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Tall Pines Ranch HOA

October 19, 2021

On October 12, the Colorado State Forest Service conducted a fall assessment of The Tall Pines Ranch development. We inspected all lots with the purpose of identifying any insect and/or disease issues that need to be addressed, particularly Mountain Pine Beetle (MPB) and Ips beetle.

Findings

During our inspection, we did not identify any Ips or MPB infested trees that require immediate attention. Overall forest health in Tall Pines is excellent for the area and has been over the past several inspections. Our inspection shows that the trees are slightly healthier than they were in 2020. This could be attributed to favorable moisture throughout the 2021 growing season.

Other Observations

Homeowners should continue the process of wildfire mitigation. Decreasing tree densities can reduce fire behavior and intensity and also keep trees healthy by reducing competition. Accompanying this report is a copy of the Colorado State Forest Service's guide to the Home Ignition Zone. Ips and MPB can breed in slash created from mitigation projects, but the neighborhood chipping program helps homeowners dispose of slash, aiding in fire mitigation and forest health.

The fall needle drop for most pines in the development has begun and can be seen on the inner part of the tree branches; this is a normal function of a tree this time of year.

One of the reasons that Tall Pines has healthier forests relative to the rest of the Black Forest is that dwarf mistletoe is not very abundant in the neighborhood. Dwarf mistletoe is a parasitic plant that competes with host trees for resources, weakening the trees and increasing the likelihood of insect infestations.

Recommendations

It is an encouraging sign that we did not detect any active insect infestations in Tall Pines. It is important to monitor for pests and keep their populations in check so they are less likely to take advantage of stressors, like drought, and build their populations to outbreak levels.

It is important that homeowners know not to stack any freshly-cut or green material next to or in between live trees. This is a sure way to attract MPB and Ips.