

Wildland Urban Interface Assessment

USDA Forest Service

Northeastern Area

State and Private Forestry

Wildland Fire Management



Description:

In 1999, the Northeast Forest Fire Supervisors, by way of a resolution to the Northeastern Area Association of State Foresters (NAASF), recommended that each State complete a comprehensive statewide fire protection assessment. The NAASF approved the resolution and the Northeastern Area has provided State Fire Assistance funds since FY 2000 to individual States or fire compacts to support completion of assessments.

Key Issues:

- Identifies areas that possess a serious potential for wildfire and have a focus on the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI).
- Provides a model and framework for a detailed analysis at the local level and a visual display of problem wildfire/WUI areas. Facilitates communications with all public interests within a State.
- Provides a mechanism to rapidly identify areas that may require additional tactical planning within the WUI.
- Provides access to a common database for interagency planning, improves emergency response, and develops analyses of complex landscapes and/or fire situations.

Accomplishments:

- Assessments have been completed in 19 of the 20 Northeastern Area States.
- Several States are utilizing the analysis from the Fire Protection Assessment to assist in developing/initiating hazard mitigation projects in high risk WUI communities.
- Several States have moved beyond the initial assessment and are now conducting GIS-based assessments, below the county level, in high risk WUI communities.

Future Direction:

- Integrate research that focuses on the social sciences aspects of the WUI phenomena into State/localized fire protection assessments and hazard mitigation activities.
- Focusing efforts on the priority emphasis areas (training, marketing information, planning, technology transfer, pilot WUI projects, and research) of the WUI Strategic Plan for the Northeastern Area.
- Develop measures of fire suppression preparedness for State fire protection agencies.
- Tie preparedness and hazard mitigation activities to the 10-year implementation plan.
- Use analysis to facilitate collaboration on and prioritization of fuels reduction and hazard mitigation projects adjacent to high risk WUI communities.

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