

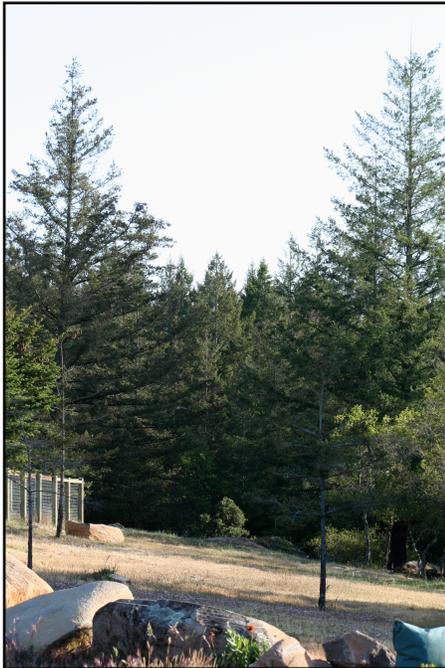
Fountaingrove II Gazette

Volume V, Issue 2

Spring 2008

Firebreak Work on Schedule

Fire Department Issues Deadline for Weed Removal of May 1st.



Maintaining a 100 foot firebreak throughout our 200 acres of open space is a difficult and labor-intensive job the OSMA contracts for and supervises each year. This year, the fire department has declared May 1st as the deadline for the first round of clearing brush and weeds for fire safety. In years with more rain, that deadline comes later. Unfortunately, with such a dry spring, the danger of fire is already upon us.

Our firebreak contractor, Marizco Landscape Management, having completed our firebreak maintenance for the past two years, knows our open space well and will complete the first pass of weed

whacking on time. A second pass of weed clearing will take place later this summer. Additionally, several areas of our firebreak will be getting a more intensive firebreak treatment (clearing small shrubs, limbing up trees, removing larger debris) over the coming weeks.

got weeds?

The Fire Department's May 1st deadline applies to all of us. Check your backyard. Do you have weeds and grasses growing over 6" tall? What about thick brush or a debris pile? You have a responsibility to clear those fire hazards and keep them cleared throughout the dry season. Do your part to keep us all fire safe this and every year.

Scotch Broom - Ugh!

Yes, it's beautiful this time of year...the cheery bright yellow blooms along all of our wild land roads. But if you keep track year after year, you will notice that it is taking over those wild lands.



An aggressively invasive species in California, broom (*Chamaecytisus*, *Cytisus* or *Genista*) is a prodigious reseeder, highly flammable and poisonous. It grows quickly and crowds out native species and destroys wildlife habitat.

Incredibly, you can purchase this plant at the local Home Depot and many other mass market nurseries.

The OSMA actively fights this and other invasive plants. Please help do your part. Don't plant it in your landscape (It is among the plants not allowed in Fountaingrove II), and if broom is creeping into your yard, remove it before it takes over.

Spring Is Here...and So Are Rattlesnakes

Warm weather brings us all outside, so remember to keep an eye out for our poisonous critter neighbors. According to the Dept. of Fish and Game, though rattlesnakes are dangerous if provoked, they also provide humans with a tremendous service - they eat rodents, other reptiles, and insects, and are in turn eaten by other predators.

Generally not aggressive, rattlesnakes strike when threatened or deliberately provoked, but given room they will retreat. Most snake bites occur when a rattlesnake is handled or accidentally touched by someone walking or climbing. The majority of snakebites occur on the hands, feet and ankles.



Rattlesnakes can cause serious injury to humans on rare occasions. Most bites occur between the months of April and October when snakes and humans are most active outdoors.

Many a useful and non-threatening snake has suffered a quick death from a frantic human who has mistakenly identified a gopher snake, garter, racer or other as a rattlesnake. A gopher snake has the added unfortunate trait of imitating a

rattlesnake by flattening its head and body, vibrating its tail, hissing and actually striking if approached too closely.



A rattlesnake is a heavy-bodied, blunt-tailed snake with one or more rattles on the tail. It has a triangular-shaped head, much broader at the back than at the front, and a distinct "neck" region. Also note that rattles may not always be present, as they are often lost through breakage and are not always developed on the young. A young rattlesnake will have a "button" on the tail tip. Other snakes' tails will come to a distinct point.



From top to bottom: photo 1: Rattlesnake; photo 2: Gopher Snake; photo 3: King Snake; photo 4: California Boa. Only the rattlesnake is dangerous.

