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# NEWS

## **For Immediate Release**

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## **Littleton Community Earns National Recognition for Wildfire Preparedness**

**LITTLETON, Colo.** – A Littleton community near Deer Creek Canyon Park has earned Firewise Communities/USA® recognition from the National Fire Protection Association for its efforts to reduce the vulnerability of homes and landscapes to wildfire.

The Sampson Community worked with the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS), the Inter-Canyon Fire Protection District and the Jefferson County Sheriff's Emergency Management and Preparedness office to conduct a wildfire hazard assessment and develop a plan to address safety concerns. Residents of the community are currently working with the Jefferson County Fuels Mitigation Crew to implement the action plan, which includes treating 30 acres of vegetative fuels along an evacuation road and completing a shaded fuelbreak along common roads to create safer ingress/egress for both residents and emergency responders.

“This Firewise recognition acknowledges the hard work and dedication of our community, the progress we have made over the last five years, and reinforces the desire to continue moving forward with our efforts,” said Jennifer Volkman, Sampson Community fire mitigation committee chair. “It has been a successful and positive collaborative effort, made possible by working with local and state agencies along with community involvement and participation. I am excited to see what more we can accomplish!”

The CSFS works with the National Fire Protection Association to implement the Firewise Communities/USA program in Colorado, and provides technical assistance and education to interested landowners and communities to help them take action in preparing their homes against the threat of wildfire. Five steps are required for a community to receive the national designation:

1. Obtain a wildfire risk assessment from the state forestry agency or a local fire department
2. Form a Firewise board
3. Create an action plan based on the wildfire risk assessment
4. Conduct a “Firewise Day” event annually
5. Invest a minimum of \$2 per capita in local Firewise actions for the year

“Wildfire mitigation is essential for many communities in this area,” said Kyle McCatty, forester for the CSFS Golden District. “Many rural communities are located in areas historically prone to frequent natural wildfires, including the ponderosa pine forests where many Coloradans live. The current trends indicate that wildfires here will continue to get worse, and if nothing is done to mitigate, we would expect more and more homes destroyed by wildfires.”

The Sampson community is the sixth community in Jefferson County to achieve the national Firewise Communities/USA recognition, joining many other communities nationwide that have been recognized since the program's inception in 2002.

The association will be hosting its "Firewise Day" event on May 31 at 10 a.m. The Firewise event will provide an opportunity for community residents to learn more about efforts they can take to be Firewise. For more information about the event, contact Dore Strey at 303-882-9112.

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*The Colorado State Forest Service is the lead state agency for providing forest stewardship and management, fuels reduction and wildfire mitigation assistance to private landowners in Colorado. Every year, the CSFS helps treat 20,000 acres of forestland, and assists approximately 6,400 landowners and hundreds of communities to help improve forest health. The CSFS is a service and outreach agency of the Warner College of Natural Resources at Colorado State University.*

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