

## **RED CROSS CHOOSES GMF FOR WILDFIRE MITIGATION PILOT**

Over the summer, the American Red Cross will be working with 25 selected property owners and residents in Green Mountain Falls to create -- free of charge -- “defensible space” outside homes that can slow a wildfire’s spread.

**Those interested in participating should send their name, phone number, email, home or property address as soon as possible to Town Clerk Bo Ayad, [clerk@gmfco.us](mailto:clerk@gmfco.us). Those without email can call Bo at 717.684.9414 ext 1 or write, P.O. Box 524 (mail must be sent to PO Box); 10615 Green Mountain Falls Road, Green Mountain Falls, CO 80819.**

The Red Cross, working with the local fire department, will choose homes for the pilot based on ones most in need, said **Cori Tanner**, disaster program manager for the Red Cross’ Colorado and Wyoming region. It chose GMF for the pilot because the town is highly vulnerable to wildfire and citizens are already working hard to lessen its risk, she said. The organization is close to signing an agreement with a contractor who will create defensible space around homes by removing dead trees, brush and other fire fuels, she added.

The contractor will not do anything homeowners can do themselves, such as removing wood piles from underneath decks and porches, Tanner said. That work falls under the pilot’s other goal: to show homeowners what they can do themselves to lower wildfire’s risk. In early June, Tanner said she will deploy Red Cross volunteers who will meet with homeowners to go over fire preparedness.

The Red Cross has conducted other pilot programs like this, predominately in the West, since last year, Tanner said. From what it learns, the organization expects to create a national program that stresses individuals’ responsibilities for protecting their homes from wildfire