



NEWS RELEASE

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County Fire Uses Goat Grazing to Mitigate Hazardous Wildfire Fuels In San Bernardino

Today, the San Bernardino County Fire Protection District (SBCoFD) announced an evolution in wildfire community risk reduction. SBCoFD and San Bernardino County Land Use Services (SBCoLUS) will use goats to clear dry, grassy fuels that increase the threat of wildfire for hundreds of residents in the Little Mountain neighborhood of San Bernardino. This unique community risk reduction project is an environmentally friendly, safe and effective method of creating defensible space.

These San Bernardino County agencies have partnered with Environment Land Management (aka ELM Goats) out of San Diego to bring over 250 goats to Little Mountain. The goats will eat away large sections of dry grass, weeds, and thistles, clearing approximately 50 acres of flammable materials. The goats will eat about 1 acre per day and are very effective in steep, rocky terrain.

In addition to reducing the threat of wildfire, the goats naturally fertilize the ground and keep it well packed. When goats eat weed seeds, the seeds lose the ability to regrow. The result is a healthier, nutrient dense soil that is less susceptible to erosion and regrowth of dangerous fuels.

The goats are protected from predators by an onsite goat handler and trained guard dogs, as well as around-the-clock, armed security provided by Allied Security. The guard dogs assist in herding the goats to make sure that they remain in the designated fenced areas. The San Bernardino Municipal Water Department will provide the 300-400 gallons of water that the goats will drink per day.

“Goats are one of the most effective fire prevention tools available,” explained San Bernardino County Fire Chief Dan Munsey. “Areas cleared or thinned by goats recover more naturally and resist wildfires, giving fire crews the upper hand in protecting life and property.”

The San Bernardino County Fire Protection District is committed to looking for new, cost effective methods to reduce the risk of wildfire. Fire officials will continue to seek funding to conduct similar fuel reduction projects in various wildfire prone areas throughout the county.

As the temperatures get warmer, SBCoFD encourages all residents to make sure they are prepared for wildfire. Create a Ready! Set! Go! Personal Wildfire Action Plan. Learn how to create defensible space around your home. Sign up for the Telephone Emergency Notification System (TENS), and download the Ready SB County Disaster Preparedness App at SBCEFire.org.

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