

# COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN

• LEADERS GUIDE SUPPLEMENT •

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Recommendations for “LEADERS by LEADERS” toward  
Implementing the Steps Outlined in the Leaders Guide

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Sponsored by:



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In March 2004, the Communities Committee, National Association of State Foresters, National Association of Counties, Society of American Foresters and the Western Governors' Association published *Preparing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan - A Handbook for Wildland-Urban Interface Communities* (CWPP). The Handbook serves as an excellent outline offering sensible approaches in planning to protect at-risk communities from wildfire. The Handbook can be located at [www.safenet.org/policyandpress/cwpp.cfm](http://www.safenet.org/policyandpress/cwpp.cfm) and the International Fire Chiefs Association (IAFC) recommends that the Handbook be reviewed prior to engaging in the process outlined in the following Leaders Guide Supplement (LGS).

The International Association of Fire Chiefs Wildland Fire Policy Committee directed a Process Action Team (PAT) to be formed under the leadership of Fire Chief Gary Smith and Fire Chief Douglas R. MacDonald. In September 2004, the IAFC PAT and partners met in Boulder, Colorado to develop a series of documents designed to assist Community Leaders/Fire Chiefs in the implementation of a CWPP. The *Leaders Guide (LG)* and *Leaders Guide Supplement (LGS)* were created and finalized in 2005. Members of the PAT who participated in the development of the Leaders Guide and the Leaders Guide Supplement are Jay Jenson, Western Governors' Association; Paige Lewis, Colorado State Forest Service; Rich Homann, Colorado State Forest Service; Tom Fry, The Wilderness Society; David J. Driscoll, California Division of Forestry; Larry Donner, City of Boulder Fire Chief; Brett M. Waters, Belgrade Fire Department Fire Chief, Montana; Bruce Turbeville, Executive Officer, California Fire Safe Council; Gary Smith, Retired Fire Chief, Aptos/La Selva Fire Protection District; Douglas R. MacDonald, Los Alamos Fire Department, Los Alamos New Mexico.

Numerous individuals, firms, businesses and organizations identified in the Special Contributors section of this LGS assisted in the review of the LG and LGS and contributed additional material.

IAFC thanks all of those who contributed. IAFC intends the LGS to be a living document and we will continue to revise the LGS after receiving additional contributions. The list of special contributors and the bibliography will continue to grow and serve your needs in preparing a CWPP.

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### PURPOSE

This Leaders Guide Supplement is offered as a companion document to the Handbook and guidance for those who are considering implementing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (**CWPP**). It explains comprehensively how to implement each of the steps needed to create an effective **CWPP**. The Wildland Urban Interface is an ever changing area, and the state and federal land management issues continue to be key components in the development of our communities and sub-divisions, and in urban sprawl. As leaders in fire and environmental protection we must act to protect lives, quality of life and resources. This process will help the fire chief or designated **CWPP** leader to engage and enlighten the community and policy leaders about the dangers and recommended mitigations when managing threats in the wildland. The planning process is designed for varying levels of sophistication and is practical and easy to use. This planning process should be developed in conjunction with other fire plans that exist.

There are very important reasons to develop a **CWPP** plan: The social, moral and professional reasons to stay on top of key fire management concerns; creditability and collaboration with other fire management and governmental agencies; building stronger levels of team readiness; and the ability to attract higher levels of grants and other forms of federal, state and local funds. No fire chief wants to fail to protect the community or personnel...**DO a CWPP plan and be sure it provides functional Community Protection!**

In general, the process should include a strong emphasis on stakeholder participation. Groups to consider for inclusion in the process are land owners, residents, business owners, neighborhood associations, environmental organizations, special districts, housing associations, agricultural and forest industry, professionals and senior citizen groups. The key is to be inclusive, to provide information as well as to listen, and to empower citizens by providing opportunities to influence planning decisions. Involve the public early and continuously; seek participation from a vast range of disciplines and special interest groups. If you find your communication and decision-making techniques are not working, change your approach and provide other opportunities for dialogue and decision-making.

Real world examples of the wildland fire challenges need to be introduced into your **CWPP** document. This includes case studies and lessons learned, e.g., forests being closed for years after a fire event, changes to water systems and water sheds, damage to community water sources, contamination of water sources, losses of life and jobs, economic effects on the community, and the loss of quality of life with respect to recreational activity. Additionally, the completed **CWPP** needs to be introduced and integrated into a public education and awareness plan as well as any existing Annual Operating Plans. The **CWPP** should be integrated into a city or county Master Plan to help ensure consistency with existing land use documents. This is explained further in *Step #1* of this LGS.

Another example of how to include various components of **CWPP**'s in general plans is found in the document, *Hazard Mitigation, Fire Hazard Planning and the General Plan*, prepared for the California Governor's Office of Planning and Research. The document discusses the importance of incorporating the **CWPP** into different elements of general plans. Some examples include: 1) Land Use Element – Land Use designations such as residential, open space, agriculture and timberland could be used to designate

fuel break and fuel reduction zones. 2) Housing Element – Construction standards for reduced ignitability and vegetation management in new subdivisions could be incorporated here. 3) Circulation Element – this element could be used for designating access/evacuation routes and safety zone needs identified in the **CWPP**. 4) Conservation Element – Management options such as prescribed burning and fuel breaks and other actions needed for protecting watersheds, wildfire habitat, etc. from wildfire impacts could be addressed here. 5) Open Space Element – Could identify areas of high hazard and policies/programs for fuels management to protect public from those hazards. 6) Safety Element – The Safety Element could provide a basis for fire protection policies that are used in zoning and ordinances.

