



Noles Discusses Timber Thinning in Hot Springs Village

Description

At the January 26, 2022 Board Meeting, Todd Noles, Hot Springs Village Common Property, Forest, and Wildlife Manager, stated that we have a section of timber we are thinning. ([Thinning](#) is the term foresters apply to removal of some trees from a stand to give others more room (and resources) to grow.)

Beginning Monday, January 24, crews began removing some trees in the 6.5-acre area of common property outlined on the map in the slideshow below.

The area being thinned is located by Elcano on the north side of DeSoto Boulevard beginning on the west side of Elcano Drive and ending at Isabella Golf Course, just east of Iniciador. This timber project should last three to four weeks, weather permitting. This project should not cause any traffic delays.

Beetle Infestation Necessitates Thinning

Noles said, “there are six and a half acres of timber that is infested with IPS Beetles.” “We had lots of timber that is dying out, turning brown,” explained Noles. Because of this, timber thinning was necessary.

Noles continued, “we are looking to cut about 60% of the timber in that stand, simply because we have a beetle infestation. This will help to preserve the remaining timber.”

The thinning will allow the sun to hit the floor of the forest. “You can walk through it now and forest floor is spongy because it has never had sunlight,” explained Noles.

Crews will also be clearing blocked drainages. “My goal is to have it looking and working perfectly,” said Noles.

Finished Job Will Be Attractive

Noles previously went door-to-door and explained to the Victoria Lane residents what was going to

happen. “Their buffer zone between DeSoto and their house would be changing dramatically, said Manager Noles.”

During the thinning process Noles said the area will not be attractive, “but when we get done, it’s going to look a lot different.”

Noles said, we will clean it up. We’ve got a plan we are enacting. It will look bad at first, but please bear with me. Please be patient. It will be cleaned up. It will look nice when we get done.”

Revenue Realized Will Pay for Cleanup

As this is being done to improve the health of the stand, the focus is not so much on the revenue the trees will bring. The revenue realized from the timber sales in this section will be used to pay for the cleanup. Todd stated, “this is going to be more a break-even type deal.” Noles is selling the dead timber, also. “We found a mill that will take it. They don’t give us much for it, but the timber that is dead and the bark is already slipping off it, we can sell it and get a little revenue off of it instead of it laying on the ground and rotting.”

Audubon Society

“I talked to Janet Rowe of the Audubon Society”, Noles shared, “We will make sure the area is good and inhabitable for our birds and wildlife,” Noles assured Rowe.

Common Property, Forest, and Wildlife Committee Played Active Role in Development of the Project

The Common Property, Forest, and Wildlife Committee (CPF&W) has been working diligently with the POA and Manager Noles on this project since the first week of December 2021. The CPF&W Committee consists of seven members of the Property Owners’ Association who are appointed by the POA Board of Directors. Committee members are Chair, Max Billingsley; Vice-chair, Tom Impellizzeri; Secretary, Anne Shears; Paula Lane; Scott McCord; Barton Langford; Board Vice-chair, Tucker Omohundro; and Staff Member, Manager, Todd Noles.

Anne Shears shared that the CPF&W Committee has three certified foresters, Max Billingsley; Todd Noles; and working forestry consultant, Bart Langford. The committee is science-based. Billingsley is a retired professional forester and is also a surveyor. Those skills came in very handy on this IPS project. Shears exclaimed, “this level of expertise is amazing!”

Shears added, “all three foresters examined the subject stand of trees and all were in agreement about the condition of the stand and what to do to remediate the problem.”

The CPF&W Committee meets at 1:30 p.m. on the first Monday of each month at the Police Training & Event Center – 301 Balearic Road. Residents are welcome to attend.

For any questions or concerns, please contact Public Services at 501-922-5524.

Click on the photos below to enlarge and then click on the arrows to move to the next photo. Click

escape to return to the article.

Map of Area Being Thinned and Photographs of the Problem (Photos Provided by Anne Shears)

By Cheryl Dowden, January 28, 2022

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