# Wildfire Partner Program - Home Ignition Zone Assessment (updated)

618 Park River Place, Park River West HOA, Estes Park, CO

**Complete**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Property Address** | 618 Park River Place, Park River West HOA, Estes Park, CO |
| **Homeowner Name** | Tom Shepherd |
| **Homeowner Contact Information (Email Required/Phone Optional)** | tomshep24@gmail.com // 831-707-4697 |
| **Ambassador Group** | Estes Valley |
| **Ambassador(s) Performing Assessment** | Ellis Thompson |
| **Date of Assessment** | Oct 15, 2026 00:00 MDT |

## Wildfire Partners Program Key Messages

Thank you for participating in the Larimer County Wildfire Partner Program, which is provided in accordance with national standards established by the National Fire Protection Association, National Wildfire Coordinating Group, and the Wildfire Adapted Communities Program from the National Fire Academy.

By taking part in your assessment and acting to reduce your risk, you are serving as a positive example for others in our community. Your leadership and stewardship will help create a positive change and build a more resilient community. The Wildfire Partner Program and its ambassadors are here to support you as you work to implement the following keys to wildfire resiliency:

- Active Shared Engagement
- Implement Your Individual Action Plan
- Work With Your Neighbors
- Actively Maintain Your Mitigation
- Understand That There Are No Guarantees

## Inspection

WAIVER

WAIVER: The attached Wildfire Partner Program Participant Agreement & Waiver MUST be signed

Wildfire Partner Program Participant Agreement & Waiver.pdf

**Homeowner signature acceptance of Wildfire Partner Program Participant Agreement**



Tom Shepard
Oct 16, 2026 11:33 MDT

WILDFIRE MITIGATION CHECKLIST

Home Identification

Address Sign Example:




| | |
|---|---|
| **Property is marked with a metal, reflective, high-contrast address sign that is visible from the road and can be seen from both directions.** | Yes - Maintain Condition |

Great job getting signage updated for each unit!

Property Access

| | |
|---|---|
| **Is there a locked gate on the access route to the property?** | No |

Structure

| | |
|---|---|
| **Exterior siding is fire-resistive (stone, masonry, metal, cement board, stucco) 4 feet up from ground.** | No - Mitigation Recommended |

For the sections that have wood going right to the ground, we recommend especially keeping these areas clear of any combustible debris and vegetation within 5ft. We recommend completely sealing these sections where cracks or gaps may be exposing insulating board to prevent embers from directly contacting it. Where these sections meet the ground or decks, we recommend metal flashing at the 90 degree angles to create a non-combustible landing spot for embers.


Photo 1

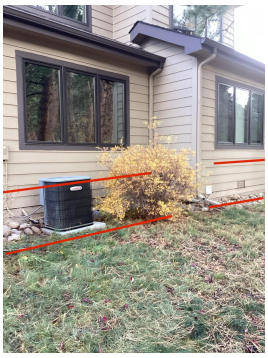

Photo 2


Photo 3


Photo 4

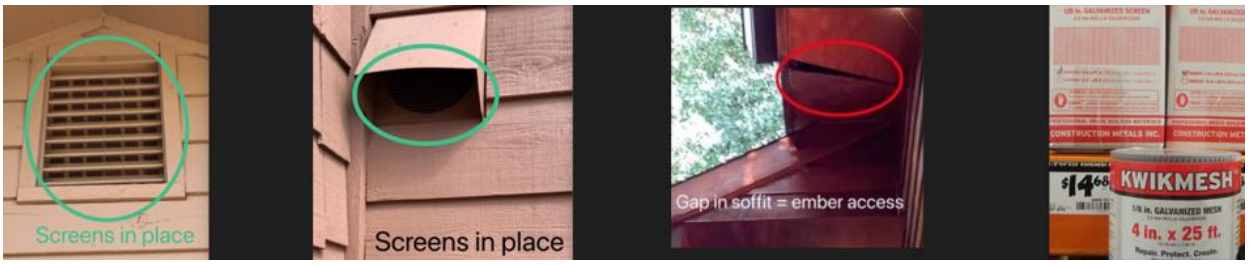
**Holes in siding, gaps in roofline soffit boards, and other openings are sealed with caulk, flashing, or trim.**

Yes - Maintain Condition

**Gable and soffit vents are protected from airborne embers with 1/8" metal mesh screens.**

Yes - Maintain Condition

Example Photos




**Windows/skylights are double pane/insulated/tempered.**

**Tip: Labels identifying tempered glass can usually be found in corner of window.**

Yes - Maintain Condition

All vents inspected were covered with 1/8 inch metal screening. Great work!

**Garage door is sealed with weather stripping and free of openings/gaps that could allow ember intrusion.**

Yes - Maintain Condition

Keep an eye out for damage or gaps in weather stripping. Often, critters that may damage the weather stripping trying to get into the garage. Garage doors will flex in high winds, possibly allowing embers in if the weather stripping is damaged.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Crawl space access doors in exterior foundation walls are sealed and protected from fire and ember intrusion.** | N/A |
| **Fencing sections in contact with homes and structures are non-combustible within 5 feet of the building.** | N/A |

## Roof, Eaves, and Gutters

| | |
|---|---|
| **Roof covering is fire-resistive Class A material (asphalt composition shingles, metal, concrete, clay) and free of openings, cracks, gaps.** | Yes - Maintain Condition |
| **Dormers, intersecting eaves, skylights, solar panels, and roof projections are free of cracks, gaps, and combustible debris.** | No - Mitigation Recommended |

Roof appears to be in good condition around the home. This is the most common place for embers to gather during a wildfire, so it's important to routinely check for any damaged sections (especially after hail/high winds) and make repairs as needed.

Many of the roofs in the HOA will experience significant needle accumulation if trees remain in the first 5 feet and/or if overhanging branches are no trimmed. It's important to REGULARLY keep these areas clear of pine needles, pine cones, and other dry vegetative material to prevent ignition from embers.



Photo 5

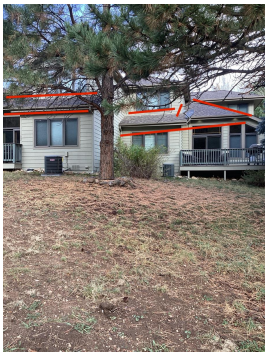


Photo 6

| | |
|---|---|
| **Gutters are metal (not vinyl) and free of combustible debris (pine needles, branches, leaves).** | No - Mitigation Recommended |

Many of the gutters in the HOA will experience significant needle accumulation if trees remain in the first 5 feet and/or if overhanging branches are no trimmed. It's important to REGULARLY keep these gutters clear of pine needles, pine cones, and other dry vegetative material to prevent ignition from embers.



