

## FOREST HEALTH TASK FORCE

July 24, 2009

At its first meeting as a re-activated committee, the Forest Health Task Force (FHTF) has begun to set a positive direction for the community.

Representatives from the RSF Association, RSF Foundation, RSF Fire Protection District, U.C. Extension and various arborists and concerned citizens gathered at the Association offices on July 20<sup>th</sup> to hear more about the current infestation of the red gum lerp psyllid.

The original task force was formed in 2000 and was responsible for bringing experts to the community to introduce a wasp that was a natural predator to the lerp psyllid. As a result, the wasp has been present in our community for nearly 10 years and until recently, the red gum eucalyptus has been healthy. However, with years of drought in the region, many of these previously healthy trees are now showing increased signs of the lerp psyllid.

The FHTF will focus on four areas in the future. The first is to save any trees that are considered healthy. Secondly, we will provide information to homeowners that will assist them in identifying trees that are dead or dying, and what options are available to them. Once a tree has been identified as dead or dying, the trees must be removed for fire and safety reasons. The task force will also provide options for the removal of the trees. And finally, and perhaps most importantly, the task force will work with arborists and horticultural organizations to develop a re-forestation plan for our community.

In 2000, the FHTF received two \$5000 grants, one from the RSF Fire Protection District and another from San Diego Gas & electric Company. These funds were to be used for creating informational materials for the public. There are funds remaining which will now be used to create a website for the purpose of informing the public about the work of the task force. This should be launched by mid-August.

The next meeting of FHTF will be on Monday August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 9:00 A.M. in the Association offices. Anyone who is interested in our work is welcome to attend. Please contact Christy Wilson, RSF Foundation, 858-756-6557 ([christy@rsffoundation.org](mailto:christy@rsffoundation.org)), for more information.