

Okanogan County Community Wildfire Protection Plan 2024 Update

Facilitated by:





This work is supported through funding from Washington's Climate Commitment Act (CCA). The CCA supports Washington's climate action efforts by putting cap-and-invest dollars to work reducing climate pollution, creating jobs, and improving public health. Information about the CCA is available at www.climate.wa.gov.



*Washington
Department of*
**FISH and
WILDLIFE**



Rising from the Ashes



Okanogan County
Long Term Recovery

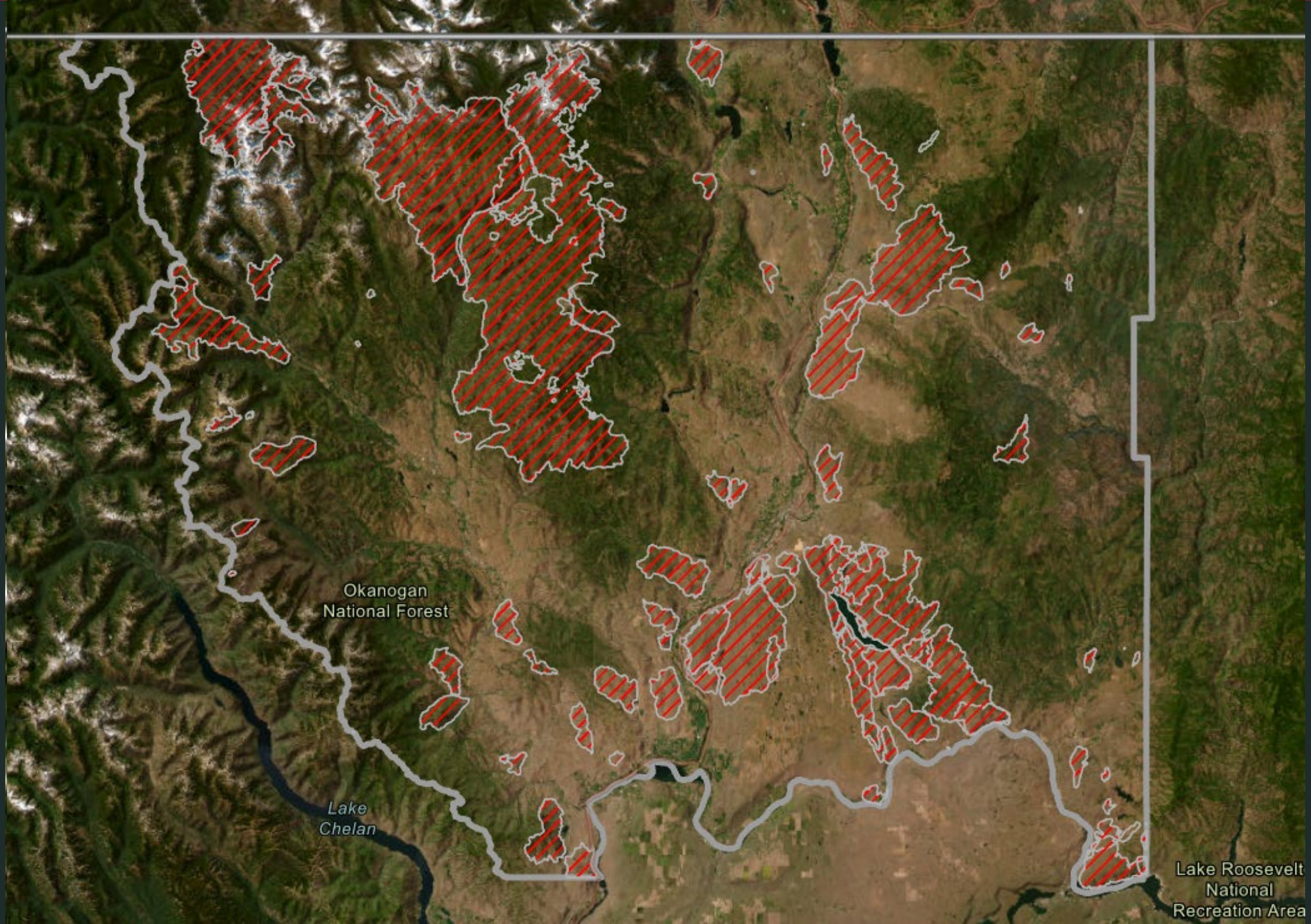




Mt. Tolman Fire Center, Municipal Fire Departments, and Fire Districts 1-16.
Fire Adapted Methow, Methow Valley Citizens Council, Methow Watershed Council.