New Landscaping in Fountaingrove II

Have you noticed the refreshed landscaping along Fountaingrove Parkway between Hadley Hill Drive and Kendell Hill? The plants along that stretch had long been stressed because of a serious irrigation problem, so many had died or were headed in that general direction. After extensive investigative work and dogged determination, the irrigation problem has finally been corrected and the newly installed plants have a promising future!

The OSMA Landscape Committee has been hard at work on their next project: Heathfield Place. In the coming weeks crews will be installing irrigation and planting an array of California natives, along with some non-native, drought tolerant plants, transforming the former blank slate along the cul-de-sac.

Other ongoing landscaping projects include filling in irrigated holes with fresh plants where dead ones have been removed.

Think the Open Space Needs Improvement? Stop!

“Use Permit Provisions, Fountaingrove II East, General Property Development Standards, 1B. Open Space: Open space areas are provided for native plant and wildlife habitat conservation, preservation of visual values, preservation of natural drainage, erosion control, and passive recreation.”

A handful of Fountaingrove II homeowners have taken it upon themselves to “improve” the open space by planting trees or shrubs, sometimes even providing irrigation. Debris and landscape clippings have also been found. Not only does this create problems with maintenance, it also poses fire hazards in our fire-break. Please be aware that vandalizing the open space comes with fines, and they will be imposed. The OSMA encourages all its homeowners to beautify their landscapes - as long as it's on their own property.

Putting things into the open space is one thing, but what about taking something out? Maybe you'd love to improve your landscape, but you need some rocks. Removing rocks, plants or mulch from the open space seems harmless enough, but it is considered vandalism, and fines will be levied. Additionally, cutting or removing trees or shrubs in the open space is a serious violation that carries a substantial fine.

Can I give my landscapers access to my property through the open space?

Many of us have thought about how easy it would be to allow our landscape crew access to our backyard through that vast open space behind our fence. The fact is, homeowners must ask permission from the OSMA Board before giving the thumbs up to landscapers, pool builders, contractors, etc. Why? Some open space has irrigation pipes, valves, drainage pipes, etc. that are damaged by uninformed contractors. Moreover, much of our open space is home to endangered native plants that the OSMA is responsible for preserving. And what happens if a contractor's vehicle accidentally sparks a fire behind your fence? It's a frightening possibility.

So, be a good neighbor. Respect our open space and it will be a beautiful asset for years to come.

Pick Up the Poop!

Dog owners - this means you!! Please be aware of the following Santa Rosa Ordinance:

7-28.010 Animal nuisances prohibited.

No owner or person otherwise having an animal in his care, charge, control, custody or possession, except a disabled person using an assistance dog, shall permit or allow any animal to do any of the following:

- (A) Defecate on any public street or other public property without immediately cleaning or removing the excrement to a proper receptacle.
- (B) Defecate on any private property other than of its owner without the consent of the owner, lessee or other person in control of the private property.

Any person owning or otherwise having an animal in his care, charge, control, custody or possession on any public street or other public property shall carry a tool or device to be used for cleaning or removing animal excrement. This tool or device shall be presented to the Poundmaster or his Deputies upon demand. (Ord. 2943 § 16, 1992)



The Fountaingrove II Gazette

The Fountaingrove II Gazette is published quarterly by the Fountaingrove II OSMA. Any submission information/ requests may be directed to the OSMA Board through its property management company: Focus Real Estate & Investments

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Stay Informed - Via Email

Be sure your name is on our email update list. Get timely and important neighborhood update notification. Your name and email address will not be shared with anyone else, and it will be hidden in group emails.

Simply send an email with your name to: editor@fountaingrove2.com and state that you want to be on the update list.

Contacts

See a problem? A dead tree in open space? A broken irrigation pipe? Contact Focus Real Estate & Investments at 544-9443.

2008 OSMA Board: Jeff Schween, Dennis Searles, Dan Cummins, JPaul Dumont, Randy Rufenacht

OSMA Board meetings are usually held at 3:00 on the third Wednesday of the month at Focus Real Estate & Investments at 393 Mayette Ave. Call 544-9443 to confirm.

Recycle Those Plastic Grocery Bags at the Curb!

Yes, you can now put clean plastic bags (#2 HDPE and #4LDPE) in your recycle bin. Stuff clean, dry bags in a clear plastic bag and knot the top.

Accepted: grocery bags, produce bags, bread, newspaper and retail bags, dry cleaning bags - even plastic zipper-type bags!

Not accepted: dirty or moist bags, CD or other "crunchy" plastic, cellophane, food wrap, painted or glued bags.

For more details, call (800) 243-0291.

Fountaingrove II
Open Space Maintenance Association
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