

Star Valley Ranch Community becoming Firewise in Wyoming



“Star Valley Ranch community fire hydrants and water systems were incorporated into the infrastructure after a Firewise assessment was conducted. Forest Service photo by Charity Parks.”

The town of Star Valley Ranch was the first incorporated town in the state of Wyoming to receive Firewise community status. The community had a goal to become a Firewise adapted community. One of the first steps in becoming a Firewise community was doing a Firewise assessment.

“The Firewise assessment was a good starting point to see what we could do to become a Firewise community,” said Greg Greenhoe, Chairman for the Natural Resource Board for Star Valley Ranch. “We looked at how we could work with land owners, we looked at our road system to improve turn around access, and our water system.”

Because of Firewise, the community was able to tie grants together to not only help with our water system, but also to help with our community getting fire hydrants as well.



Star Valley Ranch community annual fuel (dead wood) pick up. Residents bring their dead wood to the roadside for county public works crews to pick up. Forest Service photo by Charity Parks.”

In the town of Star Valley Ranch, homeowners and landowners can sign up to join the Firewise program. The county does a Firewise assessment with the landowner to identify the best strategies to protect the home and property from wildfire, and the work is done by the landowner.

The community has an annual pick up of dead wood that residents can bring to the roadside near their property that the county public works crews pick up and the wood is taken to a central burn pile to be burned later in the winter.

The transportation system in the Star Valley Ranch was identified as an item that needed improvement in the Firewise assessment. So the county is working on many of the roads, especially the circles and courts that had inadequate turnaround space so that in the event of a wildfire, the large fire apparatus' would be able to get around the various courts and narrow road endings. The county has made many improvements to the road system in the community.



“What was once a dead-end street in the Star Valley Ranch community is now being turned into a turn around so that fire apparatus and large equipment can turn around safely at the end of a road. Forest Service photo by Charity Parks.”

“We are believers in the Firewise program because it gets the community involved. We’ve had a grant from the state of Wyoming which we’ve worked in partnership with the Forest Service on both sides of the National Forest Boundary and our town. We have five miles of common boundary between the Bridger-Teton National Forest and the town of Star Valley Ranch,” said Greg Greenhoe, Chair, Natural Resource Board for Star Valley Ranch. “This program allows individual landowners to participate in reducing fuels on their property and at the same time we are reducing fuels and constructing a shaded fuel break alongside the eastern side of town. It’s really been a great benefit to us within the town.”



“Star Valley Ranch community in Wyoming is adjacent to the Bridger-Teton National Forest. Forest Service photo by Charity Parks.”

“Lincoln County has a comprehensive county plan that addresses cohesive fire strategies, and when we developed that plan, we wanted Firewise to be one of the lead programs in it. In our county plan, we believe that it is completely necessary to maintain defensible space around our communities, not only to preserve the homes, but to preserve the quality of life. If we burn down the National Forest around the homes, the quality of life and the quality of our watersheds goes down. So it is highly valuable and it is also healthy for our economy. It is essential that our National Forest is healthy as it has a direct impact on our community and our economy. Firewise works, as we have seen through previous fires that have impacted our county,” said Kent Connelly, Lincoln County Commissioner.

“Firewise and firefighter safety are essential to one another. We want to have a forest that the firefighters have a chance of fighting the fire in the case there is one in here in the future. Because over mature, dead timber is just too difficult to defend, with an intensity that is too difficult to fight. A key element to having a healthy forest around us is to have a mosaic pattern of growth so that there are different levels of ages and growth. Safety is essential and so having a Firewise plan for our community is essential,” said Kent Connelly, Lincoln County Commissioner.