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Work continues in the background on Lafayette/Walnut Creek Shaded Fuel Break

By Sora O'Doherty

The Contra Costa County Fire Protection District (ConFire) has received Cal Fire grant funding for the Lafayette/Walnut Creek Shaded Fuel Break project, according to Steve Hill, the district's Public Information Officer. In an update on the project, Hill noted that the district recently got approval from its Fire Board (which is the County Board of Supervisors) to hire the required environmental consultant to do pre-project related research.

It is expected that the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) study will begin soon. Once the environmental study is completed, the district expects that this summer mitigation work will begin for the important and potentially life- and property-saving safety work to proceed.

The entire project has been granted funding for three years to complete the entire 190 acres of shaded fuel break. However, the district anticipates that the work will be completed in approximately two years. Hill points out that the shaded fuel break will actually begin to deliver protection as soon as various portions are completed earlier than the estimated 24 months.

Hill noted that the Tunnel Hills shaded fuel break, which is managed by the Moraga-Orinda Fire District, will eventually connect to the Lafayette/Walnut Creek shaded fire break to create a continuous fuel break of some 20 miles to help protect the four cities of Walnut Creek, Lafayette, Moraga, and Orinda.

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