Experience has shown that a **CWPP** has been completed in as little as 1 month and as long as 18 months. If one is looking to fast track the process, comprehensive plans have been completed in as little as one month through outsourcing the process. The process can be facilitated with as little as three core team meetings if they are firmly facilitated. Needless to say, the establishment of shorter timelines will necessitate a more aggressive meeting schedule. Your team may decide to spend more time in the planning process, thus extending the time periods. In each case we recommended the **CWPP** planning process should occur in three phases, listed as follows:

**Phase #1: Forming and Norming**

**Phase #2: Risk Assessment and Priority Setting**

**Phase #3: Plan, Do/Implement, and Evaluate**

Note: This Leaders Guide Supplement document was produced from the feedback of over 500 executive level fire, forestry, environmental and governmental professionals from all 50 states. It represents the experience and insights of professionals who have engaged in local area planning. The Sponsors listed are major contributors; the others listed at the end of the document are special contributors. This document is a LIVING document. IAFC will continue to solicit your input. Note there is a place for your stories concerning your experiences in developing a **CWPP**; please send them to the IAFC in care of [macdonaldd@iac.losalamos.nm.us](mailto:macdonaldd@iac.losalamos.nm.us)

**Leaders Guide Symbols:**

**P** Plan - vision, knowledge, network, scope and planned activities.

**D** Do - activities accomplished to gain a planned outcome

**A** Act - numerically indexed; A planned activity that is ready for action/implementation

The symbols have been arbitrarily designated. If you find something that you believe is a “DO” rather than an “ACT”, adjust your process accordingly.

## PHASE #1 - FORMING AND NORMING

### *CWPP Step #1 Convene Decision Makers*

**D** Fire Chief to meet with his or her staff to consider the possibilities of a wildland fire problem within or near the area of concern. Considerations will focus on life safety, property/assets at risk, open space linkages or islands, risks to community economy, etc. Be sure to consider critical infrastructure such as electrical transmission lines, gas distribution systems, water systems, roads, streets, access, ingress, egress, and communications infrastructure, etc.

Schedule a staff meeting with executive leaders you intend to work closely with in creating the **CWPP**; the only agenda items should be to: 1) Review each of the steps on the “Leaders Guide” with the intent to consider how the process might work within your jurisdiction and who should be invited to the first “kick-off” meeting of the planning process; 2) Start thinking about grant resources and/or budgeted funds available to support the planning process; 3) Start working on the tasks listed below.

**P** Define the fire problem/risk, geographic area of the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) which will be considered in the **CWPP** (funding, fire fighter safety, moral obligation, economic impacts, life and environment, and professional liability, value of the planning process for operational readiness, etc.) and the reasons, value, benefits to the community, agencies, etc. to have a **CWPP**.

Create a history of wildland fire losses that have occurred in your area. Document the fire weather during these events and collect data on all fire occurrences in your jurisdiction and surrounding lands. This information can be utilized in the Risk Assessment phase to help define a probability of occurrence or risk. Consider the impact of those same incidents if weather patterns (wind, dryness, and low fuel moisture) had been different; also consider the effects of unmitigated fuel growth and the increase in WUI infrastructure, housing, and other life hazards and assets at risk. There are computer driven fire-modeling programs available that will graphically reflect how a fire will spread. Numerous models exist and the IAFC is gathering a sampling of such references (see the referenced “Fire Frames” web site for more information on fire-modeling).

**P** Set a vision, mission, goal statement and/or policy direction as a starting point; this effort will be ratified by the planning group and policy makers later in the planning process.

Convene a staff meeting to brainstorm and determine whom to invite to the first **CWPP** development team meeting. Consider the most effective leaders who represent the local area fire, environmental protection, land use planning, construction management, and others that are listed in **D** below. It is essential that collaboration and involvement of key stakeholders, citizens and the media occur. Especially on new projects – this will result in better buy-in/ownership and a better product. However, while ensuring participation from a wide variety of stakeholders, you must guard against having a very large group which can be obstructive to the process.

**D** Consider the following list of categories of interested parties: Neighboring fire jurisdictions; Fire Safe Councils and/or Firewise community groups; fire prevention officers associations and the fire labor group; environmental associations and fish & game; law enforcement agencies; utilities (water, power,

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roads); city/county planners and building officials; insurance agencies; the media; watershed oversight; water management agencies or districts, local government representatives; land owners/managers; tribal nations; spiritual/faith leaders; chamber of commerce; tribal leaders; developers, builder's associations, realtors; community leaders who have identified interests in **CWPP**. Remember, it is better to be inclusive than exclusive. Managing the groups will take facilitation at its highest level.