This document follows a template produced by the Ember Alliance, a Fort Collins, CO non-profit.





Okanogan
National Forest

Lake
Chelan

Lake Roosevelt
National
Recreation Area

Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003

Collaboration

- Must include local governments, fire departments, and the state forest service
- Community input and cross-boundary collaboration is key.

Prioritized Fuel Reduction

- Must identify the highest priority locations for fuels treatments across the landscape
- Emphasis on cross-boundary treatments

Structural Ignitability

- Must address reducing structural ignitability
- Emphasis on individual responsibility of homeowners

What a CWPP Is

Collaborative community effort to
determine, prioritize, and plan actions
that protect life, property, and
infrastructure from wildfire

A PLAN & A PROCESS

- A CWPP must include planned action items
- Action items should be SMART - specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound

What a CWPP Is Not

NOT A LEGALLY BINDING DOCUMENT

- The CWPP does not require anyone to take action.
- The CWPP does not have legal recourse for failing to act on something in the plan.

NOT A FUNDING SOURCE

- The CWPP is not a source for funding.
- The CWPP is not a checkbox.

NOT AN EVACUATION PLAN

- The CWPP is not meant to act as an evacuation plan. It provides background and general recommendations for communities to develop them.
- Communities interest in developing specific evac. plans should consider collaborating with fire agencies, county, state, and other partners.

COMMUNITY + PARTNER ENGAGEMENT

HAZARD + RISK ANALYSIS

PRIORITIZATION + IMPLEMENTATION

DOCUMENT GENERATION

2024

Process Timeline

JAN-JUNE

Partner kick-off meeting

Core planning sessions:

- Community engagement & fire/risk/hazard analysis
- Prioritizing goals/values/capacity/action steps

MAR-APR

Community engagement meetings:

- Tonasket, Okanogan, Nespalem, Winthrop, Pateros

JUNE-SEPT

Document Drafting Focus Period

Fall 24'

Final partner/community meeting:

