For Immediate Release

Contact: Seth Schalet
Santa Clara County FireSafe Council 408-975-9591 or
sschalet@sccfiresafe.org

Santa Clara County FireSafe Council Awarded New Funding $93,500 Grant For 2023-2024 State Fire Capacity Program

The grant will support SCCFSC's new Community Education and Volunteer Neighborhood Ambassador Program, a pilot volunteer program in high and very high fire severity zone neighborhoods to reduce wildfire risks.

September 24, 2024, Saratoga, CA—The Santa Clara County FireSafe Council (SCCFSC) announced today it has been awarded a new 2023-2024 State Fire Capacity Program grant of $93,500, to create a new community volunteer program. The Santa Clara County FireSafe Council Firewise Neighborhood Ambassador Program aims to enhance Fire Adapted Communities (FAC) efforts by implementing a pilot volunteer Firewise Neighborhood Ambassador Program. The project focuses on utilizing the Firewise USA® program in CAL FIRE high and very high severity wildland urban interface (WUI) areas. It builds a structured volunteer program through training volunteers in a "train the trainer" model to expand capacity at the neighborhood level for wildfire preparedness. Volunteers act as subject experts and leaders in their communities, working with SCCFSC and local fire departments to assess neighborhood risks, plan community workdays, remove biomass, introduce educational programs, and pursue Firewise USA® recognition. The program also supports ongoing education efforts, including regular meetings, workshops, and updates on wildfire information through various channels.

According to Seth Schalet, CEO of Santa Clara County FireSafe Council "This is a critical step in building out a sustainable and impactful volunteer program to support the residents of Santa Clara County living in high-risk Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) areas. The nature of wildfires is evolving, coupled with population and structure growth in WUI areas, increasing wildfire risk. By engaging and educating community members with significant supporting resources through this new grant, the FireSafe Council continues to enhance our programs and deepen our impact on county residents."

Santa Clara County FireSafe Council Program Director, Amanda Brenner Cannon stated “As the Program Director for the Santa Clara County FireSafe Council, I am thrilled to be able to use my knowledge and bring this program to Santa Clara County. The support the California Fire Safe Council is giving us to move this work forward will make a huge impact on our WUI communities. This is an exciting opportunity to better engage with residents and meet the growing requests for Firewise USA® support.”

About the 2023-2024 State Fire Capacity Grant Program:

Funding provided by a grant from the Cooperative Fire Program of the U.S. Forest Service, Department of Agriculture, Pacific Southwest Region, through the California Fire Safe Council.

About Santa Clara County FireSafe Council: As a 501 (c)3 nonprofit with a 20-year history, Santa Clara County FireSafe Council’s core mission is to mobilize the people of Santa Clara County to protect their homes, communities, and environment from wildfires. As a trusted partner across the government, fire service, corporate and WUI residential communities, SCCFSC has led some of the most complex hazardous fuel reduction projects in the region. With a board and advisory council that has a deep expertise across the wildfire ecosystem including wildfire and environmental research, academia, emergency management, regional planning, technology products and wildland firefighting leadership, Santa Clara County FireSafe Council is uniquely positioned to lead cross-sector collaborations, government-private partnerships in Silicon Valley, Santa Clara County and beyond. For more information, visit www.sccfiresafe.org

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Santa Clara County FireSafe Council
14380 Saratoga Ave
Saratoga, CA 95070
Phone: (408) 975-9591
Website: www.sccfiresafe.org/