



## Shaded Fuel Break Protects Local Neighborhood from Potential Wildfires

**The National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy** is a national collaborative effort to bring a broad cross-section of stakeholders together to address wildland fire management challenges. The Strategy directs wildland fire planning activities and has three primary goals: restore and maintain landscapes, develop Fire-Adapted Communities, and improve wildfire response.

The Los Reyes Canyons community in Helotes, Texas is in close proximity to the heavily wooded Government Canyon State Natural Area. When drought-like conditions are present, the community is at risk for wildfires. In an effort to protect lives and property, firefighters and volunteers installed a shaded fuel break during February 2016. This was created by removing much of the understory brush and pruning off tree limbs (ladder fuels) that could carry flames into the canopy of the tree from the ground. This sort of mitigation work changes the way a wildfire would burn through this area, keeping the fire on the ground, versus the canopy, where firefighters can access it and more safely extinguish it.



*This worker clears brush to create a shaded fuel break. Credit: Texas A&M Forest Service.*

The shaded fuel break is just one example of the wildland fire management work occurring in the City of Helotes. Other activities include:

- developing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan and
- crews attending a chainsaw workshop hosted by the Helotes Fire Department and taught by Texas A&M Forest Service personnel.



*Continued development of a shaded fuel break. Credit: Texas A&M Forest Service.*

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