- Review document, public comment, revisions, and approval

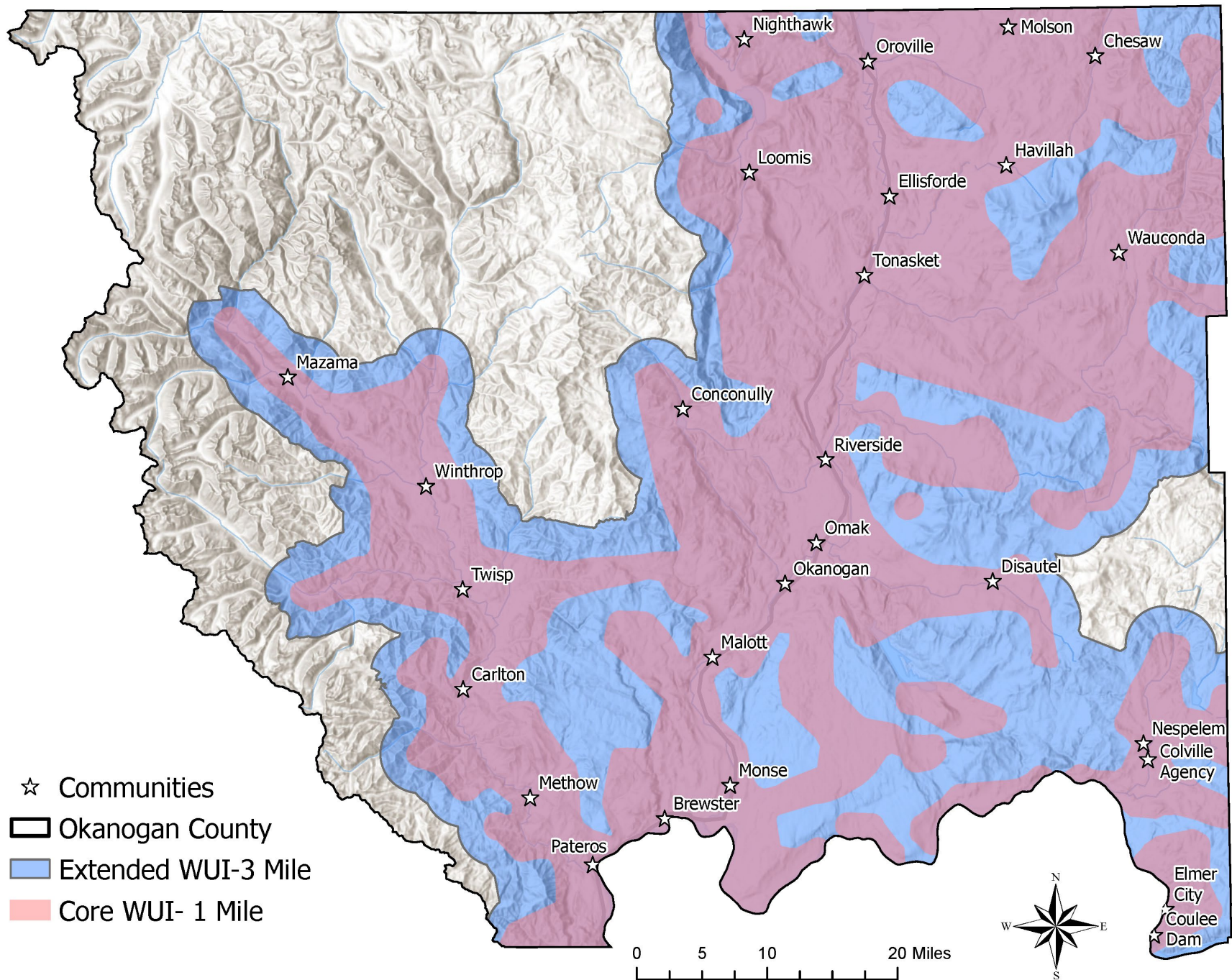
Objectives

- 1) To reduce the area of WUI land burned and losses experienced because of wildfires
- 2) Prioritize the protection of people, structures, infrastructure, and unique ecosystems contributing to our way of life and the sustainability of the local and regional economy
- 3) Educate communities about the unique challenges of wildfire in the WUI
- 4) Establish mitigation priorities and develop mitigation strategies in Okanogan County
- 5) Strategically locate and plan fuel reduction projects
- 6) Provide recommendations for alternative treatment methods, such as modifying forest stand density, herbicide treatments, fuel reduction techniques, and disposal or removal of treated slash
- 7) Meet or exceed the requirements of the National Fire Plan and FEMA for a County-level Wildfire Protection Plan

