



National Park Service
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Rocky Mountain National Park Fire Management

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Neighboring Subdivision Receives Firewise Communities/USA Designation

The Windcliff subdivision bordering Rocky Mountain National Park recently earned the important Firewise Communities/USA designation. Firewise Communities/USA is a nationwide program that recognizes communities for taking action to protect people and property from fire risk in the wildland urban interface.

Windcliff is one of 58 communities nationally and only the third in Colorado to receive such recognition. "Achieving Firewise recognition is not a quick or easy process," said Jim Smalley, manager of the Firewise Communities/USA program. "Windcliff has done an outstanding job of creating a local Firewise task force and implementing Firewise principles. By preparing homes, structures and landscapes before a wildfire occurs, Windcliff has dramatically increased the chance that homes and structures will be protected when a wildfire occurs."

To receive Firewise Communities/USA designation, the Windcliff subdivision accomplished the following program requirements:

- Completed a community assessment and fire mitigation plan with local, county and state fire and forestry agencies.
- Formed a three-member Firewise board that invested \$35,000 in fire mitigation efforts.
- Conducted vegetation management and fuels mitigation projects within the subdivision on a semi-annual basis and organized several community workdays with residents volunteering 600 hours.
- Created and distributed fire mitigation information to all property owners and hosted an information table at their annual homeowner association picnic.

Board members Joe Walsh, Chuck Skeldon and Bud Duryea have been the energizing forces in realizing many significant Firewise improvements within Windcliff and are currently working on a comprehensive Community Wildfire Protection Plan to further protect their subdivision. "Windcliff residents have made the protection of their homes and the surrounding forestland a priority and are certainly deserving of this recognition," said Wendy McCartney, forester, Colorado State Forest Service—Fort Collins District. "Not only have they been successful in developing an ambitious mitigation program, they have set an example for other subdivisions in the Estes Valley and throughout Colorado."

For more information, visit the Firewise Communities/USA web site at www.firewise.org/usa.

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