

## Summit Association of Realtors awards defensible space grants



Photo Courtesy of the Summit Realtors Association. |  
Melissa and Eli Snell at the ribbon cutting for work to begin at their home on Aug. 30, 2016. The couple received a grant to help aid them in fire mitigations.

Sept. 14, 2016 – The Summit Association of Realtors (SAR) has long been committed to residential fire mitigation efforts. Now it's time to up its game. "Our board decided to take the next step," said Sarah Thorsteinson, the CEO of SAR. "Instead of educating we decided to assist."

The organization had originally started by sending newsletters every June to nearly 13,000 properties throughout Summit County. The newsletters were sent before the chipping program was set to start. This year, SAR received grant money to help residents prep their homes for fire season. They raised enough to give two awards. One of the awards went to Melissa and Eli Snell, who own a home on Peak 7.

Thorsteinson said that the grant was able to cover the full mitigation of their property. A ribbon cutting was held at the property on Aug. 30, a crane was on hand to begin

working after the event ended.

Several speakers were at the event such as Kathy Christina, the chair elect of SAR, and Bonnie Smith from Project Wildfire of the Colorado Association of Realtors. Both organizations were donated to the grant program along with Leslie Weise, an agent from American Family Insurance.

A second grant was given to Rich Holcrost, who owns 2.4 acres at 10 Mile Vista. Thorsteinson estimated that Holcrost had 300 trees to be cut down. Thorsteinson said that one of the fears residents have when they hear about these mitigations is that they will have to clear cut their entire property. She said that this can be a dangerous assumption because clear cutting can make the land more susceptible to flooding.

The program has already begun to seek funding for next year's grants. Thorsteinson said that any residents that are interested in receiving funding should contact her directly: (970) 468-8700 ext. 1.