

# HOMEOWNER NEWSLETTER July 2016

## Relief for fallen trees on the way

BY BRIAN WILKINSON (REPORTER FOR THE SIERRA STAR)

Relief may be coming soon for many Mountain Area homeowners left with dead trees in their yards after they were cut down by companies contracted with Pacific Gas and Electric Company.

The trees, killed by bark beetle infestations, were cut down for safety reasons and to protect power lines, but disposing of the trees, in some cases a massive and expensive undertaking, was left to homeowners.

PG&E is currently finalizing details of a contract with a large company while identifying sites where the logs and debris can be hauled to, PG&E spokesperson Denny Boyles said, including lumber mills, biomass chipping yards, and other disposal sites.

★ Boyles said PG&E will pay for the enormous clean-up effort, but could not predict the expected start dates, or how long the clean-up project will take until the contract is completed. The total number of PG&E customers impacted by the tree removal project throughout 10 counties should be known by mid-November.

The counties include Madera, Fresno, Mariposa, Kern, Tulare, Tuolumne, Calaveras, Amador, Placer and El Dorado.

"Under normal circumstances, property owners are responsible for disposing of trees that PG&E takes down on their property because the wood is the property of the homeowner," Boyles said.

To date, the Forest Service has felled more than 77,000 hazard trees, treated over 13,000 acres along 228 miles of roads around communities and recreation sites, and created 1,100 acres of fuel breaks. Work on another 15,000 acres is in progress. Forest Service scientists expect to see continued elevated levels of tree mortality during 2016.

With the increasing size and costs of suppressing wildfires due to climate change and other factors, the very efforts that would protect watersheds and restore forests to make them more resilient to fire in the future are being squeezed out of the budget. Last year fire management alone consumed 56% of the Forest Service's budget.

## Wawona Community Recycling Update

Total Waste Disposal (contractor of Mariposa County) has brought a recycle bin to us. It is located near our office next to the garbage bins. Pick up days will be on Wednesdays. There is no need to sort the recycling as they have a sorter.