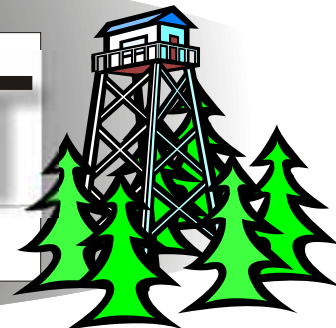


THE LOOKOUT



A publication of the Groom Creek Fire District



Proudly Serving Groom Creek Since 1970

Fuels Management Update

The Groom Creek Fire District is continuing our fuels management projects as in the past. We will begin the dumpster program for this year on April 6th and continue through mid-June. We have had great success with this program in the past and request that anyone utilizing the dumpster or performing any defensible space work on their property complete a sweat-equity form so that we can show our community's participation in the grant project.

The fire district has contracted with Southwest Forestry, Inc. to address thinning of the larger diameter trees that are not in the scope of work for our fuels crew. The contract provides for a professional forester to assess, prescribe and execute a treatment on individual parcels. This service is available to all landowners in the community (thinning private parcels to mirror the work being completed on US Forest Service lands surrounding the fire district is a goal of our fuels management projects). Scientific data from the Ecological Restoration Institute of Northern Arizona University is the basis for this prescriptive thinning.

Our current grant project also has a provision for the creation of a demonstration area that would exemplify the thinning prescription around structures, powerlines and along roadways to be addressed under the next grant project on a district-wide scale. This work will be performed only with written permission of the landowners. Ideally, we would like to have a 10 acre demonstration area and will be contacting landowners in the near future.

As a community identified in the Federal Register as being "At-Risk" of a major wildland fire conflagration it is imperative that we have a plan to restore the forest to a healthy, fire-resistant ecosystem. It is also incumbent upon us to leave the forest and the community in a better condition than we found it so that our future generations can live, work and play in Groom Creek as we have been able. We will continue to have public meetings about this in order to educate ourselves and the community as to the best manner in which to proceed. See page 4 for our next meeting date.

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The Groom Creek Fire District Board meets in regular session on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at Station 41 on Friendly Pines Rd. and Spur Lane. Public attendance is encouraged and welcome.

Volunteers are always needed. For more information visit www.groomcreek.org

Road Project Report

On January 20th the Groom Creek Fire District held a meeting for the landowners in the Upper Groom Creek and Spruce Mountain areas. The proposed project to improve the roadway was discussed.

The Fire District will be working to reduce the vegetation along Old Miner, Yeagan, Preddy and Ridge roads. The objective of this fuels project is to improve the safety of the roadway since this route is identified as the secondary fire exit for that area.

The road area treatment parameters were discussed and the potential for private land treatments in conjunction with the project was offered. The contractors that will be addressing the larger vegetation along the roadway will be in the area already and will make it more economical for extending the treatments onto private parcels. A suggestion from one of the landowners was to have a site visit to show the desired outcome. This suggestion was addressed by the marking of the vegetation along the route and a walk-through that was held on February

10th. Anyone who was unable to attend these meetings can call the Fire District office to schedule an individual meeting.

The road surface improvement will be pursued with Yavapai County when the vegetation has been treated. The County will be applying for the funding to improve the road through FEMA. This funding will be in the form of a grant in order to make this improvement at no cost to the landowners affected. A letter of intent has already been filed with the County for this project. This funding is competitive and dependent on the federal budget and may take a while to secure.

Our desire for the roadway improvement is to accommodate two-way traffic along this route. It is also our contention that the residents of these areas pay the same tax rates as other areas of the Fire District where the county maintains the roads and should enjoy the same benefits. If you have any questions about this project please contact Chief Bentley at the fire station.

ALS Service

Advanced Life Support (paramedic) service will be coming to the Groom Creek Fire District. Our Captains are working to achieve this level of certification as a means to improve the standard service that the fire district provides. Captain Wakefield is already an ALS provider and Captain Manzanedo is currently attending the paramedic program through Yavapai College. Captain Fay will be attending the program beginning in the summer.

In order to graduate, our personnel have to complete several hundred hours of clinical time in hospitals throughout the state and field time with other ALS providers. This education is a one-year program and our personnel are doing this while working full-time at the station.

ALS providers can perform many more treatments in the field and have more stringent re-certification requirements than our current Basic Life Support provider level.

