrush, sagebrush), regardless of size or proximity to a structure, are discouraged and must be approved by the RECOA Architectural Review Committee (ARC).
- 1.2 New construction and revised landscaping shall meet the current standards of both the ARC Policies and Guidelines and the RCWPP. Failure to do so may result in a fine or forfeiture of the Owner's \$2,500 Refundable ARC Compliance Deposit for new construction.
- 1.3 Owners shall be responsible for the reduction and disposal of flammable vegetation from their properties, subject to the permitting process and standards stated below. The entire property, including areas within 30 feet of any structure or up to the property line, shall be subject to Ladder Fuels reduction standards.
- 1.4 Ridge and Neighborhood common properties are subject to the RCWPP.
- 1.5 Other private property within The Ridge include two golf courses and support facilities, Oregon Water Utilities water/wastewater system facilities and related property, RV storage area, The Ridge fitness and recreation centers, and other Ridge facilities. These property owners are encouraged to participate in the RCWPP to the extent possible.

In cooperation with these owners, the CWP Committee will suggest wildfire protection actions consistent with this program and provide that information to the RECOA Board of Directors. The Board shall then notify the subject property owner of identified wildfire issues and recommendations.

2.0 PROGRAM PERMITS

- 2.1 An Architectural Review Committee (ARC) permit is required to remove highly-flammable trees and shrubs on the prescribed Owner property under the following conditions: trees or shrubs requested for removal are more than 15 feet from a structure or an adjacent lot's buildable envelope; tree trunks are greater than six inches in diameter measured one foot above ground level; and shrubs are greater than three feet in height. Owners shall complete a Tree and Shrub Removal Permit and submit it to the ARC for review and approval before the requested removal is conducted. The permit request form is on page 69 of the Architectural Review Committee Policies and Guidelines (2020) document.
- 2.2 A separate permit is required to remove highly flammable trees within the RECOA Common Areas. This permit is available at the Eagle Crest Management Office.
- 2.3 Owners may request that CWP Committee members inspect their property and make recommendations for wildfire protection measures. However, Owners must still obtain all permits as required above.

3.0 WILDFIRE DEFENSIBLE SPACE STANDARDS ON PRIVATE PROPERTY

Wherever possible, the goal is to create wildfire defensible space within the first 30 feet in the Home Ignition Zone, measured from the eaves of the home structure. General information and details about the wildfire defensible space standards and how to carry them out are available on The Ridge Owners website (www.ridgeowners.org). In addition, a *Fire-Resistant Plants for Home Landscapes* link is available as an Owners reference to manage home wildfire landscape risks. (see *Fire-Resistant Plants for Home Landscapes* ^{7.3} and *Highly Flammable Plants and Fire-Resistant Plants* ^{7.4}).

3.1 SINGLE FAMILY PROPERTY (RESIDENCES AND LOTS)

- 3.1.1 Owners shall remove all noxious weeds, bitterbrush, rabbitbrush, sagebrush and flammable ornamental shrubs (Ladder Fuels) from underneath juniper or other flammable trees to three feet beyond the tree canopy (width of tree or drip line). Remove vegetative growth on juniper trees or other flammable trees within four feet of the ground or 20% of tree height if the tree is less than 20-feet tall. Remove small junipers or other vegetation growing up into the canopy of larger junipers and routinely prune and maintain non-native landscaping. Grasses under trees shall be mowed to four inches in height. **NO permit is required**.
- 3.1.2 All trees shall be maintained substantially free of deadwood to a minimum of four feet above ground level. **NO permit is required**.
- 3.1.3 Individual junipers, pines and fir trees should be thinned to an average spacing of 10 feet or more between tree canopies, measured at the canopy base (drip line). Smaller trees six inches or less in diameter measured one foot above ground level are encouraged to be removed in order to preserve the health of older, larger trees. Trees should be cut so as to leave a stump no higher than four inches. NO permit is required unless removing trees with trunks greater than six inches in diameter measured one foot above ground level and more than 15 feet from a structure or an adjacent lot's buildable envelope.