Photo 7

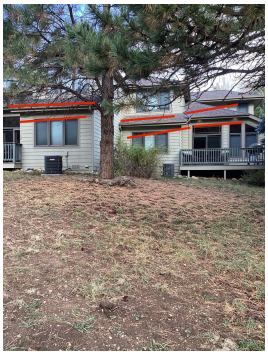
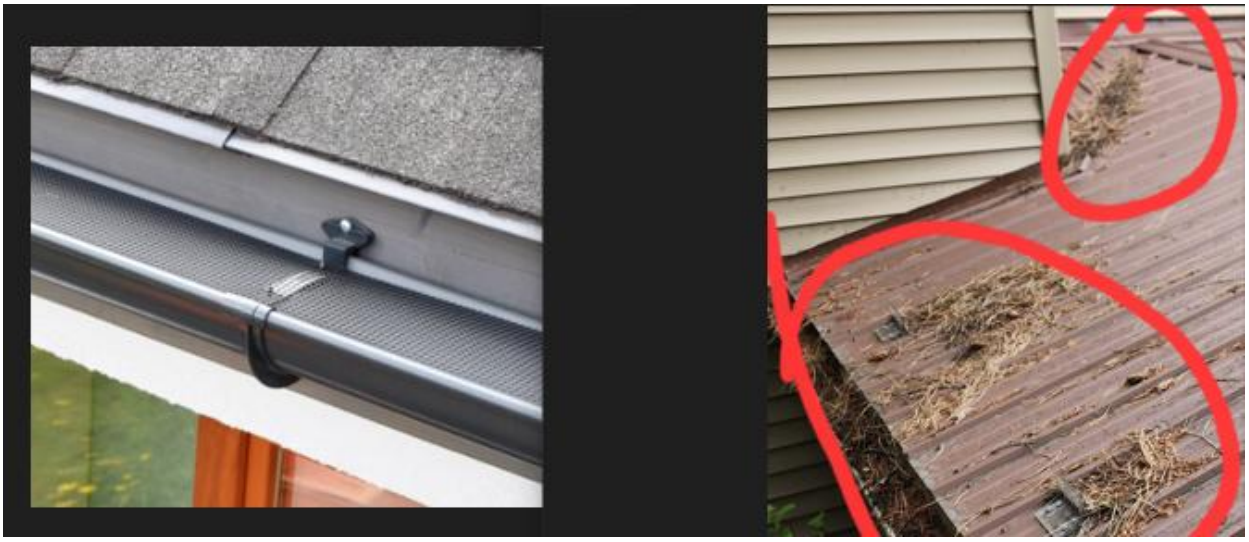


Photo 8

**Gutters have metal covers with wind-resistant clips.** No - Mitigation Recommended

Gutter guards could be a good investment in sections where you experience high pine-needle and debris accumulation, to prevent having to clear them out as much.

Sample Photos



## Chimney Spark Arrester

**Does the property have a chimney?** No

## Decks

**Does this property have a deck/patio or similar structure attached to home?** Yes

**Deck/patio attached to home is made of fire-resistant material (cement board, metal, masonry).** Yes - Maintain Condition

All decks observed are ignition resistant materials, but where decks adjoin to home was not inspected closely, so the following recommendation may already be in place.
We recommend 90-degree metal flashing in the corners of the deck where the deck meets the home. This area is a hot-spot for ember gathering and smoldering. Having metal in this corner will help prevent ignition of the home.


Photo 9


Photo 10


Photo 11

**Deck/patio attached to home is clear of combustible furniture, rugs, decor, permanent fabrics.**

No - Mitigation Recommended

We recommend there be no combustible materials on the deck. This includes wood furniture, wicker, cushions, and plastic materials. If any of these materials are going to stay on the deck, we recommend removing them prior to an impending evacuation (if time permits), as well as store them indoors during longer times away from the home (even in the winter months). Additionally, decks should be regularly cleaned of needles and leaves to resist ignition.

We recognize this is an ongoing maintenance issue, but it could be work educating homeowners about in the coming year.

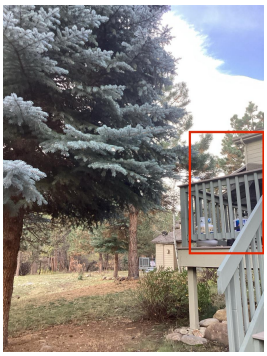

Photo 12


Photo 13


Photo 14

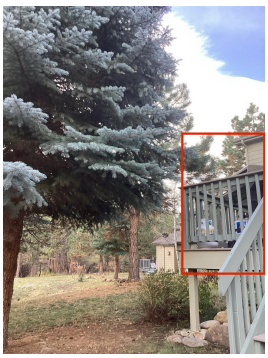
**Any grills presents are on a fire-resistive surface (metal tray or masonry paver stones) and spare propane cylinders are stored inside garage or storage shed - NOT directly on combustible deck/patio.**

No - Mitigation Recommended

We recommend grills that are on combustible decks be moved as far from the home as possible, and **have a fire-resistant mat underneath them.** This will help protect any propane tanks from flame impingement.

When grills are not being used, or in the event of an evacuation if time allows, it is recommended to store propane tanks indoors.


Photo 15


Photo 16

| | |
|---|---|
| **Area under deck is clear of combustible debris (vegetation, tree litter, leaves, pine needles, bark chips) and is not used for storage (firewood, lumber, fuel containers, etc).** | Yes - Maintain Condition |
| **Area under deck/patio is sealed off with 1/8" metal mesh or solid metal screening.** | No - Mitigation Recommended |

Pictured is an example of where we would recommend ⅛” metal mesh be installed on the exterior of the porch/deck. This mesh will help prevent the initial accumulation of tree debris in the first place, while also helping to restrict embers from getting under the deck during a wildfire.

In areas of heavy pine needle and cone accumulation, this screening could prevent accumulation under the deck. Again, this is an ongoing issue and could be worth educating homeowners about.

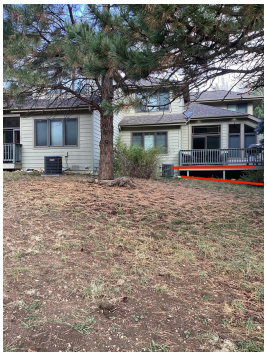


Photo 17

## Other Combustibles

| | |
|---|---|
| **Are there stacks of firewood on this property?** | No |
| **Are there fixed aboveground propane tanks on this property?** | No |
| **Recreational vehicles (ATV's, RV's, lawn mowers) used occasionally are stored as far from the home as possible.** | N/A |
| **Storage sheds, barns, detached garages, or any other structures within 30 feet of home are mitigated to the same level as the primary residence.**<br><br>**Tip: Regardless of location on property, every structure should have zones of defensible space.** | N/A |
| **Electrical power poles are maintained clear of combustible vegetation in a 5 foot radius around their base.** | N/A |

## ZONE 1 (0-5 FEET)

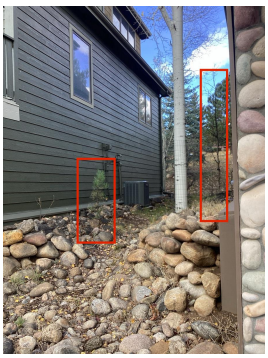
| | |
|---|---|
| **No flammable vegetation (including shrubs, slash, mulch, or other woody debris) in Zone 1.**<br><br>**Tip: Check nooks and crannies around structure - wildfire embers tend to collect in the same catchment areas as fallen leaves, or where snow drifts against a structure.** | No - Mitigation Recommended |

We recommend keeping the first 5ft out from the home clear of combustible materials. This is the most important zone to maintain to prevent a creeping ground fire from having a clear path directly to the home. Combustibles in this zone we want to minimize include; pine needles and pine cones, bark mulch, evergreen shrubs and trees, dry grasses, and other dead or dry plants.

Pictured are examples of shrubs that we recommend removing/trimming back more. These are fine options to have in terms of fire resistance, but their proximity to the home is still close. We want to remove anything that could come in contact with the home, or anything growing under eaves.

We recommend clearing out the nooks and crannies around the home that may be more prone to accumulation than others. Remember, most homes that burn in a wildfire are from the embers that travel away from the main fire and land in and around the nooks and crannies around the house. The more combustible debris we can remove (especially within the 5ft zone) the better.