Other groups to consider inviting include: Department of Transportation; forestry and timber management experts; land trust groups; sportsman's associations; emergency communications centers; city/county emergency management (disaster management) with emphasis on an anti – terrorism task force; air pollution control and health services leaders; recreation districts, tourism groups; county agricultural/farm bureau; experts on weather and geography and terrain; specialist in geographic and computer information systems; grants coordinator and city/county financial management; university or college forestry, fire protection, and environmental programs; waste management; mayors, managers, commissioners and county supervisors; Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) for hazmat; schools and educational leaders, and others with special interest and community building potential. Don't discount the utilization of quality, private sector companies who can assist and facilitate a WUI planning process.

**P** List the potential players (define the “Jurisdictional” and “Non-Jurisdictional” players) – Develop a matrix comparing the problem areas and concerns with the potential players who should join the planning team to help manage the fire risk.

**P** Identify the Core Group of policy interest leaders; those that have statutory policy level sign off powers and those who are required for grant funding – i.e. Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) compliance requirements.

**P** Review all existing local, state and federal fire plans for information related to the wildland fire planning challenges in the City/County/District/Entity Comprehensive Plan.

Ensure that the city and county planners and environmental agencies are actively involved as **CWPP** planning members; their support and developing workable methods of mitigating fuel hazards is critical to the success of the **CWPP** process. Also be sure to invite city/county financial managers to help identify funding sources and to help track accountability for spending on the mitigation projects.

**D** The Fire Chief is the “change agent;” in that capacity he or she must make face to face contact with city and county leaders and key political leaders to point out the “hot button” problems, concerns and costs of the planning process – ensure those involved in policy level decisions are aware of the consequences and costs of “doing” and “not doing” the wildland fire plan. Brainstorm roadblocks and “deal breakers” with this political group. Find political and practical solutions to anticipated problems.

**P** Begin exploring and defining the potential boundaries of the **CWPP** planning area.

The final map will be adopted by the **CWPP** planning team; as a first step identify the potential boundaries, recognizing natural boundaries and territorial jurisdictions. The first version of the boundary should be penciled in with the understanding that it may be changed by the planning team.

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### ***CWPP Step #2 - Involve the Public Agencies – Local, State and Federal***

**D** Develop a clear understanding of the property ownership, with special concerns for state, federal and tribal lands; consider the ownership of parks, open space and lands located in high fire risk areas. Check with your city or county planning and land use departments for ownership maps.

**P** Conduct a search of all grant opportunities; utilize state and federal guidance from some of the stakeholder players identified in Step #1 (K-1 and P-3). A web site reference for grants is included in the appendix. Contact those local agencies that have already completed the **CWPP** process to determine the resources and planning practices utilized. See wildfire programs reference in the appendix.

**D** Fire Chief or Leader to conduct “face to face” meeting with all District level (local regional leaders) from federal and state agencies in charge of managing property interests within the boundaries of the **CWPP** planning area as well as all grant funding agency leaders and those that regulate and permit fire management operations, such as control burning and other fuels management operations.

**A** Assign the official **CWPP** planning team. This should be a public event with political attention and public recognition (media coverage). This would be the time to prepare the public and the public policy leaders for the impact of the plan, identifying the potential cost/benefit impacts of performing the **CWPP** process. Consider involving your Public Information Officer and or the city/county PIO.

The Fire Chief would take an active part in laying out the wildfire planning challenges and threats as well as the opportunities and positive impacts of accomplishing the mitigation projects defined in the **CWPP** process.

**P** Federal and State players who have jurisdiction within the planning area must be engaged in the **CWPP** planning process.

Contact the regional fire service and forestry leaders to determine who from the state and federal agencies should attend the **CWPP** planning meetings; focus recruitment on those agencies having jurisdiction within the **CWPP** planning area with special attention to the state forestry, federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM), U.S. Forest Service (USFS), National Park Service (NPS), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFW) Initiate contact with these entities even if they are not directly bordering your planning area.

### ***CWPP Step #3 - Engage Parties***

**D** Extend a personal invitation to all private property owner groups and other interested parties to work on the planning process and actively involve them in follow up on the planned activities. Consider inviting a few “hand picked” citizen representatives at this point. They should be reasonably educated on fire management issues and perhaps have attended a FireWise workshop. It may be better to provide a general invitation to all citizens after the initial hazard and risk assessment has been completed. This will enable the core team to present specifics on potential fire behavior and community hazards to local



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private property groups. Be sure to include the environmental group representatives within the planning area.

**P** Begin considering the meeting location, convenient meeting time and meeting agenda for the first official meeting of the **CWPP** plan development Core Committee.

**D** Develop an agenda for the first meeting (see A-1 below for details).

**A** Conduct the first meeting of the **CWPP** planning group. The Fire Chief/Leader should encourage membership to the planning group and be inclusive of group interests – making sure that non-fire agencies such as recreation, environmental, and other users of wildland areas are invited to the planning team meeting. Make sure base data maps are available for this meeting to facilitate a scientific approach to defining the WUI and boundaries of the planning effort. This may be a multi-jurisdictional process, therefore, identify and invite all jurisdictions under consideration in the WUI for the **CWPP**. Maps should include; fuels models, slope, elevation, land ownership, water sources, roads, parcels (if available), etc. It may also be valuable to have fire progression maps available for the same areas considered in the WUI base maps.

Many of these maps may already be available through city, county, state or federal partners.

**P** The Fire Chief/Leader will assure that the organization is on the right track and is adequately supported but does not have to lead the planning group at future meetings. The Fire Chief/Leader may empower others to assume leadership and management functions, while always tracking to make sure that the planning process is functioning properly.

