

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Change in tree density requirement makes Forest Care program available to more landowners in the San Bernardinios!

BLUE JAY, CA – Forest Care, a landowner assistance program based in the San Bernardino Mountains, has lowered the property tree density requirement from 200 to 100 trees per acre. This means that more landowners will be able to qualify for grant funding to thin their trees.

Through federal grants from the US Forest Service, Forest Care reimburses landowners 75 percent of the cost of thinning small diameter trees, removal of some brush and pruning of trees 8 ft. from the ground. The program is administered by the San Bernardino National Forest Association and delivered in partnership with CAL FIRE.

“This change will significantly increase our ability to address clearance issues on private properties in the mountain communities,” said Program Manager Julie Crick. “We’re excited to be able to offer this to people who may have fallen just short of our previous requirement and encourage those landowners to get back in touch with us.”

Historically, Southern California forests have adapted to light periodic fire. Long term fire suppression has resulted in a high density of small trees and shrubs that would have otherwise been naturally thinned. A healthy, thinned forest may have 50-150 trees per acre. Many areas across the San Bernardino mountain communities have 700-800 trees per acre or more, which creates unhealthy forest conditions as well as unnecessary fire risk.

“The lowering of our tree per acre requirement is really important for homeowners living in communities like Wrightwood, Mt. Baldy, Idyllwild, and Big Bear,” said Program Coordinator Allison Roth. “These areas are more brush-dominated and often don’t have the stand density of places like Lake Arrowhead and Crestline but as we saw this past fire season they are still at great risk.”

To find out if your property qualifies at 100 trees per acre call 1-888-883-THIN to set up an appointment to meet with a forester.

The San Bernardino National Forest Association (SBNFA) manages 6 volunteer and visitor programs, including Forest Care. SBNFA is a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization and is funded through grants, donations and corporate sponsorships. The San Bernardino National Forest Association exists to support the USDA Forest Service in carrying out its mission of caring for the land and serving people, and to bring people, partners and funding resources to important forest projects. Forest Care is primarily funded through a grant from the USDA Forest Service. It is administered through both SBNFA and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. For more information on Forest Care, contact Shawna Meyer at (909) 744-9510 x 121.