

## Fire at Krotona

Krotona welcomed the month of July with its own fireworks when a car that crashed through the Krotona fence on Highway 33 caught fire. The flames quickly spread across Krotona's lower meadow. Luckily, there were no injuries or fatalities. However, the event kept residents of Krotona, as well as the fire department, on alert for a few days. Flare ups after a fire are a common concern.

Fire abatement requirements for Krotona have become more rigorous given the increase in temperatures and the overall climate changes taking place in general. These requirements are set by the local fire department. In past years, our fire abatement activities required a month of cutting down the wild grass from the fields and as well as around the buildings. This year, the mandates included raking and removing hay and dead brush, trimming tree limbs that were less than three feet from the ground, and removing branches that were touching roofs and walls of all the structures. This is no light task on a property of 118 acres with a number of buildings. The stringent mandates have dramatically added to the workload of our two maintenance men, requiring months of hard labor on their part.

While the new mandates are understandable to combat the fire dangers that a warming planet presents, for a non-profit like Krotona they are becoming unsustainable. At present, we are still awaiting the arrival of a new flail mower for our tractor to address the annual grass cutting needs for the fields. It has been an eight-month wait due to high demand and supply chain issues. We also need to obtain the right equipment that can mow, rake, and haul away grass and brush, especially near the trees, roads, and buildings where the tractor cannot reach. This will reduce the manual labor that is currently done. The large piles of branches that are collected need to be chipped so having the ability to do that ourselves is also needed. Beauty has a price and it is steep, but having the right equipment will help with the effort to meet fire safety regulations and keep the property safe.

(Picture below shows one of the many brush piles collected, waiting to be mulched.)