The Fire Chief/Leader should be sure that there is support from the city manager and/or the county administrator and the mayor and/or chairperson of the board of supervisors.

**P** The Fire Chief/Leader should consider the formal planning process to be used (all 8 steps reviewed within this planning guide) and the preliminary boundaries of the planning effort to offer to the planning group at the first meeting.

**D** Make sure that the plan's focus and scope is achievable and can grow with the "economy of scale" encouraging interested parties, resources and players to join into the process.

**D** Although a **CWPP** should not be a political document, political realities should be considered in any community planning process. Therefore, consideration should be given to the political environment and support gathered for the process. That support will motivate local interest and probably involve powerful local leaders, which may assist in funding and support of the vision/mission of the **CWPP**.

**P** Understand and be ready to address "deal stopper" issues and disruptive participants that obstruct the planning group's activities. When disruptive activities occur make sure to remind the planning team about the vision, mission and goals of the group. Do not stifle constructive feedback that may be in conflict with the group interests. Allow adequate time to deliberate before moving on, **but move on!**

The Fire Chief/Leader should ensure that meetings produce results that meet the vision, mission, and

goals of the group; establish several small, achievable goals to help assure continued participation and a positive outlook from the group. Always be aware of the potential for threats from within the groups as well as from special interest groups and individuals from the community that may not support the **CWPP** ideals. Obstacles or roadblocks may include personalities, egos, jurisdictional issues, resistance to the time and cost of the projects, perceived lack of importance, apathy (even from within the fire service), high enforcement costs, inability to manage the long term challenges – keeping mitigated areas maintained, reduction in land available to development potential, resistance due to perception of restricted property rights and personal privacy rights, reluctance to trust the “government”, decision-makers underestimating the fire threat potential, disputes over who is in charge, failure to invite key landowners and other stakeholders, lack of participation, lack of identity with the wildland fire threat, multiple visions breaking down cooperation and collaboration of the planning team, competition between neighboring agencies, a perception that the Fire Chief/Leader is empire building and or being overly sensitive to the perceived risks, etc. The **CWPP** process demands a high level of professionalism to ensure the credibility of all involved, including, but not limited to the Leader of the process, the Fire Chief, the code officials, and the planning team.

Utilizing the latest technology and science will help deter these threats as will adopting a win/win management model for all participants.

**D** Refine the vision and direction of the planning effort to accurately reflect community concerns. Probability of success goes up with support and buy-in/ownership to a clear vision, mission, and goals. Continually revisit the vision, mission, and goals with the planning team at every meeting. There are many issues to consider when working towards the successful accomplishment of **CWPP** projects. The following is a summary of the feedback from approximately 50 fire chiefs, industry professionals, environmentalists, and government officials from 33 states that have an identified wildland fire problem:

- **Work hardest with those parties that have energy and common interest to work together well; play off of the small successes and build momentum and more interest with time and more successful outcomes.**
- **Involve state and federal agencies early in the process; they have the resources and the interest in collaboration to achieve local area success.**
- **Make sure the data used is accurate and credible; use as much data as possible that has already passed the scrutiny of local, state and federal agencies for CWPP project planning purposes.**
- **Build working relationships with agencies and associations that have common interest in CWPP projects;**
- **Make sure to adequately plan for staff time to accomplish planned activities.**
- **Secure protection and defensible space, access, water and fire protection resources to the clusters of buildings and other assets of risk in the wildland.**

- **Sell the CWPP process to economic development interests, recreation, resort and environmental groups;**
- **Elected leaders/politicians prefer to associate with successful people and committees – develop those opportunities and maximize the results of your success!**
- **Success breeds cooperation and momentum for more future action; play off success and motivate your team for more!**
- **State and Federal grant agencies like to support well-planned community action – do the planning and play off of the community support!**
- **Include the non-participants in the consensus development process; facilitators and group leaders should encourage quiet yet focused participant feedback; there should be something for everyone – mutual aid or some sort of support trade-offs should be encouraged.**
- **Streamline regulatory oversight by working cooperatively and collaboratively.**
- **Develop relationships and familiarize yourself with the political planning process.**
- **Use the talents of the Public Information specialists and media to generate some interest through a local news outlet; get them to identify with the vision early in the planning process and then follow the story appropriately.**
- **New coalitions and better understanding of roles and responsibilities will occur when the leadership opens communications and joins other leaders interests into the planning process.**
- **Draft a model plan from collaborative efforts of a well represented community effort and then ship it to the other stakeholders for feedback and potential support. Be careful not to consider the sign-off support of an agency that did not participate in the plan development as collaboration. Participation is key. Without active participation, you will not have gained that agency's personal support and interest in creating the plan.**
- **The CWPP process will raise the consciousness of the community and political leadership to the threats and concerns involving fire in the WUI. Take advantage of that awareness.**
- **A good CWPP may reduce the fire protection and insurance cost for wildland assets at risk.**

### PHASE #2 - RISK ASSESSMENT AND PRIORITY SETTING

#### *CWPP Step #4 Community Base Map*

**P** As there will be numerous maps available to use as a base map, select a base map that the participants will be most comfortable with when defining the boundaries of the planning effort. Define the boundaries of the **CWPP's** planning effort and be mindful that the areas excluded may be a concern in efforts to improve fire safety on a broader scale. Use natural and recognizable boundary breaks, not necessarily political or jurisdictional boundaries. This initial map planning can be effectively achieved with markers on the base map. It is probably not necessary to involve GIS at this point, as the boundaries are likely to change with further review. The planning area can be digitized into a GIS format once full consensus of the base map has been achieved. Remember to consider and delineate locations and magnitude of hazards (ingress, egress, roads, infrastructure, etc.).

