

City of South Pasadena Monterey Hills Targeted Goat Grazing and Hybrid Vegetation Management Pilot Program Public Fact Sheet

What is the City doing?

The City is implementing a limited targeted goat grazing and hybrid vegetation management pilot program in the Monterey Hills area. The purpose is to reduce hazardous vegetation, improve defensible space, and lower wildfire risk near homes located in designated High and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones. This project does not involve the removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees.

For this pilot, the treatment area is limited to City-owned or City-controlled property within 100 feet of 100 feet of privately owned land containing legal residential structures.

Why goats?

Goat grazing can be useful for reducing grasses, weeds, light brush, fine fuels, and flashy fuels, especially in steep or difficult-to-access hillside areas. In some locations, using goats may reduce the need for crews to work on steep slopes with hand tools or mechanical equipment.

Goats are not a complete solution. This is a hybrid vegetation management approach. The City may also use mechanical treatment, hand crews, trimming, mowing, selective cutting, or follow-up maintenance where those methods are more appropriate.

Is this a broad open-space grazing program?

No. This is a limited pilot program focused on fuel management and defensible space near homes. The project is not grading, development, habitat conversion, or ecological restoration.

How will the City decide where goats are appropriate?

Before work begins, the City will conduct a pre-treatment site review with City staff and the contractor. Public Works will assist in verifying property lines and treatment boundaries.

The City will use an area-based approach. If a section is not appropriate for grazing due to sensitive vegetation, drainage features, unstable slopes, erosion risk, sedimentation, access limitations, or other site conditions, that section may be removed from the grazing area. If fuel reduction is still needed, the City may use mechanical or hand treatment instead.

Can the City guarantee there will be no impacts?

No. Vegetation management on steep hillsides involves tradeoffs. The City will make reasonable, good-faith efforts to minimize soil disturbance, protect drainage areas, and avoid

unnecessary impacts to native vegetation and sensitive resources. However, the City cannot guarantee that every potential impact will be eliminated.

The City's priority is to reduce wildfire risk near homes. Life safety is the first priority, followed by protection of property and protection of the environment. Environmental protection remains important and will be considered throughout the pilot.

How will the project be controlled?

The contractor will be required to use approved treatment boundaries, containment fencing, and active communication with City staff. The City may stop, redirect, reduce, exclude, or modify grazing activity if field conditions warrant.

The City will monitor the pilot and document results through field observations, photographs, contractor updates, and post-treatment review.

Is this project exempt from CEQA?

Staff has recommended that the pilot be exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Article 19, Class 1 (Existing Facilities) (§15301) and Class 4 (Minor Alterations to Land) (§15304), and are further statutorily exempt as specific actions necessary to prevent or mitigate a wildfire emergency under Public Resources Code §21080(b)(4) and CEQA Guidelines §15269(c); and are further statutorily exempt as a project that establishes defensible space for wildfire risk reduction under Public Resources Code Sections 21080.49(c) and (d) **What happens after the pilot?**

After implementation, the City will evaluate the results, including fuel reduction effectiveness, contractor performance, goat containment, areas where grazing was useful, areas where another method was needed, and whether managed grazing should remain part of the City's hybrid vegetation management program.

Questions or observations?

Residents may provide site-specific observations or questions to:

City of South Pasadena Fire Department
Phone: 626-403-7300
Email: fdinfo@southpasadenaca.gov

Please do not enter fenced grazing areas, approach the goats, feed the animals, or interfere with fencing or contractor operations.