

Dear Board of Supervisors:

Please accept this as a letter of support for the Hazardous Vegetation and Rubbish Abatement Ordinance you are considering tomorrow at your board meeting.

I have several reasons for writing in support of this ordinance.

As the founder and current chair of the Yorkville Fire Safe Council, the most predominant complaint I hear from our roadshed coordinators, trying to do fire safety work on their roads, is about the "one house with the absentee or disinterested owner, who is unwilling to work with the rest of the roadshed to prepare for fire events."

As a landowner in Yorkville, I have experienced first hand the frustration and difficulty in getting some of the downhill neighbors in our ranch to realize that their dense brush and unkempt areas will fuel oncoming fires, which will likely result in my property and house being far more likely to have fire threat, even with my 100 feet of defensible space and bare mineral earth around my house.

There are more than a few Community members who live near properties that are creating a hazard. This is a significant problem. The lack of a stronger ordinance and enforcement is a significant barrier in resolving abatement problems.

Being ready for the coming wildfires is an issue that requires a community effort. Property owners who do not comply with defensible space requirements and/or do not reduce dangerous fuel loads and/or allow invasions of flammable invasive plants and/or maintain other fire hazards on their property put our entire community at risk.

More homes burn down from ember than direct flame and embers are reported to travel up to a mile. So, a badly maintained property that hosts a fire can endanger a wide area of neighboring homes.

Most fires are started by human activity. Being able to enforce basic risk management requirements for property owners is an important step toward reducing human agency in the disasters we have all suffered from in recent years.

Insurance companies are also reportedly starting to assess fire risk based on the overall risk in an area. Improperly maintained properties put their neighbors at risk of increased premiums and/or loss of insurance which damages our economy and makes it even harder for people to afford homes in Mendocino County.

I urge you to vote in favor of the Hazardous Vegetation and Rubbish Abatement ordinance.

Thank you for your consideration and support

Lisa Bauer