**A** Be sure to revisit, at the next planning session, the decisions made on the first map boundaries with the group for confirmation and group approval. Consider amendments to the map, get consensus from the group on the **CWPP** boundaries and if necessary, draw a new map. Confirm your vision, mission, goals and planning direction with the group.

Get consensus and buy-in/ownership on the draft map; involve public works engineers, utilities, parks and forestry personnel and private land owners on the mapping process.

#### *CWPP Step # 5 Develop a Community Risk Assessment*

Gather information about the hazards (fuels, structure ignitability, dangerous topography, other flammable material), risks (what might start a significant interface fire) and values (things you don't want negatively impacted within the **CWPP** planning process) within the designated mapping area.

**P** Utilize existing risk assessment information from other planning documents (public works, utilities, and fire analysis efforts conducted by state and federal agencies often have the fuels models, vegetative models that can be "cross-walked" to fuels and the BLM will have Risk Assessment and Mitigation Strategies (RAMS) data available. See bibliography for the BLM web site). Reference web contacts, local planners and guide books for how to define risk.

Contact state and federal region fire protection agencies; do a historic accounting of fire history and project the impact on today's infrastructure at risk; contact city and county planning departments, weather services, state and federal geological services, military services, mapping and topography surveying groups for support.

Convene the third planning meeting. Present the risk assessment information to the planning team and attain feedback to expand upon the hazard, risk, and value concerns. All Fire Chiefs or Wardens within the jurisdictions established on the map should describe the "real picture" of what the level of suppression capacity, timelines for response and ability to protect lives and property at risk. The entire planning team

should describe the loss potential and values at risk within their area of interest. A risk assessment team should be assigned from the membership of the **CWPP** planning committee to put the hazard, risk, values, and response capability together. Utilize the fire spread rate maps to define the effectiveness of response capabilities. For instance, you may have historic ignitions along a railroad track in light, flashy (fast moving) fuels. The distance to values at risk can be easily calculated along with a time line for the fire to reach the community. This time may be significantly shorter than the expected response time of the fire department. This level of interpretation helps to justify community level action and fosters an attitude of shared responsibility.

- **Use Firewise concepts (structural ignitability, ignition risk, fuel hazards)**
- **The hazard identification process should single out the concerns; each concern should have a prevention and mitigation plan developed for it.**
- **The priority should be focused on the most significant life threats first, followed by highly significant assets, such as water supply and infrastructure. environment and private property interests.**
- **The Fire Chief/Leader must make sure that the group stays together on this process - understanding and prioritizing the risks and threats is very important; make sure that key stakeholders are present during these discussions.**
- **Individually/Jurisdictionally prioritize risks and threats and then gain consensus on the highest priority concerns – do a rank-order exercise where the participants get to participate and express their feelings/concerns on the choice AFTER understanding the individual interests for each of the projects considered.**
- **Develop a measurable rating system – place firefighter and resident safety as the highest valued measuring point.**

### *CWPP Step #6 Community Priorities*

**P** The **CWPP** leadership team must be led in a collaborative and consensus based approach; as special interest groups' projects will start rising out of the planning process for implementation consideration. The planning and risk assessment team should begin working on ways to prevent, mitigate and prepare for the defined hazards/risks and potential impacts. The planning process should also consider the structural ignitability concerns for areas near wildland fuels as well as the house-to-house fire spread concern from a major wildland fire event or conflagration.

Use GIS personnel to staff and help facilitate the mapping process. The **CWPP** planning team should consider new ordinances and fire regulations. Two template regulatory documents are referenced in the Bibliography.

**A** It is very important to document all the information gathered during this community priorities meeting. It is suggested that a facilitator be used for this meeting, as there will be a need to capture the

feedback, encourage maximum participation from everyone, organize the feedback into the hazard and risk categories accompanied by understanding prevention, mitigation and preparedness activities already contained in the jurisdictional plans. The Fire Chief(s) should be present to encourage and monitor feedback and to understand the complexities that will surface from the **CWPP** planning team and the priorities of the community. This is a very important part of the planning process.

Set some timelines for planning; the basic **CWPP** process could be completed in as little as six meetings (which can be accomplished in one month, however will most likely take a longer period of time. The on-going development and implementation should proceed from there. Follow the Leaders Guide for a better understanding of the process and then come back to the LGS for more specific details. Remember, one size does not fit all in the **CWPP** planning process; use other plans and support from outside agencies to keep from re-inventing the wheel, but do not expect your **CWPP** to be the same as any other version in existence...it's YOUR community, YOUR leadership, that and develops the best **CWPP**!

