

Forest Stewardship Committee

The community has survived yet another year (our fifth) without Mountain Pine Beetle. The Forest Service reports no new Mountain Pine Beetle outbreaks in the Castle Rock area. The same is true for Tussock Moth and Saw Fly Wasp. We have seen the incidence of Ips and Turpentine Beetle return to 2015-2017 levels. Some ten to fifteen Ponderosa showed signs of these beetles. It appears that 2018 was an anomaly with some thirty trees affected. The presence of these beetles in the Village is to be expected. They are part of the ecosystem and almost exclusively attack stressed and dying trees.

This marks the fifth year of noxious weed control. Acres of Canada Thistle, Knapweed and Leafy Spurge have been reduced to patches. Leafy Spurge, very difficult to control, finally appears to be on the run.

The Mistletoe infested trees along Indigo Way were sprayed for a third year. Several on Bantala Place were sprayed for the second time. A program of cutting Mistletoe out of trees as opposed to spraying was initiated. This approach will result in a more permanent solution as spraying only retards growth of Mistletoe without killing it. The Mistletoe north of the Northstar sub-association remains contained for a second year. A large infestation (some thirty trees) was removed from open space on Elk Point Lane this spring. The Village Lake sub-association was audited for Mistletoe. None was found.

Four sub-associations and several individual homeowners have consulted with South Metro Fire Rescue regarding a fire mitigation program. These programs have been reviewed and approved by the Master Association. In the future, homeowners will be discouraged from planting junipers near foundations as they are highly flammable. The Starbuck sub-association employed some 200 goats to prune its oak for fire mitigation purposes. The overall impact of this venture looks good and will be further evaluated in the spring.

The Metro District has agreed to participate in a test program to determine if the health of the Village's native grasses can be improved. The test program will evaluate (1) the impact of the frequency of mowing on stands of native grass and (2) the impact of over seeding areas prone to erosion.

Forest Stewardship Committee members of 2019 include Dave Cooper (chairman), Jack Hummel, Suzy Beck, Pat Foley, Jim Huffman, Sam Mersfelder and John Paul.

Respectively Submitted

Dave Cooper

Chairman, Forest Stewardship Committee