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Santa Clara County FireSafe Council invites public comments on a newly developed East Foothills Community Wildfire Protection Plan

San Jose, February 20, 2007 – The Santa Clara County FireSafe Council (SCFSC) has released the first Public Draft of a Community Wildfire Protection Plan for the East Foothills area east of San Jose for comments. Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs) are the new standard for evaluating a community's risk from wildfires. CWPPs not only set forth a detailed plan for ongoing wildfire prevention maintenance in a specific area, but also provide other important benefits to the community.

These Benefits to the Community include:

1. Higher priority for Federal grant dollars for fuel reduction projects
2. Quicker turnaround for environmental permits or navigating compliance issues
3. Communities can organize projects to reduce fire prone fuels without Federal funding
4. Identification of appropriate Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) boundaries with community input

The East Foothills CWPP was developed by SCFSC and Dudek, a wildfire prevention planning company, with assistance from the San Jose Fire Department, CDF (now CAL FIRE), and many other stakeholders and residents. It is the first CWPP completed in Santa Clara County. The San Jose Fire Department Wildland Officer, Fire Captain José Guerrero, has been involved in the planning process from the beginning. Captain Guerrero states, "We're very excited about this project. It's a great example of how the public and private sectors can take steps to reduce the risk of wildfires in the foothills of San Jose."

A presentation summarizing the East Foothills CWPP, the Executive Summary and the complete Public Draft CWPP can be downloaded from the SCFSC Web site at www.SCCFireSafe.org/CWPPs.htm. Questions or comments should be e-mailed to Allan Thompson at AllanT@SCCFireSafe.org or call (408) 272-7008. More information on CWPPs is available from the California Fire Alliance at www.cafirealliance.org/cwpp/.

The Santa Clara County FireSafe Council also has a 20-page, step-by-step guide for homeowners and residents available on-line. The guide, *Living With Fire in Santa Clara County*, is at www.SCCFireSafe.org/FireSafe/LivingWithFire.htm. This guide is appropriate for the Wildland Urban Interface areas and includes information on creating Defensible Space, fire resistant plants and roofing materials.

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The Santa Clara County FireSafe Council is a 501(C)(3) non-profit organization. Our mission is "Mobilizing the people of Santa Clara County to protect their homes, communities and environment from wildfires." The council meets at 2:00 PM on the second Tuesday of each month. Homeowners, residents and representatives of all interested organizations are welcome! For more information and meeting locations, see www.SCCFireSafe.org, e-mail info@SCCFireSafe.org or call (408) 975-9591.

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