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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Mono County Office of Emergency
Management Hosts Wildfire Preparedness Town Hall Workshops**

North County Events Held in Lee Vining and Bridgeport

MONO COUNTY, Calif. (SEPTEMBER 12, 2023) – Today, the Mono County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) announced hosting two in-person Town Hall Workshops (Workshops) focused on wildfire preparedness and resiliency. The Workshops will feature presentations on the latest, science-based home hardening techniques, and the creation of [Firewise Communities](#). The Workshops will feature expert guest speakers Yana Valachovic, County Director-Forest Advisor for the University of California Cooperative Extension, and Beth Burnam, founding member of the [North Topanga Canyon Fire Safe Council](#), and Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains Board Director.

“Wildfires are becoming more devastating each year, threatening our communities, and decimating our forests and watersheds,” said *Chris Mokracek, Director of Mono County’s Office of Emergency Management*. “We encourage you to join us for these important workshops as we work together to prepare for the upcoming wildfire season.”

Ms. Valachovic has provided home hardening workshops throughout the Eastern Sierra, and is known for her work in wildfire mitigation and resilience. Valachovic’s research has shown that often, the best ways to protect a home against wildfire are also the simplest and most affordable.

Ms. Burnam’s first experience with wildfire occurred during the 1961 Bel Air Fire, which instilled in her a lifelong respect for the destructive power of wildfires, and how communities can organize to increase their wildfire resilience. In 2020, Burnam worked with Firewise USA, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), and Los Angeles County Fire Department to lead Topanga Canyon through the process of becoming a Firewise Community. Firewise Communities are those that have taken appropriate measures to become more resistant

to wildfire structural damage. Additional details on Firewise Communities can be accessed [here](#). Details on Fire Safe Councils can be accessed [here](#).

Town Hall Workshop Details

Workshop #1: Lee Vining

September 26th (Tuesday)
Lee Vining Community Center
296 Mattly Avenue; Lee Vining
6PM – 8PM

Workshop #2: Bridgeport

September 27th (Wednesday)
Bridgeport Memorial Hall
73 North School Street; Bridgeport
6PM – 8PM

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