- 3.1.4 Flammable ornamental landscaping plants (arbor vitae, junipers, conifers, etc.) next to decks and siding or under roof eaves shall be removed and replaced with fire resistant plants that may also provide ground cover. If removal is not feasible, then trim and mow hazardous vegetation to create defensible space according to standards 3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.1.3 and 3.1.6. **NO permit is required**.
- 3.1.5 Dead trees may be removed on an Owner's property. If they are important for aesthetics or as habitat trees, then they may be kept. **No permit is required** to remove dead trees. If the Owner is concerned about wildfire from dead trees, they should contact the CWP Committee and ask for a review of the situation.
- 3.1.6 Roofs, gutters, and the area under decks and around the foundation of a structure shall be maintained free of highly flammable trees, shrubs, dry leaves, needles and other flammable debris (also see 3.1.9). Trim all highly flammable tree branches at least five feet from the roof line of the house or structure. Remove branches that are over the roof. Also remove accumulations of dry leaves, needles, twigs, and other flammable debris on the roof and in gutters.
- 3.1.7 To enable emergency vehicle access for homes with driveways longer than 150 feet, remove obstructions over and along the sides of the driveway surface. Vertical clearance should be at least 13.5 feet and horizontal clearance at least 12 feet. Even for driveways shorter than 150 feet, Owners are encouraged to meet this standard.
- 3.1.8 Firewood is a dangerous ignition source that may create a hazard and obstruction for fire fighters. Storage of firewood on, next to, or under decks is prohibited. Storage of firewood at any other site is prohibited unless it is within a fully-enclosed space as specified in the ARC guidelines.
- 3.1.9 No bark or other flammable mulch shall be used within at least 18 inches of a property structure (house, deck, propane tank enclosure, etc.) when flammable materials of a structure are at or near the ground level. Use soil, stone or other non-flammable material near structures.

Most outdoor fires at Eagle Crest Resort begin in Bark Dust or other Flammable Mulch.

3.2 RIDGE COMMON PROPERTIES

- 3.2.1 The CWP Committee is responsible for directing and implementing wildfire protection measures on RECOA-owned common areas considered hazardous to the community. Properties will be monitored and maintained in a condition that meets or exceeds the standards in the RCWPP. Refer to *Figure 1* and *Figure 2* for area coverage.
- 3.2.2 Ingress (for emergency and utility support vehicles) and egress (for Owners and visitor evacuation) routes through Eagle Crest Resort are needed in case of wildfire. While RECOA does not own or control all lands through which ingress and egress must take place, RECOA will work with the responsible officials to provide safe ingress and egress routes in case of emergencies.

- 3.2.3 Junipers should be thinned to a spacing of 10 feet or more between trees, measured at the canopy base (drip line). A cluster of junipers may be retained if other surrounding tree canopies are more than 15 feet away. Small junipers with a trunk six inches or less diameter measured one foot above ground level are encouraged to be removed in order to protect the health of older, larger trees. Juniper trees within 15 feet of an Owner's home or associated structures shall be removed. Trees shall be cut so as to leave a stump no higher than four inches.
- 3.2.4 On juniper and other flammable trees greater than 20 feet in height, lower branches shall be removed so that no tree vegetation is within four feet of the ground. For trees less than 20 feet in height lower branches shall be removed so that no vegetation is within 20% of the height of the tree. All trees shall be maintained substantially free of deadwood.
- 3.2.5 All Ladder Fuels such as bitterbrush, rabbitbrush, sagebrush, dead vegetation, small trees and other flammable shrubs shall be removed from underneath juniper trees and other flammable tree species out to a distance of three feet beyond the tree canopy, measured at the canopy base (drip line). Grasses shall be mowed to four inches in height. Bitterbrush, rabbitbrush and sagebrush in all common areas designated for wildfire protection treatment shall be cleared to leave a mosaic pattern (i.e. space between shrubs) of no more than 50% ground coverage. As a goal, vegetation shall be removed to achieve a separation between the vegetation of twice the height of shrubs and brush concentrations.
- 3.2.6 At the discretion of the CWP Committee, stands of bitterbrush, rabbit brush, and sagebrush may be left where they will not contribute to fire spreading into tree canopies. Concentrations of bitterbrush, rabbit brush, and sagebrush are desirable for wild animal habitat, dust and weed control, as well as aesthetics. These plants have proven to be successful in protecting roadway and pathway easements from damage, and providing effective barriers to cyclists, pedestrians, and motorized vehicles.
- 3.2.7 Removal of Ponderosa pines is permitted only when the CWP Committee confirms a tree is diseased, poses a hazard, is located in an overcrowded condition, or is in the canopy of a larger tree. When thinning trees around a Ponderosa pine, consideration shall be given to increasing the distance between trees to greater than the minimum 10-foot canopy separation, measured at the base of the canopy (drip line).
- 3.2.8 Ladder Fuels and all branches and other debris from felled and limbed-up trees shall be disposed of by chipping in place, by hauling to a recycling location, or by burning by a certified fire specialist. Any contractor proposing burning as a method of disposal shall submit a complete description of experience with burning, a burning plan, and proof of sufficient insurance to the RECOA Board of Directors to obtain approval before work begins. Any permits required by local fire officials must be obtained and submitted to the RECOA Board of Directors before burning starts. Final coordination of the scheduled burning will be accomplished with RECOA.
- 3.2.9 Roadside trees may be removed if within 20 feet of a road edge to reduce the threat of wildfire along evacuation routes.

