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East Foothills FireSafe Council Receives USDI Bureau of Land Management Grant for Defensible Space Fuel Reduction Programs in Santa Clara County

San Jose, February 2, 2010 – The East Foothills branch of the Santa Clara County FireSafe Council (SCFSC), a local non-profit organization dedicated to preventing wildfires in Santa Clara County, has been awarded a grant from the USDI Bureau of Land Management through the California Fire Safe Council (CFSC), to help residents build Defensible Space around their homes. This grant will allow the organization to focus its programs in the high fire risk areas in the East Foothills communities east of San Jose. The funding will be used for Defensible Space Chipping Programs and critically needed Community Outreach and Education efforts.

“This funding will enable us to provide additional chipping for residents, including low-income and seniors” says Allan Thompson, SCFSC Treasurer/Director and East Foothills FireSafe Council (EFFSC) Founder. “We also plan to work on priority projects identified in our recently approved East Foothills Community Wildfire Protection Plan. Through Federal Grants and local matching funds, SCFSC is able to provide these services to the community free of charge.”

In addition, SCFSC has expanded its Community Outreach and Education programs, including Smokey Bear Education for youth in libraries and schools.

While the East Foothills communities east of San Jose have not experienced a major fire in 2009, smaller brush fires in and around the area have local fire officials concerned as the increased fuel load poses a real threat. Many areas in the East Foothills, such as Alum Rock Park’s south and west-facing slopes, provide the highly combustible vegetation to ignite and spread wildfires, threatening homes, structures, and lives.

SCFSC programs have made an impact on wildfire prevention for residents throughout the county. In 2007 and 2008, the SCFSC Defensible Space Chipping Programs successfully protected 3,500 homes, 10,550 people, and \$3.5 Billion in property values in Santa Clara County. Accomplishments in 2009 to date include protecting over 2,700 homes, 8,000 people and \$2.6 Billion in property values.

To learn more about these free Chipping Programs, or the Santa Clara County FireSafe Council, visit the SCFSC Website at www.SCCFireSafe.org. The Santa Clara County FireSafe Council is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Our mission is “Mobilizing the people of Santa Clara County to protect their homes, communities and environment from wildfires.” The council meets at 2:00 PM on the second Tuesday of each month. Interested organizations and individuals are welcome to attend! For more information and meeting locations, see www.SCCFireSafe.org, e-mail info@SCCFireSafe.org or call (408) 975-9591.

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