



Colorado State Forest Service  
5060 Campus Delivery  
Colorado State University  
Fort Collins, CO 80523-5060  
970.491.6303; FAX 970.491.7736  
<http://csfs.colostate.edu/>

# NEWS

## **For Immediate Release**

October 27, 2015

**Contact for Reporters:** Donna Davis

(719) 383-5780

[donna.davis@colostate.edu](mailto:donna.davis@colostate.edu)

## **Crowley County Couple Recognized for Fire Mitigation Efforts**

**ORDWAY, Colo.** – Last week, Fred and Sylvia Sassone of Crowley County were recognized by the Colorado State Forest Service for organizing multiple community fire mitigation events this year. Donna Davis, district forester for the CSFS La Junta District, presented the Sassones with a letter from President Obama, which was addressed to participants in the 2015 National Wildfire Community Preparedness Day.

Early this year the Sassones, who also are Colorado Master Volunteer Forest Stewards, applied for and received a \$500 Wildfire Community Preparedness Day Grant from the National Fire Protection Association and State Farm Insurance. The couple used the money to cover expenses for the First Free Firewise Crowley County Champion Chip on May 2, a wood-chipping event in which material resulting from local fire mitigation efforts or other landscaping could be brought in to the county fairgrounds and turned into mulch.

By removing the vegetation from their properties, residents were able to reduce the fuel available for wildfire near homes and other structures. Volunteers and county workers chipped the material – brush, tree limbs and other vegetative material brought in by landowners.

Enough money was left over after the May event that the Sassones led fall wood-chipping events on two Saturdays last month, also at the fairgrounds. The spring and fall events were supported by the CSFS, Crowley County, Town of Ordway, Crowley County Volunteer Fire Department, Master Volunteer Forest Stewards and Clean Valley Recycling.

The CSFS La Junta District serves Baca, Bent, Cheyenne, Crowley, Kiowa, Otero and Prowers counties. For more information about reducing wildfire risk, conservation/agroforestry plantings, and community trees and forestry, contact the district at (719) 383-5780 or visit <http://csfs.colostate.edu>.

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