Photo 18


Photo 19

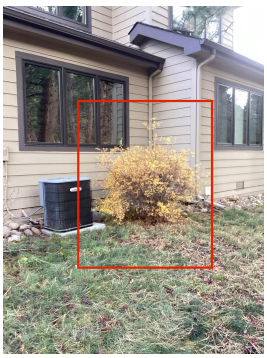

Photo 20


Photo 21


Photo 22


Photo 23

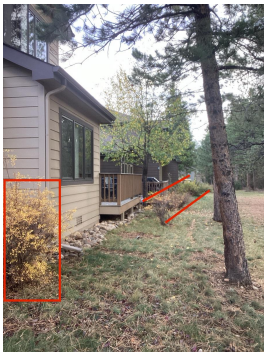

Photo 24


Photo 25


Photo 26

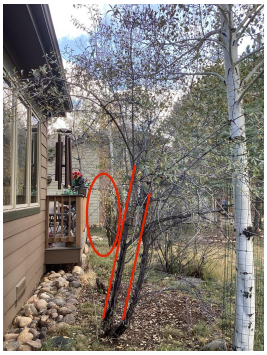


Photo 27

| | |
|---|---|
| **No firewood or other combustible materials (fuel cylinders, patio furniture, or other manmade debris) stored in Zone 1.**<br><br>**Tip: Check that spaces underneath decks, patios, or stairs are not being used for storage.** | N/A |
| **Any plants remaining in this zone have LOW flammability.**<br><br>**Attributes of LOW flammability plants include:**<br>**• Low oil or resin content**<br>**• High moisture content**<br>**• Soap, latex or pectin content**<br>**• Compact growth form**<br>**• Green stems**<br>**• Drought tolerant**<br><br>**Attributes of HIGH flammability plants include:**<br>**• High oil or resin content**<br>**• Low moisture content**<br>**• Tall growth**<br>**• Open form**<br>**• Fine wood (twiggy) stems**<br>**• High water need** | Yes - Maintain Condition |
| **Tree branches do not extend over the gutters or roof, and are at least 10 feet away from any chimney or gas fireplace vent.** | No - Mitigation Recommended |

We recommend no tree branches overhang/extend over the roof or be in close contact with the eaves/siding. As we spoke about, with conifer trees we want to have as much distance as we can. At least 10ft of space between the branches and the home would be our preference, but every little bit reduces risk if we can't get the full 10ft.

For the fir tree pictured (gathering pine needles in out boughs) we recommend taking this tree for its proximity to the home, and its fine fuel accumulations in the eaves.



Photo 28



Photo 29



Photo 30



Photo 31



Photo 32

**Trees and shrubs are not growing closely under or touching eaves or vents on the structure's exterior.**

No - Mitigation Recommended

We recommend no tree branches or shrubs be growing directly under eaves, overhangs, or underneath deck sections. Additionally, we recommend trimming back any branches (especially from conifer trees) that are within 10 ft. of the siding/roofs.

For the ponderosas pictured (along moraine, near the entry to the HOA) we recommend removing these trees due to their sub-standard health as well as the proximity to the home.



Photo 33



Photo 34



Photo 35



Photo 36



Photo 37



Photo 38


Photo 39


Photo 40

## ZONE 2 (5-30 FEET)

**Grass is maintained "lean and green" and is kept 4 inches tall or less.**

Yes - Maintain Condition

**Trees are limbed up 6-10 feet from the ground or 1/3 the total height of the tree, whichever is less.**

No - Mitigation Recommended

We recommend additional limbing of tree branches (pictured). The purpose of limbing up trees is to prevent a creeping ground fire from getting into the low-hanging branches of nearby trees. We recommend limbing up large, fully grown trees at least 6ft off the ground (from where the branch ends, not where it begins), and no more than ⅓ of the trees total height

The HOA has done a great job limbing trees, but as the tree goes, limbing can go higher (up to 1/3 the height of the tree). Additionally, many trees are adequately limbed at the trunk, but boughs are sagging toward the ground and could be trimmed up.


Photo 41


Photo 42


Photo 43


Photo 44


Photo 45

**Tree canopies have at least 10 feet of space between crowns.**

No - Mitigation Recommended

Pictured are some examples of possible gaps that could be created by selectively removing one or two trees. Whenever we can create these gaps, they can function as ‘fire breaks’ during a wildfire, and make a big

difference in helping force the fire to stay on the ground, where it is much more manageable.

This rule works best for ponderosa, fir, and other ornamental trees if the desired effect is uniform-density vegetation for privacy, allowing 10 feet between canopy edges helps provide protection for trees, and reduced the ability for fire to spread from tree to tree.

The areas along Moraine Ave. and shared areas between condos that are overplanted would benefit from this type of spacing. This will likely also improve tree health and reduce tree-to-tree competition for resources.


Photo 46


Photo 47


Photo 48


Photo 49


Photo 50


Photo 51


Photo 52

**Small groups of trees are spaced at least 30 feet away from adjacent clusters of trees (particularly conifers).**

No - Mitigation Recommended

Pictured are some examples of groups of trees that could benefit from some selective thinning. Selectively removing a few trees from these areas can help reduce the density of the fuel near the home, increase healthy growth of tree species (especially ponderosas), and preventing the spread of flames during canopy fires. We recommend groups of 3-6 trees with 30 feet of spacing between canopies.

This rule works great for lodgepole and other natural "clumps" of trees/vegetation as well as overplanted or dense young trees. It is recommended to create 30-foot breaks in the lodgepole row along the river and create "clumps" of trees. For lodgepole, these "clumps" help protect individual trees from windfall. When creating these "clumps" you can evaluate by tree health, as well as age and species diversity.



Photo 53



Photo 54



Photo 55



Photo 56



Photo 57

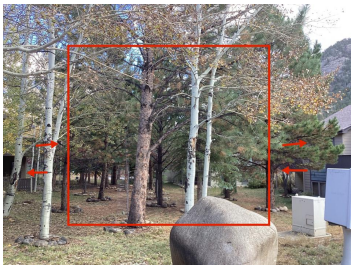


Photo 58

**Ladder fuels under remaining trees have been removed.**

**Tip: Ladder fuels are any vegetation that can carry fire from the ground into taller trees. Removing them reduces the risk of fire climbing into the canopy.**

No - Mitigation Recommended

We recommend clearing out ladder fuels under the larger trees. Ladder fuels can be grasses, shrubs, small trees, and dead material that have the potential to transfer a creeping ground fire into the low-hanging branches of larger trees nearby. Fire typically is much more manageable and slower moving when it stays on the ground. We recommend taking out ladder fuels in conjunction with limbing up trees for the most effective mitigation.



Photo 59



Photo 60



Photo 61



Photo 62



Photo 63

**Isolated shrubs are not growing under trees and are kept at least 10 feet away from the edge of tree branches.**

**Tip: Periodically prune and maintain shrubs to prevent excessive growth. Remove dead stems annually.**

Yes - Maintain Condition

**Shrubs clumps are properly spaced and sized.**

**Tip: Shrub clumps should be spaced at least 2.5 times their mature height apart, and each clump should not exceed twice its mature height in diameter. For example, a 6-foot tall shrub should be spaced at least 15 feet from the next clump, with a maximum clump diameter of 12 feet.**

No - Mitigation Recommended

We recommend clearing out some shrubs when they become dense and tightly grouped, especially up against the home. One of the principles we work off of is trying to create breaks in the fuels so the fire can travel easily. The recommended spacing for shrubs is to double the height of the tallest shrub, and provide that amount of horizontal spacing between shrubs. One way to reduce recommended spacing between shrubs is to keep them trimmed lower to the ground.

