Protecting Our Community: Addressing Wildfires with Resilience and Unity

Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy

A Community United in Action

Though the recent rains have brought relief, wildfire concerns will quickly return when weeds begin to grow this spring. It's critical to stay vigilant and take proactive measures to protect homes and neighborhoods. Here is some helpful information, a description of fire-resilience work underway on the Palos Verdes Peninsula and suggestions of what you can do around your home to protect yourself.

Fire-Resilient Habitat Management

As stewards of 1,700 acres of open space across the Peninsula, the Conservancy is committed to preserving the region's coastal beauty while fostering fire-resilient communities. Our habitat management includes removing invasive plants and restoring native vegetation. This helps create landscapes less prone to intense wildfires. In 2025, we aim to clear over 100 acres of invasive weeds and nonnative shrubs—key contributors to wildfire spread.

Our stewardship team collaborates with groups like the Conservation Corps of Long Beach, community volunteers and hires goats to remove invasive "**flash fuels**" such as mustard, tumbleweed, and acacia. These plants are notorious for fueling fast-moving fires, while native species like lemonade berry and coastal sage scrub provide natural fire resistance and prevent soil erosion. Since starting our habitat restoration work, we've cleared over 450 acres of nonnative vegetation, improving fire safety and restoring habitats for wildlife.

Native plants not only reduce fire risks but also stabilize soil, preventing erosion and later mudslides. Their deep root systems allow them to thrive during droughts, maintaining ecological balance and hillside stability in the topsoil.

Here's what we do:

- **Invasive Species Management**
The Conservancy conducts widespread removal of nonnative vegetation that create "Flash Fuels" causing wildfires to burn hotter and faster.

- **Local Seed Collection**
The next step is to harvest local seeds from the peninsula to ensure the plants are adapted specifically for preserving local biodiversity.

- **Seed Propagation**
Seeds are cleaned, stored and cultivated at the Conservancy's Native Plant Nursery and Seed Farm. The nursery is pathogen-free, enabling us to grow healthy plants that do not contaminate sensitive ecosystems.

- **Planting**
Staff and many hundreds of community volunteers each year help to create fire-resilient areas.

- **Long-term Site Management**
Staff and dedicated volunteers return to weed and water, making sure the young plants are established for the future.

