

State Road 512 Improvement Priority Plan

An Action Plan by Volunteer Brazos Neighbors

Executive Summary:

Who we are:

In February of this year residents of the Brazos Canyon attended the Rio Chama Congreso. Experts discussed the designation of a “Very High Fire Severity Threat” for this area. Since that time, a Brazos Fire Mitigation Team was created and developed a master plan approved by the Brazos Canyon Volunteer Fire Department. In coordination with subdivision leaders, the team surveyed residents to determine their needs, fire concerns, and priorities. Based on the survey’s results the team has been implementing the plan. Key successes have included: two no-cost chipping events, created a vendor list for fire mitigation professionals, provided written technical guidance on defensible space, and held a well-attended Firewise presentation. We created a newsletter and a webpage, helped over 40 households create defensible space and removed over 75 trailers full of fire fuel.

What we want:

A top priority of neighbors was improving the egress on 512 which is the sole evacuation route from the Brazos Canyon . This report is a direct response to that priority. **We are only talking about 4 miles of road needing prompt attention to benefit over 900 property owners, a commercial resort community and several businesses We all benefit from a safer egress.**

As a way of moving action forward we divided the approximately eight miles of roadway into a maintenance proposal based on citizen priorities. The **first** attachment outlines road maintenance needs by mile marker. The **second** attachment is a description of the proposed action steps, who is accountable, and suggested deadlines for completion.

We are citizens trying to communicate the urgency of our need for a safe way out of the Canyon. We are seeking a better way to work with DOT on how to make that happen given the reality of dual goals of safe roads and a quick evacuation route. We are offering this improvement plan to begin a discussion among the stakeholders on how to deal with these two goals most effectively. Without long term solutions for existing roadway obstacles which cause safety issues, citizens will be addressing this subject each year with DOT and that places the public at risk and a roadway still unsafe to drive with or without an existing fire danger.

Those of us working on this problem want to thank the dozens of public employees and public officials who graciously took our calls, directed us to the appropriate divisions, and educated us through their carefully crafted responses. A very special thanks to the local DOT crews for understanding our frustration and helping where and when appropriate.