**D** Reconvene the **CWPP** planning team to review the risk assessment and risk management results. Provide further refinement to develop prevention, mitigation, and preparedness plans for each hazard and risk defined. Prioritize the planning projects with collaborative consensus for those projects and programs requiring immediate attention. Select project based on the ranked priority previously established. This needs to be tempered by the probability of success and support for the project. In other words, the highest ranked project may not be the first selected for implemented because the cost, political environment or detail of planning needed for successful implementation is too overwhelming and costly with current resources. For the first project, it may be better to select one which has a high probability of success. This helps to encourage the team and ensure the plan's momentum.

- **The Fire Chief(s)/Leader should be clear and direct with what he/she hopes to accomplish; don't overdo the "mega-disaster" but present clear, scientifically based and identifiable threats.**
- **A Collaborative approach is recommended when building a CWPP; initially keep the process and CWPP simple (don't get grandiose), build the plan with time and momentum generated from successful implementation of smaller projects;**
- **It is highly recommended to use trained and effective facilitators when leading planning group efforts that require consensus support.**
- **Be able to define and communicate the value of prevention and mitigation efforts when suppressing fires; sell the value of CWPP as the "ounce of prevention" that keeps problems small and manageable.**
- **Don't get bogged down in over analyzing data or fighting over the finer points of the plan. Establish priorities and facilitate solutions corrective action, low cost, quickly accomplished followed by mid to high term cost impacts that have greatest life safety value.**

### PHASE #3 PLAN, ACT AND EVALUATE

#### *CWPP Step #7 – Action Plan and Assessment Strategy*

**A** The key point of this Step is to attain buy-in/ownership and commitment for “doing”. The plan will call out the priority actions – the key tasks need to be tracked to measure progress. It is critical for all of the key players to commit to the action plan and participate in the implementation process.

Make sure to engage private property owners into the “doing” process; their understanding and support of the plan is critical.

- **Leverage competing interests for training, prevention and suppression needs ( e.g. terrorism); join these interests to create an opportunity for overall system strength.**
- **Sustainable results can be achieved through collaboration and commitment to the CWPP planning process.**
- **Be mindful of the need for developing CWPP for firefighter safety, especially when first-in protection involves the use of inexperienced wildland firefighters.**
- **The group can convince the dissenting member(s) to reconsider and think outside the box and hopefully join the majority of the group so that a solid consensus supports the CWPP projects.**

**A** At this point the Fire Chief(s)/Leader’s role will be to support and encourage the outcomes, clearly identifying the support and involvement that the fire department will offer for each of the planned outcomes, remembering that it is much better when the community engages in the “doing” process – the fire agency fills the gaps to keep the process alive and moving forward. The financial impacts associated with each of the planned outcomes must be developed and a fund raising process defined by the planning team.

Use examples where fire caused major damage or had great potential to do so; recognize changing demographics, growth into WUI, weather patterns and higher potential for more fire starts. Identify all of your fires and establish the fact that these fires could very well have been the “big one” that is coming your way!

**D** Make sure to set up a method for changing, updating and/or revising the plan. The only way to keep the plan alive and effective is to keep refining it to meet the challenges ahead and changes in scale, scope and after significant fire, insect or landscape scale disturbances.

- **See Step #9; the plan must have scheduled dates to measure progress and review/update planned activities.**
- **Build strong communications systems; person to person (face to face is best), newsletter, e-mail and web pages. Track and celebrate successes as well to provide accurate and timely information...that builds momentum!**
- **Give presentation to governing bodies, commissions and homeowners groups that build support**

**and identification with the CWPP vision.**

- **Gather and recognize the CWPP leaders and “doers” publicly; public kudos create positive energy and motivation for more “doing”; and most importantly, it’s the right thing for a leader to DO!**
- **Learn from mistakes, failures or lack-luster performance; try a new strategy if the first one fails...hang in there for success and it will come, especially if your team is working together and has the same vision of success clearly in mind.**

### *CWPP Step #8 Finalize the CWPP Plan*

**D** The planning team must develop an excellent (professionally designed) message for public information about who, what, where, when and why the **CWPP** project is being accomplished. Use the planning team members as much as possible to deliver the public relations message to the community leaders. A community member working with a fire department representative provides an effective, balanced presentation.

- **Keep the media involved; develop and maintain a relationship and an on-going story of your team’s challenges and successes; find reporters who have a personal interest in the vision of the CWPP projects, invite them to give their testimonial at community events.**
- **Maintain a sense of ownership by building a collaborative team effort around the CWPP projects;**
- **Set the theme of the CWPP projects and promote that theme at public events like fairs, parades, and other community events.**

**D** The planning team should develop the background and detail necessary to plan tasks, resources and staffing needed for each of the projects selected for high probability of success.

Each **CWPP** is a “tailor made” effort for the community served, developed by the leaders within the community and patterned on the actual fire challenges and asset protection planning that is important for the individual community. Although individualistic, the **CWPP** must have a baseline of sound scientific analysis to guide the decision makers. The guidance offered in this document and the Leaders Guide is a compilation of recommendations and helpful hints used by fire and forestry leaders from all of the States that have a WUI challenge.

Realize that fire chiefs and local leaders who have interest in public safety work hardest on empowering and helping to focus the planning teams on producing the projects that are focused on attaining the local vision for **CWPP** improvements.

