

**Tyler Hartsell**

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**From:** nancywws@aol.com  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 7, 2023 7:02 PM  
**To:** Kim Dawson; BOS-Clerk of the Board  
**Subject:** El Dorado County Defensible Space Ordinance Comments

Board of Supervisors El Dorado County;

Just this evening is the first I have heard of and read through this proposed Ordinance. I admit that I haven't kept up with reading my legistar emails because mostly they have been Consent Items. I ask: Where has this Ordinance been made available to the Public for their input, as you say?

I am in Quintette, a largely below average income community between Georgetown and Lake Edson. I will speak for myself. I live on a teacher's pension; I pay a mortgage, Medicare and health insurance, fire insurance and property taxes. With what is left I attempt to limit expenses and take care of the property as best I can. This effort is limited by my age, 74, and the kinds of projects that are needed. My insurance agent visited last month to fill out the Farmer's Insurance Survey and we both gave up the effort of trying to fit my property into the basically uptown suburban model the survey demands. Since my insurance will now not be renewed, my agent will attempt to fit me into the Fair Plan. I have no idea what the cost of this will be. I have house repairs that need doing, trees that need removing, decks that are beyond their lifetime, felled trees that need splitting, a firewood pile close enough to the house to get to when the snow comes, limited water allowance and whatever else your Ordinance would describe as a hazard. Oh, and woodchips to try to keep the moisture in the soil. You might think I should move to a place where these requirements don't exist. Can't do it. My legislatively designed pension doesn't cover the cost of living where the cost of an apartment is greater than a mortgage!

I will attempt to list my concerns here:

1. Lack of prior notice of such a major Ordinance.
2. Lack of money to ameliorate any of the above mentioned problems.
3. DECAR's mention of the Catch 22 where one can't afford the repairs and thus can't sell the house to recover money.
4. The procedure you outline for fining those of us who don't have the money to accomplish your goals. Why fine someone who has no money? Then take them to small claims court to add on fees and %penalties? How about jailtime for not paying? Paying your officers to attend to all this? Creating a county of criminal homeowners? Well, that is a very inefficient method of accomplishing whatever it is you believe can actually be accomplished.
5. Public money is used by the forest service to do their forest management. Therefore, public money needs to be allocated if you pass this Ordinance. The forest service is welcome here. CalFire is welcome, too.
6. Studies: I don't see the research you used to prove that all this modification of our properties will make any difference in the protection of said property. I listen and I read; there are examples in

the latest fires of behavior that is unexpected and contrary to usual fire behavior. Fires do burn downhill. Fires are so hot they make their own weather. And how does the Ordinance address the daily wind shifts that blow the fires up the canyons and then back down? Do you really believe that your Ordinance can eliminate wildfires? Are you able to harness those traveling embers with up to five mile paths? Show us the research that says all the Ordinance asks for is anything more than an attempt to appear to be proactive and up to the mark? And the length of the thing, the cost to prepare it, the desire to push it through with one reading? Evasive maneuvers.

7. I resent that the county allowed building permits up here when apparently it is such a dangerous place to live. Whose responsibility is this conundrum? Can't be climate change, as that is touted to be untrue. PGE? They cut down the forest like crazy instead of solving their issues by ramping up their undergrounding work. The County? They are the ones that issued the permits and also declared little old Quintette a Regional Center capable of high density development!

8. The Ordinance states that hazard vegetation will be controlled and not regrow. What method do you advise us to use to accomplish no regrowth? Your Ordinance doesn't specify. Most people you might ask about this are going to reply that it isn't possible unless you use Round-Up, which has been proven to cause cancer. Also, we are to remove all the limbs and leaves and other plant refuse, but where is it going? Historically it goes into our burn piles and is turned into smoke and ash, much as the forest service does with its house-sized burn piles. Quintette doesn't have green waste collection by Waste Management. There is no apparent expectation that green waste will leave the Divide.

9. If homeowners cannot pay for the program in fines and fees, how will the County afford to hire and train all these folks who are going to be inspecting and monitoring the lack of progress?

10. We as a county have created an impossible situation. This is a dry landscape with grasses and oak trees all over the foothills and evergreens and oaks all over the mountains. This Ordinance appears to demand all of this dangerous and beautiful landscape to be denuded in order to protect people and houses. As a resident of this county, I expect our elected officials and their employees to create a much more intelligent and researched proposal than this. You might begin by interviewing residents of this county and find out what ideas might be out there that are more sensible and useful than this Ordinance. We aren't going to get reasonable insurance rates no matter what the Ordinance says. Farmer's Survey indicates that all of the things in the Ordinance still wouldn't satisfy all of their criteria. Ask Allison. They look at wiring, plumbing, trip and fall hazards, appliances and on and on.

Please do some more research. Please let the people of this county know what the Ordinance will do to them. Please, if you just can't resist all the cutting and killing, don't dump it all on us in one fell swoop. Think of the impact, the resistance, the people who won't be able to comply.

Sincerely,

Nancy DeRodeff  
Quintette