The HOA has done a great job removing juniper shrubs, especially next to homes, but many shrubbed areas around homes create a direct and nearly continuous path to homes.



Photo 64



Photo 65

**Common ground junipers have been removed from this zone whenever possible.**

**Tip: Ground junipers are highly flammable and often hold a layer of combustible material beneath them, increasing wildfire risk. If any remain, they should adhere to all shrub spacing guidelines and standards, and needles or tree litter underneath should be cleared out regularly.**

No - Mitigation Recommended

We recommend no junipers within 30ft of the home. Juniper bushes and trees are especially hazardous and produce a tremendous amount of flames and heat. We would encourage juniper removal even if they are

further than 30ft from all structures due to their hazardous nature.

GREAT JOB removing junipers! These are just a couple spotted near the river that we recommend moving. Keep and eye out for volunteer junipers trying to grow near homes.


Photo 66


Photo 67

| | |
|---|---|
| **No dead or downed trees, slash piles, or large accumulations of surface fuels in this zone.** | Yes - Maintain Condition |

ZONE 3 (30-100 FEET)

| | |
|---|---|
| **Tree crown spacing is adequate.**<br><br>**Tip: Tree crown spacing of 6–10 feet is suggested. Creating openings or small meadows between clumps of trees helps slow wildfire by forcing it to move along the ground rather than through the canopy.** | No - Mitigation Recommended |

We recommend similar notes on canopy spread going out 100ft from the home as we did for the 30ft zone. As much as we can, we want to develop fuel breaks in the canopies and have the trees be in clusters and groups, rather than continuous lines of fuel.


Photo 68

| | |
|---|---|
| **Excess slash is properly managed.**<br><br>**Tip: Any approved method of slash treatment is acceptable here - removal, piling and burning, lop-and-scatter, or mulching. Favor treatments that reduce the total amount of woody material, especially close to the home.** | Yes - Maintain Condition |

The contracted company is doing a great job removing slash after work.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Ladder fuels are minimized.**<br><br>**Tip: Reducing ladder fuels - by removing low branches and** | No - Mitigation Recommended |

**widely spacing surface fuels - lowers the chance of a surface fire climbing into the trees.**

We recommend clearing out ladder fuels under the larger trees. Ladder fuels can be grasses, shrubs, small trees, and dead material that have the potential to transfer a creeping ground fire into the low-hanging branches of larger trees nearby. Fire typically is much more manageable and slower moving when it stays on the ground. We recommend taking out ladder fuels in conjunction with limbing up trees for the most effective mitigation.

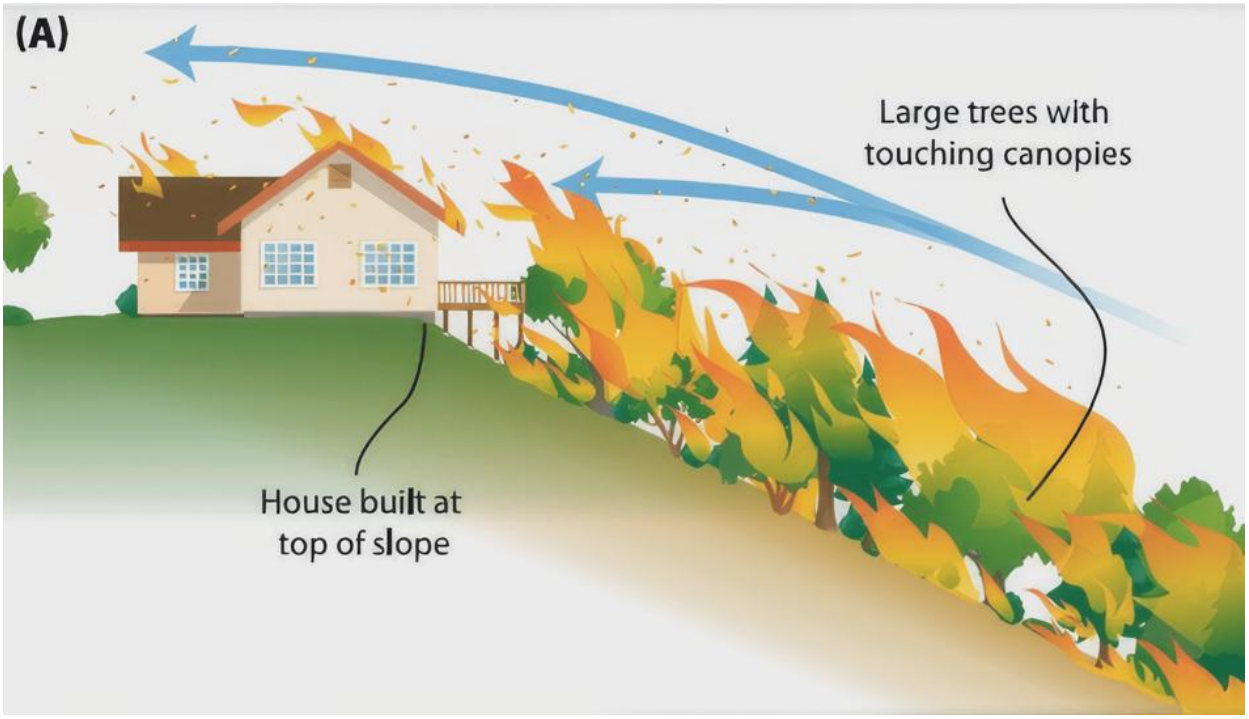


Photo 69



Photo 70

If the 100-foot distance for Zone 3 extends beyond your property lines, it is encouraged to work with neighboring property owners to create a continuous defensible space. Homes located on steep slopes or with significant topographic features may require a larger Zone 3, as wildfires burn uphill faster and more intensely than on flat ground. Steep slopes leading toward structures increase the recommended minimum distance for defensible space.




**What is the slope of this property?**

Flat to Gentle Slope = No increase to minimum defensible space.

Wildfire Resiliency and Preparedness Resources

Emergency Alert Notification

**Is the homeowner signed up for county emergency alerts?** No - Mitigation Recommended

It is recommended to educate all residents about evacuation notifications and resources and to provide annual reminders. Contact Ellis Thompson if you wish to have an education session about this issue. Ethompson@estesvalleyfire.org.

Wildfire Evacuation Preparedness Checklist:

• Sign up for your local Emergency Alert Notification System.

• Create an evacuation plan for your family members, pets, and neighbors who may need help.

• Evacuate early - leave immediately before or as soon as voluntary evacuation orders are issued for your area. Do not wait for mandatory evacuation orders to take action!

• Keep a full tank of gas in your designated evacuation vehicle at all times.

• Learn how to open your garage door manually in case of a power outage.

• Know at least two routes out of your neighborhood or area.

• Practice driving alternate routes ahead of time to ensure you're familiar with them.

• Prepare a "Go Bag" with enough supplies to be self-sustaining for at least 3-5 days away from home.

Evacuation Go Bag and Preparedness Checklist.pdf

Before the Fire Facts: Homeowner's Insurance Agent Conversation Guide

Before the Fire Facts Homeowner's Insurance Agent Conversation Guide.pdf

Home Inventory: Create a detailed inventory of your personal property (ideally with video of your possessions) saved in a cloud-based storage application for insurance reimbursement.