**A** The leadership of the team must meet with the key stakeholders and policy leaders (sign off authorities) to attain support for the planned activities with emphasis on the financial needs and funding mechanisms identified. Use the planning team members to deliver as much of the message as possible to



## Community Wildfire Protection Plan

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the community leaders. Attain signature support from the organizations that must approve the plan to grant financial support, regulatory or oversight (the list was developed in **Phase #1, Step #3**).

Consider alternative options for utilizing non-merchantable fuels. Bio-mass for co-generation of power or for forest products uses such as mulch and feedstock can be developed locally.

**A** The planning team should celebrate the development of the plan and establish future meetings needed to keep the plan active.

At this point the **CWPP** process is engaged and working. The challenge will be to recruit involvement from the community stakeholders (much like you have already done) and to work on funding mechanisms to achieve the prevention, mitigation and preparation measures you and your community or jurisdiction feels is necessary.

**P** Set a date for tracking the progress of planned projects. The entire **CWPP** should be reviewed and updated during the next scheduled meeting; build on the **CWPP** so that new projects stay on track for the vision of the plan as described in Step #9 below.

### ***CWPP Step #9 Progress and Review Meeting***

**P** The staff and committee leaders should get together and establish a “Progress and Review” system. This would be a chance to recognize progress and build team momentum for more future accomplishments. The planning team should review the entire **CWPP** planning process (Leaders Guide and Leaders Guide Supplement) and highlight the activities that should be discussed at the “progress and Review” meeting.

**A** ***CELEBRATE YOUR SUCCESS*** and thank everyone who participated by holding a **CWPP SUCCESS EVENT**. Invite all of the participants, the media, the elected officials, the state foresters and the federal folks who were all a part of this process to celebrate progress and to review and update the **CWPP** for future action. This should be a positive and encouraging meeting which builds momentum for future success.

**P** The **CWPP** planning process never ends. It is a continuing cycle of plan, do, act, evaluate, and celebrate. The issues and challenges change but the planning guidance recommendations presented in this Leaders Guide Supplement remain fairly stable and can be used repeatedly. Plan to have **CWPP** meetings at least once per quarter to maintain interest and to encourage progress. Good luck and remember persistence pays and persistence with collaborative support effort pays big! The more the collaborative support the bigger the pay off will be!

After you have finished your **CWPP**, please contact the International Association of Fire Chiefs at [iafc.org](http://iafc.org) or call 703/273-0911 and let us share in your success. Your input, feedback, comments and experiences will ensure that the LGS is, in fact, the **LIVING** document it is intended to be. Good luck in your efforts to make your community safer.

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*Wildfire Susceptibility Index Districts Metadata\DDDPWFSI.doc*

Wildfire Mitigation in Florida – Land use planning strategies and best development practices.

To order contact: Florida Department of Community Affairs. Jeff Bielling, Principal Planner  
phone: 850-922-1760, [jeff.bielling@dca.state.fl.us](mailto:jeff.bielling@dca.state.fl.us) Online copy available at:  
[www.dca.state.fl.us/fdcp/DCP/hazardmitigation/pubs.htm](http://www.dca.state.fl.us/fdcp/DCP/hazardmitigation/pubs.htm)

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[www.nwcg.gov](http://www.nwcg.gov)

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# Leaders Guide for developing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan

This Leaders Guide was created for Leaders by Leaders and is designed to work directly with “Preparing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan – Handbook” available at: [www.safnet.org/policyandpress/cwpp.cfm](http://www.safnet.org/policyandpress/cwpp.cfm)

## Leaders Guide General Instructions

This Leaders Guide is designed to supplement the document entitled: “Preparing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan – Handbook for Wildland-Urban Interface Communities” available at [www.safnet.org/policyandpress/cwpp.cfm](http://www.safnet.org/policyandpress/cwpp.cfm) or contact the Western Governors’ Association at (303)-623-9378 for a free copy. Please reference the Leaders Guide Supplement for details about each of the step instructions listed on this Fire Chiefs / Leaders Guide. [www.iafc.org](http://www.iafc.org)

### Minimum CWPP requirements

As required by the Healthy Forests Restoration Act:

- 1 Collaboration\*: local and state government agencies in consultation with federal agencies and other interested parties
- 2 Prioritized Fuel Reduction: identify and prioritize areas for hazardous fuel reduction; recommend types of treatment; must protect one or more at-risk communities and essential infrastructure
- 3 Treatment of Structural Ignitability: A CWPP must recommend measures for homeowners and communities to reduce ignitability of structures

### \*Collaboration:

More than asking for feedback - must plan, do and act together; three entities must mutually agree: local government, local fire department(s), and state entity responsible for forest management. In addition, must consult with local representatives from USFS/USDA and BLM/DOI and other interested parties or persons in the development of the plan.

### Timeline for first CWPP

The first draft of the CWPP can be accomplished with 6 well planned meetings and will take approximately 1- 18 months to complete the CWPP process. Consider a strategy of developing a simple version of the CWPP that you can “Plan – Do – and Act” on with smaller successes. This will lead to larger outcomes as the plan is expanded in the future.

