



**WESTERN FORESTRY LEADERSHIP COALITION
MEMORANDUM**

TO: Western Forestry Leadership Coalition (WFLC) Members

CC: Rich Homann, Chair, Western State Fire Managers

FROM: Steve Ambrose and Jim Lawrence

SUBJECT: Community Wildfire Protection Plans and the Federal Emergency Management Agency Local Mitigation Plans

DATE: July 9, 2004

The purpose of this memo is to advise the WFLC members of the relationship between development of a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Local Mitigation Planning.

The Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 included meaningful statutory incentives for the USDA Forest Service and USDI Bureau of Land Management to give consideration to the priorities of local communities as they develop and implement forest management and hazardous fuel reduction projects. Communities must first develop a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) to take advantage of this new opportunity.

The handbook titled *Preparing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan - A Handbook for Wildland-Urban Interface Communities* was developed by the Communities Committee, Society of American Foresters, National Association of Counties, and the National Association of State Foresters, and distributed in March, 2004. The *Handbook* is intended to provide communities with a concise, step-by-step guide to use in developing a CWPP.

FEMA has published an Interim Final Rule to implement the mitigation planning requirements of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000). This Act provides an opportunity for States, Tribes, and local jurisdictions to significantly reduce their vulnerability to natural hazards, as well as streamline the receipt and utilization of Federal disaster assistance through enhanced pre-disaster hazard mitigation planning and coordination. FEMA has developed a special document called the *Multi-Hazard Mitigation Planning Guidance* to, in part, assist State, local and Tribal jurisdictions develop new mitigation plans or modify existing ones.

DMA 2000 places new emphasis on State, Tribal and local governments to develop and submit mitigation plans as a condition of receiving various types of pre- and post-disaster assistance, such as Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program and the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program under the Stafford Act. Communities do not, however, need a mitigation plan to be eligible for public and individual assistance after a Presidential disaster declaration.

We encourage wildland-urban interface local and multi-jurisdictional communities to consider incorporating the requirements for a CWPP into the multi-hazard mitigation planning process described in the FEMA guidance where feasible. This would allow for consolidated community planning rather than a series of separate efforts.

We suggest that State, Territorial, and Regional Foresters distribute this information to the appropriate staffs within their respective organizations and to representatives of local wildland-urban interface communities.

Further information on the CWPP Handbook can be found at:

<http://www.safnet.org/policyandpress/cwpp.cfm>

FEMA Multi-Hazard Mitigation Planning Guidance may be downloaded from:

<http://www.fema.gov/fima/planning.shtm> or a copy may also be obtained from FEMA regional offices.

Contact Mark Cooper at mcooper01@fs.fed.us or phone # 303-445-4364 with questions regarding this letter.

/s/ Jim

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/s/ Steve

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