- 3.2.10 When conducting wildfire protection activities, RECOA shall make every effort to avoid accidental vegetation removal on private properties. RECOA will mark boundary lines and notify Owners electronically prior to each year's fuel reduction work on RECOA or adjacent unirrigated golf course property. The notice will stipulate that Owners are responsible for contacting RECOA prior to commencing wildfire protection measures if boundary flagging appears to be inaccurate.
- 3.2.11 Restoration of private property will be required only if Owners previously notified RECOA of incorrect boundary flagging or if wildfire protection standards have not been followed. When necessary, all restoration will be performed according to ARC and RCWPP standards. Restoration vegetation, once planted, becomes the property and responsibility of the Owner, who will be solely responsible for the care, watering, and survival of the restored vegetation.

3.3 RIDGE NEIGHBORHOOD COMMON PROPERTIES

- 3.3.1 Wildfire protection and fire abatement practices shall be implemented in irrigated and non-irrigated common areas of The Ridge Neighborhoods (Creekside, Desert Sky, Highland Parks, Vista Rim, Eagle Creek, Forest Ridge, Forest Greens, The Falls, Eagle Springs, and Scenic Ridge) to establish and maintain a sustained wildfire protection environment. *Wildfire Protection / Fire Abatement Practices for Ridge Neighborhoods* ^{7.5} specifies landscape practices to reduce wildfire risks on Neighborhood common properties.
- 3.3.2 Within the prescribed Neighborhood common area, Eagle Crest Management is responsible for the annual accomplishment of wildfire abatement activities. Recurring wildfire abatement will occur in the irrigated and non-irrigated Neighborhood areas and will complement contract-directed landscape maintenance requirements. Wildfire abatement shall be accomplished in May and June annually and be completed by July 1.

4.0 **DISPOSAL OF DEBRIS**

- 4.1 The disposal of vegetation and debris removed from private property is the responsibility of the Owner.
- 4.2 Owners must ensure that contractors working on private property are responsible for disposal of all debris created.
- 4.3 The preferred methods of disposal are to chip and blow the debris in place over the ground at a depth no greater than two inches or to haul the material to a landfill or recycling facility.
- 4.4 Owners are encouraged to participate in the Annual Ridge FireFree Event to conveniently dispose of qualifying trees, limbs, shrubs and other flammable plant debris at street side.

5.0 PROGRAM ENFORCEMENT

- 5. 1 Each Owner shall carry out and manage wildfire protection measures on their property in compliance with the RCWPP.
- 5.2 Failure of an Owner to carry out and manage their privately-owned property in compliance with the RCWPP will be subject to The Ridge Enforcement Policy and Fine Schedule described in the Association Policies and Procedures for the Use and Enjoyment of the Ridge at Eagle Crest by Its Owners (2022).

6.0 PROGRAM REVIEW AND AMENDMENTS

6.1 The CWP Committee shall review the RCWPP at least every five years and submit a report to the RECOA Board of Directors. At any time, the RECOA Board of Directors, by a majority vote, can change this program to meet conditions existing at that time.

7.0 REFERENCES

- 7.1 Greater Redmond Community Wildfire Protection Plan (2022). A copy of the plan is available at: http://www.projectwildfire.org/cwpps/
- 7.2 "Are you prepared for wildfire?" Brochure was produced by FireFree.org and is available at: http://www.projectwildfire.org/resources/
- 7.3 Fire-Resistant Plants for Home Landscapes (2023), an Oregon State University Extension Service Publication may be found at the OSU Extension Service website https://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog/pub/pnw-590-fire-resistant-plants-home-landscapes
- 7.4 Highly Flammable Plants and Fire-Resistant Plants. (March 2020)
- 7.5 Wildfire Protection / Fire Abatement Practices for Ridge Neighborhoods (March 2018)

Note to Reader: All references noted in section 7.0 above are available on the Ridge Owners website: (www.ridgeowners.org / Association Info / Committees & Volunteering / Community Wildfire Protection / Wildfire Protection Resources & Information.