Home Insurance Inventory Checklist.pdf

Income Tax Credit: The State of Colorado provides certain tax incentives for performing wildfire mitigation measures on property located in Colorado. For tax years 2024 and prior, an income tax subtraction was allowed. For tax years 2023 through 2027, an income tax credit is allowed. Review the attached Colorado Department of Revenue document with your tax professional to possibly receive an income tax credit for completing wildfire fuel mitigation work on your own private property. Save receipts for wildfire mitigation expenses.

ITT Wildfire Mitigation Measures - March 2025.pdf

CSFS/CSU Fact Sheet - Low-Flammability Landscape Plants: Replace highly combustible shrubs, trees, and grasses in Zones 1 and 2 with these lower risk alternatives.

CSFS_CSU_Low-Flammability Landscape Plants.pdf

Wildfire Home Ignition Zone Guide: Share this helpful guide with your family, friends, and neighbors!

Wildfire Home Ignition Zone Guide.pdf

## Media summary



Photo 1

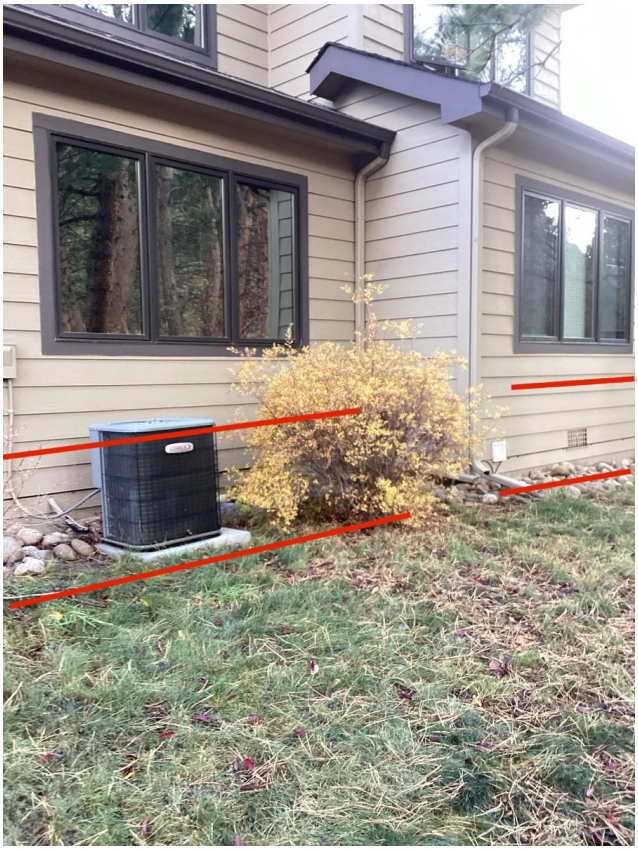


Photo 2



Photo 3



Photo 4



Photo 5

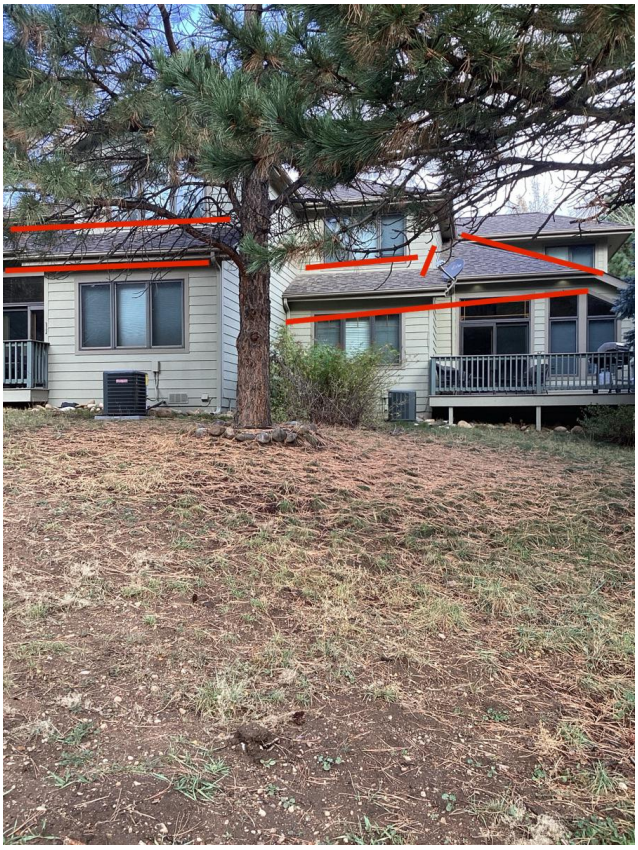


Photo 6



Photo 7

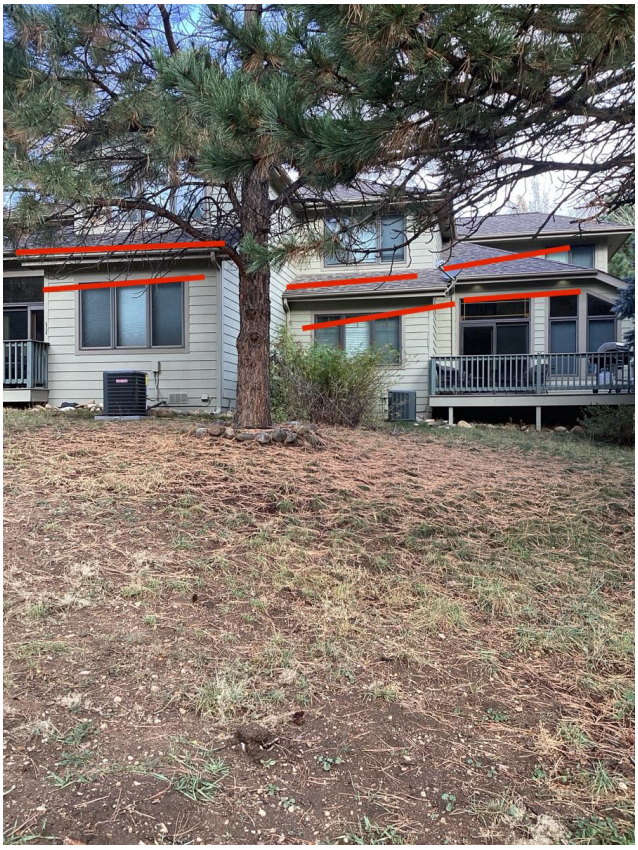


Photo 8



Photo 9



