

## **Grazing Project Update**

This year, the Sleepy Hollow Fire Protection and its primary partners: Marin County Open Space District, San Domenico School, Triple C Ranch, and the Rocking H Ranch contracted with Star Creek Land Stewards to create shaded fuel breaks and defensible space in Sleepy Hollow utilizing livestock grazing. Last year we had one herd of 400 goats and a second herd of 200 goats combined with 200 sheep. This year we had three herds of goats for a total of 1200 goats.

We are very pleased with the results so far. The goats moved through the land that was grazed last year more quickly because the heavier vegetation had been thinned. In addition, the herders have done an excellent job in the way they set the fences and move the herds around. Previously, the goats were reluctant to eat poison oak in the spring when it was green and oily and they ate almost none of the scotch/french broom. For some reason this year, they have been aggressively eating both the poison oak and some of the broom. Interestingly, when the animals enter a new area, they immediately start eating the coyote brush, followed by the leaves on low hanging branches. Grass is their least favored meal, but they eventually graze and trample on it greatly reducing the fire threat.

A continuous shaded fuel break, designed to stop/slow down fires and create a safe area for firefighting operations, was created from Fox lane all along the Terra Linda Fire Road (Sleepy Hollow/Terra Linda Divide) to the top of the Luiz Ranch Fire Road where it meets the Rocking H Ranch. A mid slope fuel break was created along the ridge to the south of San Domenico School, across the entire Triple C Ranch to an area above Dutch Valley Lane up to the Mather Fire Road. This fuel break was then extended to the top of the ridge behind Manor View Drive in Fairfax. This fuel break will eventually extend along Wilder Drive fire road to Oak Springs Drive. Coupled with some grazing that has been done on the saddle between Rocking H Ranch and the northern side of San Domenico, Sleepy Hollow will for the first time be completely ringed with a substantial fuel break.

This year more defensible space was created behind homes on the slopes of the Sleepy Hollow Terra Linda Divide. Grazing was done on San Domenico property to protect homes at the end of Van Tassel Ct. Additional work took place behind homes on Luzanne Ct., Martling Rd., Sleepy Hollow Dr. and Hidden Valley School where they abutt Open Space Land. More acreage was grazed in the open bowls off of Fox Lane. And once again the goats cleared all of the land around the San Domenico campus to a distance of approximately 300 feet.

The herds will spend the rest of the summer working at White Hill School, Cascade Canyon and Canyon Creek Village in Fairfax, Hawthorne Canyon and adjacent properties in San Anselmo and areas around Sorich Park and Red Hill.