### Leaders Guide Symbols:

- P** Plan symbol - vision, knowledge, network, scope and planned activities.
- D** Do symbol - activities accomplished to gain a planned outcome
- A** Act symbol numerically indexed; A planned activity that is ready for action/implementation

## Phase 1: Forming and Norming

### Step #1 Convene Decision-makers: Form a core team of representatives from local government, local fire, and state agency responsible for forest management

**D** Staff meeting review of CWPP process; brainstorm methods and who to invite to the planning process

**P** Fire Chief/Leader to decide the need for a CWPP; consult with neighboring fire chiefs

**P** Develop conceptual mission and policy direction for CWPP

**D** List lead planning team: local, state and federal agencies; local community leaders

**P** Define jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional players and match them to the wildland fire problems

**P** Identify core group of policy leaders, statutory authorities; those with sign off powers; granting agencies

**P** Review local, state and federal wildfire plans and the City/County General Plan Safety Element

**D** Face to face meetings with city and county executive and political leaders – check the level of support for the CWPP

**P** Begin defining the geographical planning area for the CWPP

### Step #2 Involve Federal Agencies: Identify and engage local representative of the USFS and DOI; contact other land management agencies as appropriate. Public Releases

**D** Define property ownership in the CWPP planning area.

**P** Work with state and federal agencies for grant opportunities

**P** Contact local agencies that have completed a CWPP

**A** Assign the official CWPP planning team for the first meeting. Involve the public early and continuously

**D** Face to face meeting with state, federal and regional leaders that have a property interest in completing a CWPP – discuss the need to form a planning team and to access available grant funds

### Step #3 Engage Interested Parties: Contact and encourage active involvement in plan development from a broad range of interested organizations and stakeholders.

**D** Personal invitation to property owners and a broad range of stakeholder groups to join the planning process

**P** Find meeting locations and convenient meeting times

**D** Develop the agenda for the first meeting

**A** Convene the first CWPP meeting: introduce planning process; describe benefits of doing a CWPP; expand planning team membership; and encourage support and involvement

**P** Leadership to assure CWPP process is on the right track and empower other leaders to keep process on track

**P** Leadership to encourage members of the planning group to stay engaged; encourage the non-participants to engage and speak out; make sure the non-fire representatives are invited

**P** Understand and be ready to address the “deal stopper” issues; be ready to keep planning team focused on the mission and vision of the planning process

**D** Refine the mission and direction of the planning process to accurately reflect the community concern.

## Phase 2: Risk Assessment and Priority Setting

### Step #4 Establish a Community Base Map: Work with partners to establish a baseline map of the community that defines the community WUI, inhabited areas at risk, forested areas containing critical human infrastructure, and forest areas at risk for large-scale fire disturbance.

**P** Start with any base map; define the CWPP planning area – use natural and recognizable boundary breaks

**A** Convene the second CWPP meeting and focus on defining the fuel hazards, assets at risk and confirm the planning area; make sure that the planning team understands the mission and vision of the CWPP process

### Step #5 Develop a Community Risk Assessment: Work with planning partners to develop a community risk assessment that considers fuel hazards; risk of wildfire occurrence; homes, businesses, and essential infrastructure at risk; other community values at risk and local preparedness capability.

**P** Gather information about hazards, fuel models, risks, threats; use local, state and federal agency information and identify on the base map

**A** Convene the third CWPP meeting; present and build upon the risk and assessment information; fire chief to “tell it like it is”

### Step #6 Establish Community Priorities and Recommendations: Use the base map and community risk assessment to facilitate a collaborative community meeting to identify priority fuel reduction, structural protection, and improved fire response project; clearly indicate relationship to reducing community wildfire risks.

**P** Develop a process that leads to collaboration and consensus building around the highest priority projects that prevent, mitigate and prepare for risks and hazards; consider wildland fire threat to structures as well as structure to structure fire spread.

**A** Convene the fourth CWPP meeting; review risk mgmt. and reduction plans; prioritize planning project

**D** Facilitate the meeting; capture feedback, organize and prioritize; fire chief should be present to encourage and monitor feedback making sure the planning process is staying on track.

## Phase 3: Plan, Do and Evaluate

### Step #7 Develop an Action Plan and Assessment Strategy: Consider developing a detailed implementation strategy to accompany the CWPP, as well as a monitoring plan that will ensure its long-term success.

**A** Attain buy in and commitment for the “doing”; track and measure progress; engage private property owners

**A** Convene the fifth CWPP meeting; fire chief to encourage outcomes and community involvement; fill the gaps and keep the process moving forward

**D** Set up a method for changing, updating, and revision of the plan; change to meet future demands

### Step #8 Finalize Community Wildfire Protection Plan: Communicate CWPP results to the community and key partners.

**D** Public release and a media blitz about who, what, where, why, and how the fire safe projects are being processed; use planning team members to deliver the message.

**D** Planning team to develop the background, funding and staffing plans for the projects.

**A** Leadership team to meet with key stakeholders, property owners, and policy leaders and deliver the plan message; attain signature support from funding agencies.

**A** Convene the sixth CWPP meeting; celebrate the development of the plan; schedule future meeting to follow implementation, update, funding and tracking of plan; set a specific date for the next meeting.

### Step #9 Track Progress and Update CWPP: A plan stays alive when it’s evaluated and updated to meet the reality of the implementation days.

**P** Describe accomplishments to date and review the 8 Step CWPP planning process to pick up loose ends and new areas of concern.

**A** Convene the seventh CWPP meeting to celebrate success, upgrade existing plans and to plan for the future

**P** Plan future meetings to track and update the planned activities

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