Photo 10



Photo 11

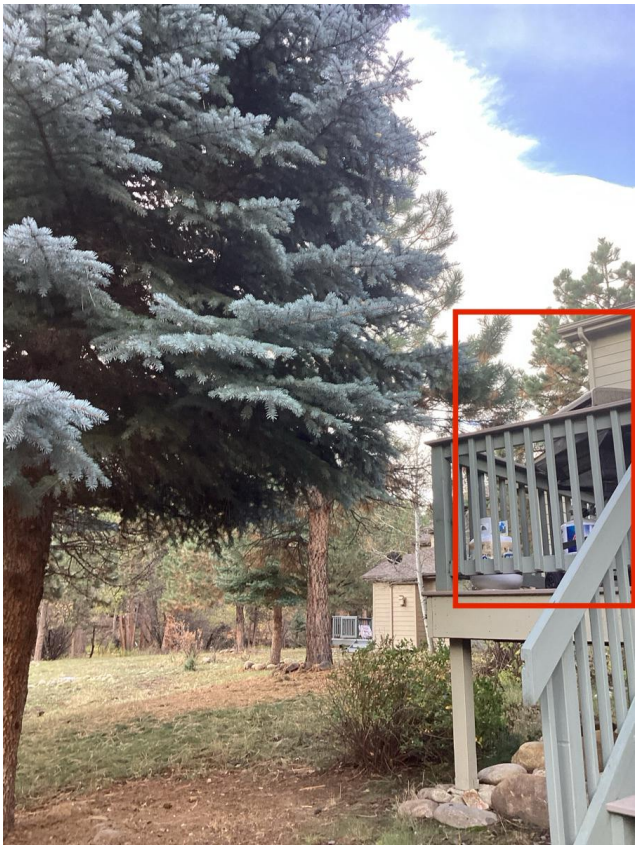


Photo 12



Photo 13



Photo 14



Photo 15

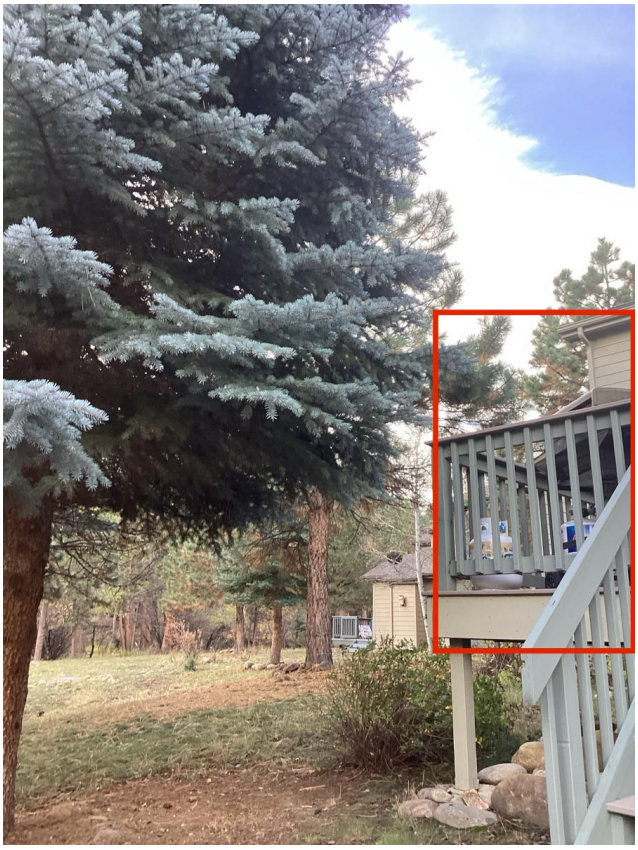


Photo 16

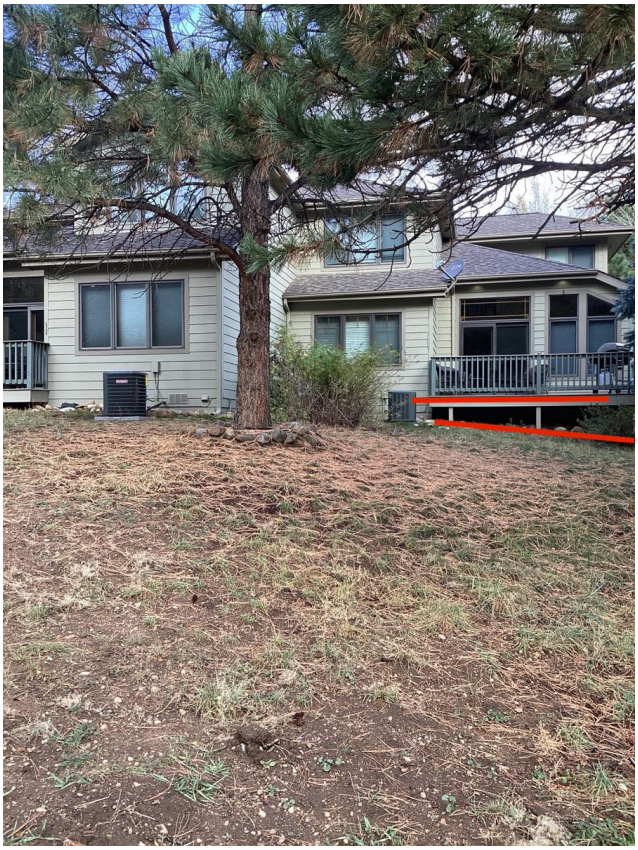


Photo 17



Photo 18

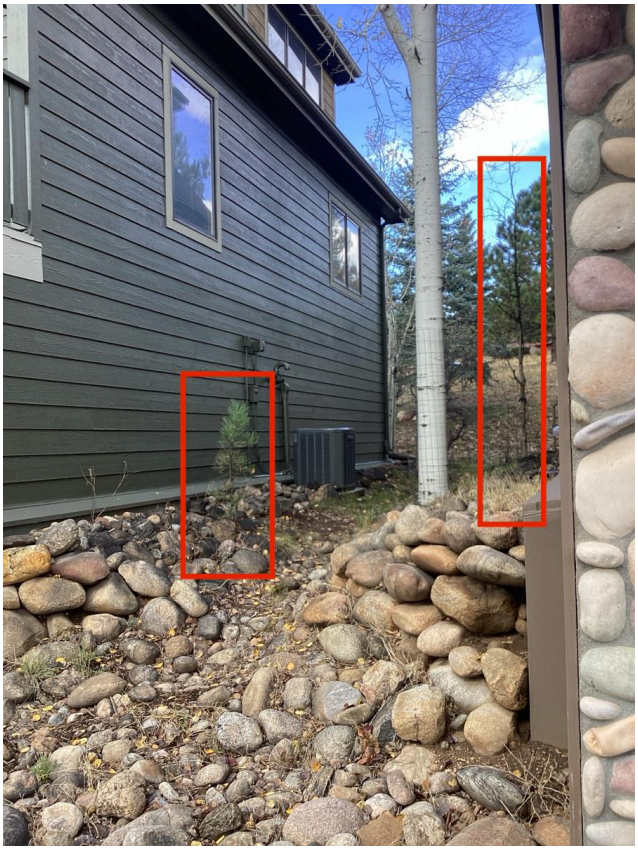


Photo 19

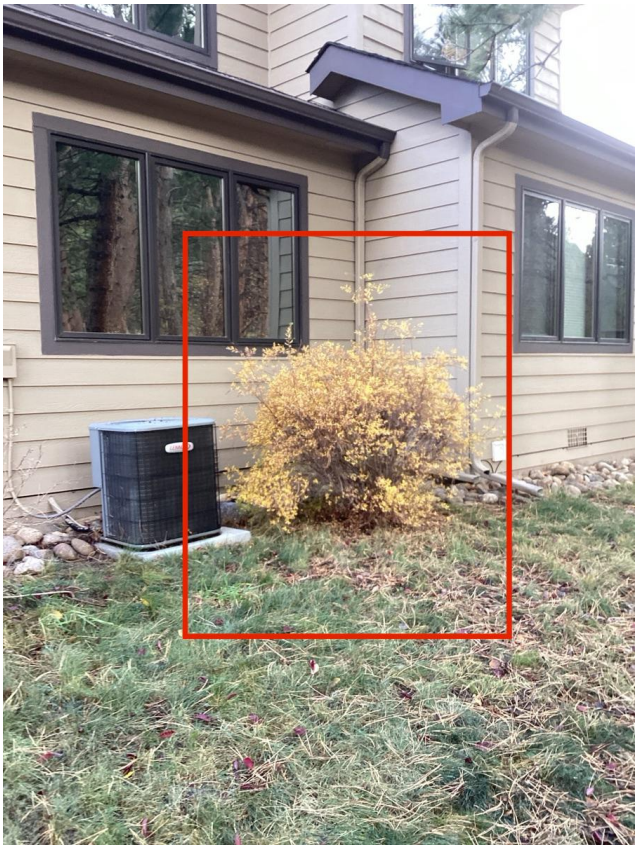


Photo 20



Photo 21



Photo 22



Photo 23

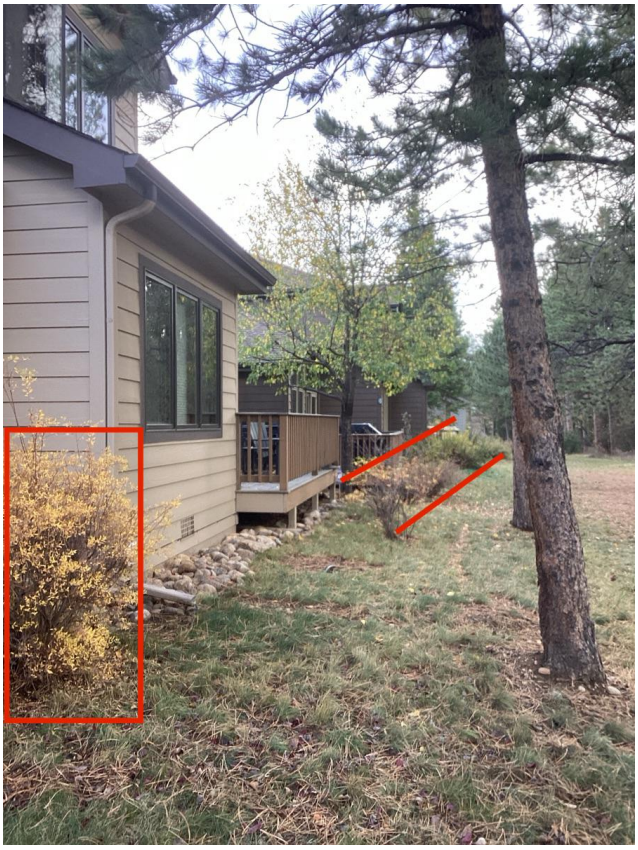


Photo 24



Photo 25



Photo 26



Photo 27



Photo 28



Photo 29



Photo 30



Photo 31



Photo 32



Photo 33



Photo 34



Photo 35



Photo 36



Photo 37



Photo 38



Photo 39