Ranger Grant

The Groom Creek Fire District has applied for a grant for a Polaris Ranger from US Smokeless Tobacco Company. This is a much needed piece of equipment as we have



 POLARIS
RANGER

seen a marked increase in the number of rescue calls in remote areas over the last three years. The Ranger will be equipped with a bed that can carry a patient, a rescuer and the necessary equipment.

If awarded, we will also be able to use this to access remote wildland fire calls.

Park Committee Report

The Park Committee of the Groom Creek Firefighter's Association has been meeting to determine a master plan for the Groom Creek Park property located across from the fire station. The plan includes a ramada, picnic tables, bbq grills and playground equipment. The goal is to have the ramada completed before the 4th of July picnic. So far the Committee has raised about \$12,000 from the fund-raising events of last year (Halloween Festival, 10k run, Tostada Dinner, movie nights, etc.) The community's support has also been shown by the generous donations of many of our residents.

The events planned for this year will be posted in the sign board at the entrance to the park as soon as the dates and events are determined. The Groom Creekers are selling t-shirts to raise money for the park. If anyone is interested please call Claudia Starr at 776-7451. As soon as the park plan is finalized, we will be posting the plan in the sign board. We are looking forward to another year of great events to bring the community together.

Groom Creek History

The Prescott National Forest recently completed renovation of the 100-year old Groom Creek Schoolhouse south of Prescott and anticipates renting it to the public on a daily basis. Beginning in April 2007, groups will be able to reserve the Schoolhouse building for meetings, receptions, weddings, community gatherings and similar uses.

The Schoolhouse, built in 1902 and important to the Groom Creek community through the 1950's, is listed on the National Register of Historic Buildings as a unique example of a two-room schoolhouse from the early 1900's. The building was acquired by the Forest Service in 1967. However, the building was used very little the past ten years and was deteriorating from lack of maintenance. A grant from the Forest Service Arizona Cabin Rental program provided funds for restoration. Rental proceeds will now provide funds to manage and maintain the building, plus provide for additional renovation and improvements at the Schoolhouse.

The building and adjacent picnic area will rent for \$150 per day. The Schoolhouse building accommodates groups of 60 people in a meeting or dining room configuration. When the building is used in conjunction with the adjacent picnic area, the facility is suitable for groups of up to 100 persons. The building is furnished with tables and chairs. The picnic area has nine tables, a fire ring and an amphitheater.

Excerpt from Georgia Belle Nichols Johnson Tells

About Her Life Up Until 1930.

(<http://perso.orange.fr/rancho.pancho/Georgia.htm>).

"The school teacher was single and had her sister living with her. She was in the 7th or 8th grade. We went right on in the grades we had started in Nutrioso. The next term we again had a single woman teacher. She had a "gentleman friend" from Prescott whom she later married. His name was Day and the kids use to "sing" in very loud voices during recesses and after school "It's never night at Miss Shemmer's on Sunday because Day is always there." The second term there were 16 pupils in the school and seven of us were in 7th grade.

I remember an Easter picnic and egg hunt that the whole community took part in, and a night when we all went up a mtn. trail to rob a bee tree. It was scary and exciting, and of the whole crowd I had to be the only one who was stung. There was plenty of honey for each family to fill their bucket. We roamed the hills and played in old abandoned mines where we could all have been buried alive and nobody would have known where to look for us.

Leon was fire lookout on Spruce Mtn. the summer of 1917. He had a cabin at the foot of the tower and I went up and stayed with him. We spent our evenings playing poker for matches. Perhaps the best memory of Groom Creek was the warm summer nights when we sat out on the front porch and Mama sang for us. She knew so many songs, some sad, some funny. We never tired of listening"



Groom Creek Fire District

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CPR Classes

Thanks to all members of the community who have attended our CPR and First Aid classes. We will continue to offer these classes to all residents of the Fire District and their families at no cost. The curriculum includes CPR for adults, children and infants, environmental emergencies, basic first aid skills and use of an automated external defibrillator (AED).

Our next class is scheduled for Saturday, March 10th from 8:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. and will include lunch. If you are interested, please call the fire station at 778-6519 and speak with Todd Bentley. Leave a message if we are not available and we'll get back with you to confirm your attendance.



Class space is limited to 8 people, so reserve your place as soon as possible.

Firewise Day 2007

The Groom Creek Fire District will hold or annual FireWise Day on April 14th at 10:00 at the Fire Station.

We will talk about all of our fuels management programs, fire season forecast and be available to answer any questions about the fire district.

A demonstration of our structure protection trailer will be given.

We will serve hot dogs, hamburgers and other refreshments at the conclusion of the presentation.