Photo 40

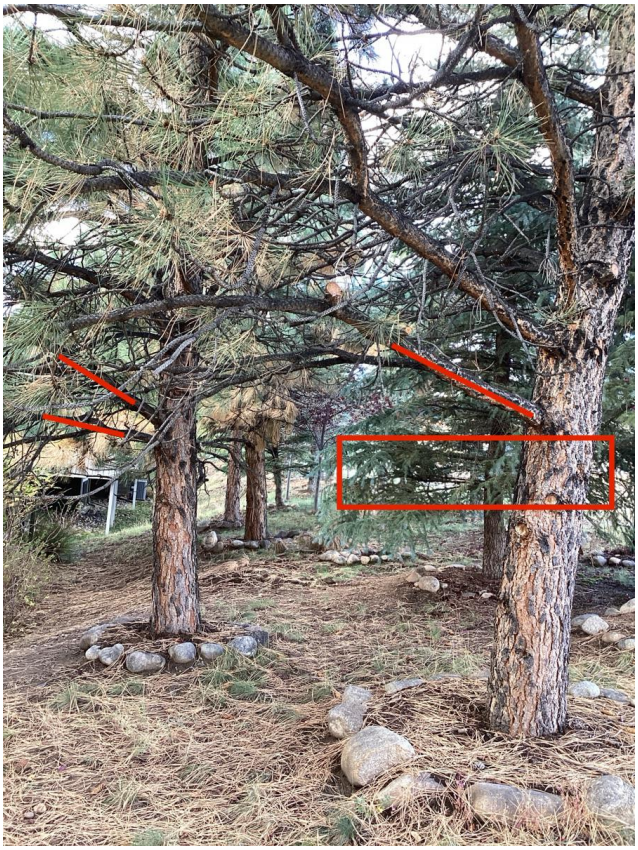


Photo 41



Photo 42



Photo 43



Photo 44



Photo 45



Photo 46

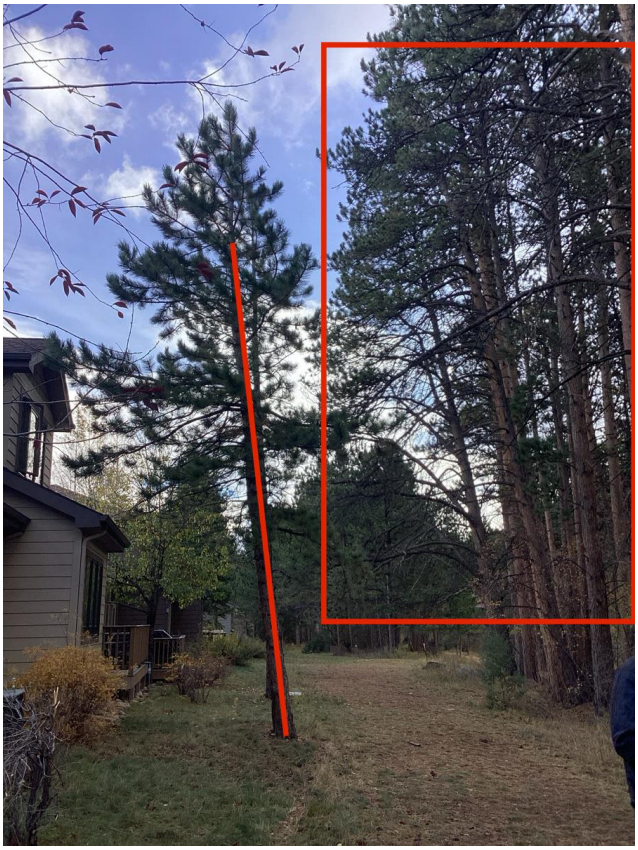


Photo 47



Photo 48



Photo 49



Photo 50

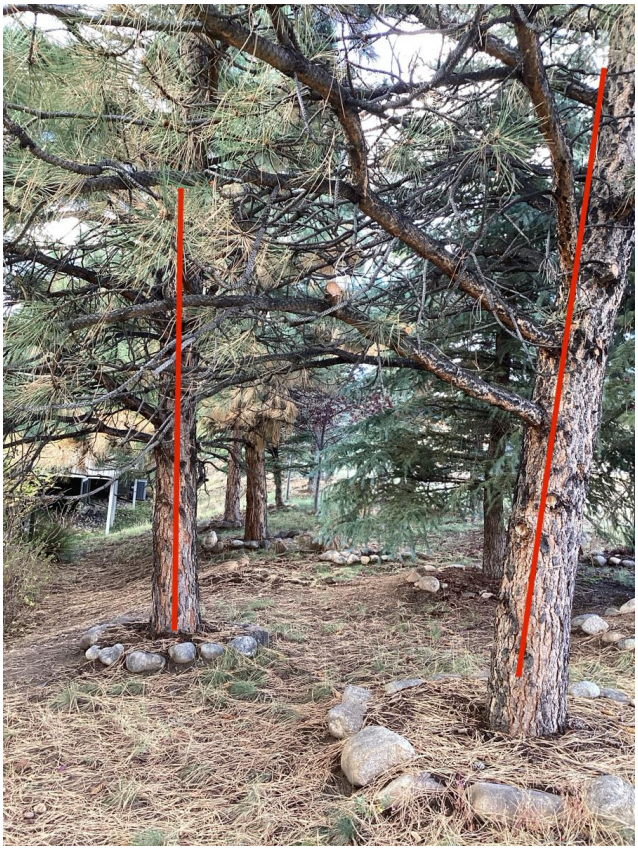


Photo 51

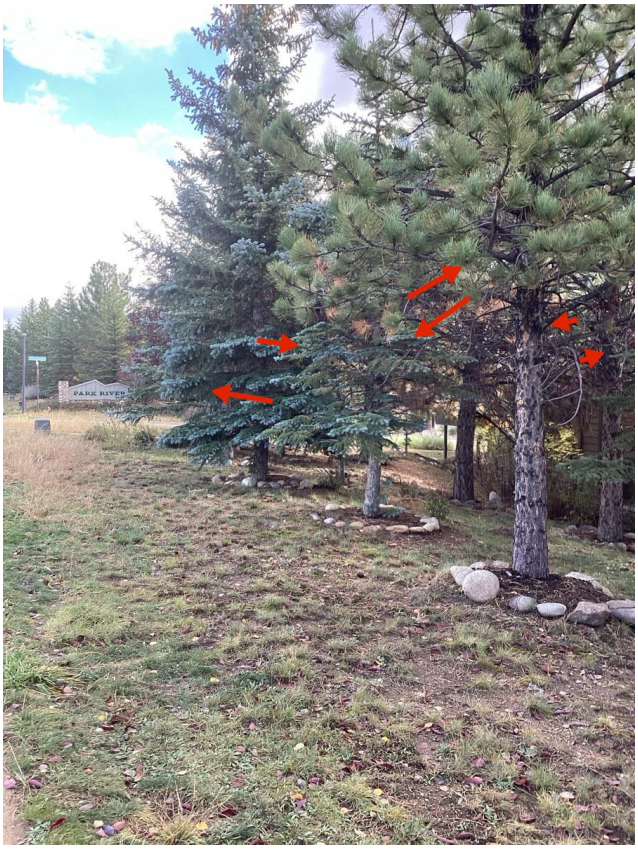


Photo 52



Photo 53



Photo 54



Photo 55

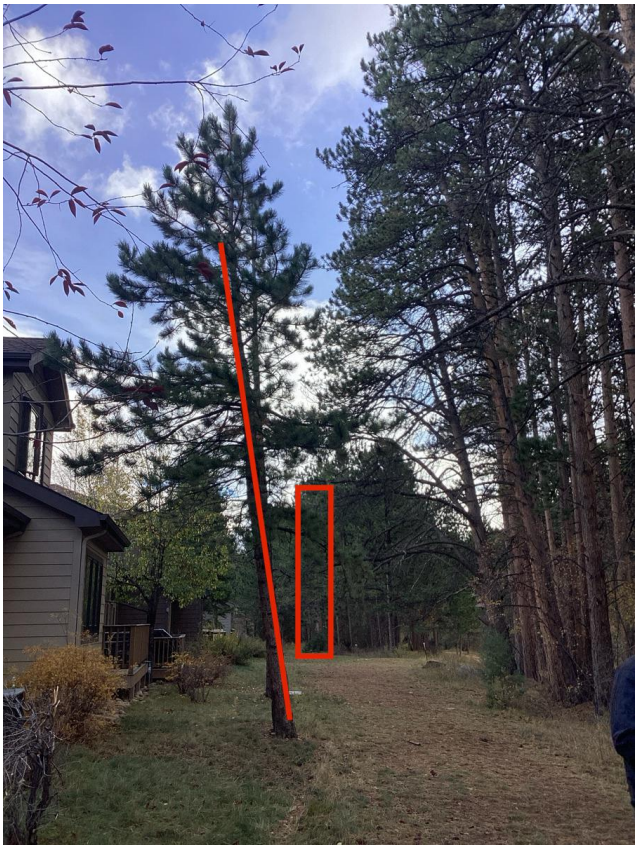


Photo 56



Photo 57

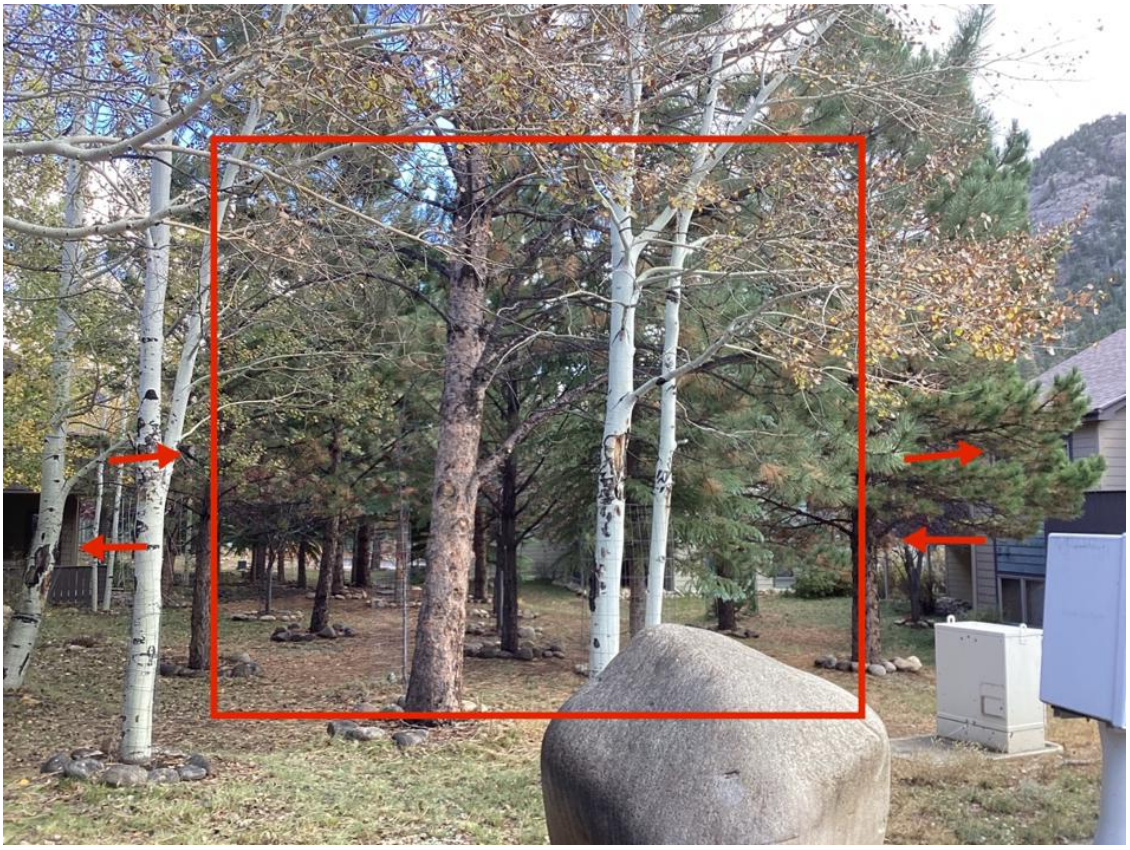


Photo 58



Photo 59



Photo 60



Photo 61



Photo 62



Photo 63



Photo 64



Photo 65



Photo 66



Photo 67



Photo 68



Photo 69



Photo 70