Initial Steps

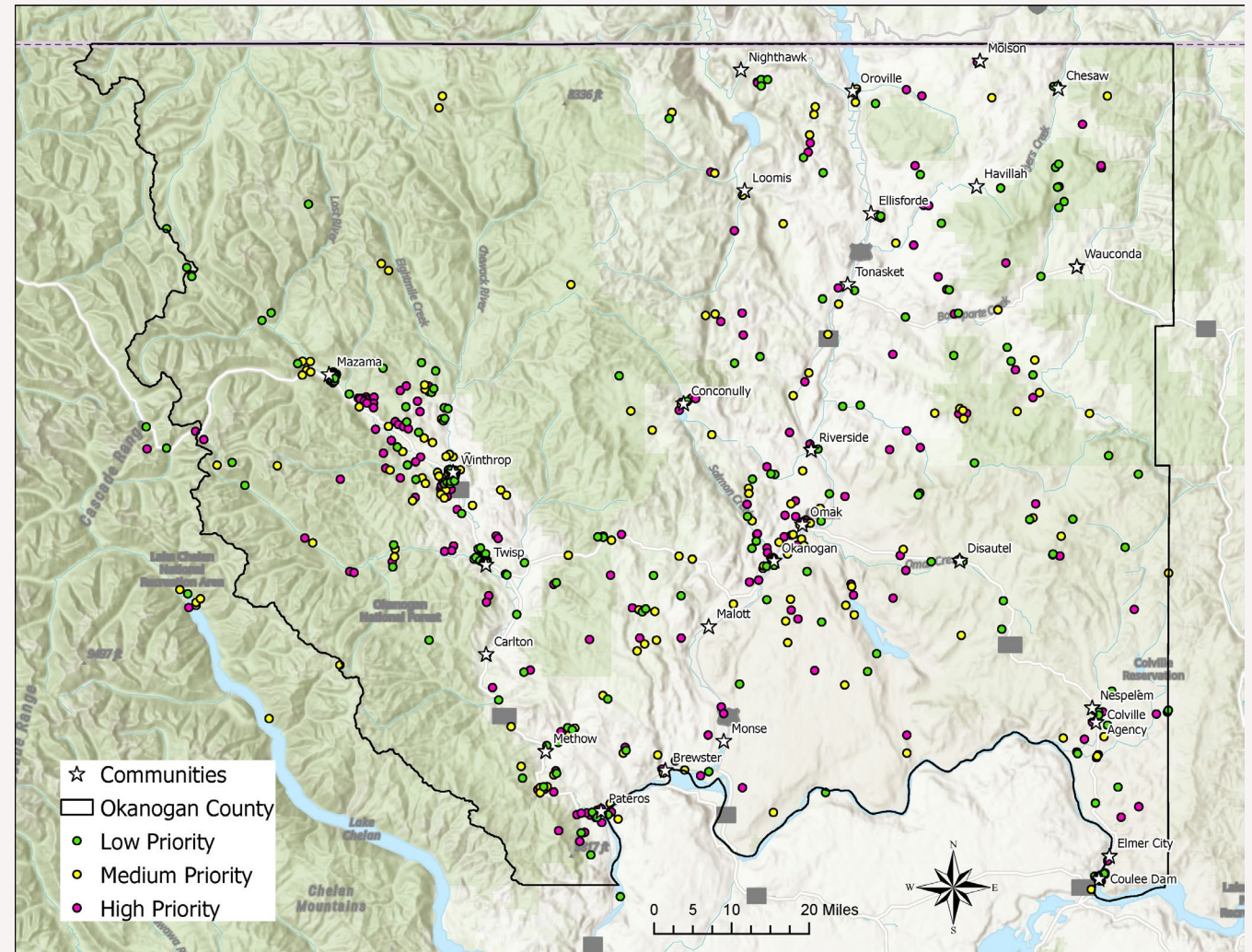
- CWPP Community Input Survey (725 responses, see Appendix C.)
- Jan 31, kickoff meeting
- Gathering of governmental and other partners
- Defining the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)





CWPP Public Meetings

- Tonasket (March 12)
- Okanogan (March 19)
- Nespelem (March 27)
- Winthrop (March 28)
- Chiliwist (April 8)*
- Pateros (April 9)
- Over 300 participants
- Value mapping



* Held at Okanogan CD Office, held at request of residents

Planning Sessions (Feb-June)

- 9 meeting, made up of core planning group.
- Open to public
- Used to discuss main focus areas, evaluate elements of the CWPP, delineate responsibilities for sections, develop action items, ID elements not included in previous CWPP updates.

Document Drafting Focus Period

- Used to develop fully fledged drafts of individual sections.
- Consultation between partners.
- Refine/add action items.
- Develop additional mapping resources.
- Concluded with internal partner comment period Aug-early September.

Community Wildfire Protection Plan

Okanogan County, Washington



Published in 2024

Structure

1. Introduction
2. Okanogan County Background
3. Wildfire Risk and Preparedness
4. Fire Protection and District Capacity
5. Mitigation and Adaptation Recommendations
6. Project Action Recommendations

Project Action Recommendations

- This section includes specific project action recommendations displayed in a table developed by the CWPP planning committee with input from community members. These actions aim to accomplish the mission and objectives of the Okanogan County CWPP.
- These items range from broad scale initial outlines of projects to specific previously delineated and on going projects that already support CWPP objectives.
- 180 individual action items.

Categories

- A. Fire Prevention and Mitigation
- B. Enhancements to Infrastructure
- C. Community Outreach and Education
- D. Enhancements of Local Resources and Capacity
- E. Fuel/Forest Health Treatment Implementation
- F. Post-Fire Recovery
- G. Evacuation and Emergency Response
- H. Cultural and Economic Viability
- I. Public Health

Item A: Fire Prevention and Mitigation Efforts

Item #	Action Item	Activity Description	P	CWPP Objectives	Status / Timeline	Lead Agency	Partner Organizations	Project Location
A1	Offer incentives for xeriscaping to remove the need to water lawns and green belts.	By decreasing lawns and removing water loving plantings and replacing them with fire resistant plants that are native to dry and arid landscapes we will reduce the need for wasting water that could be used for instream flow or agriculture.	L	1, 2	O	Okanogan CD	WA DNR, Towns	Throughout the WUI in Okanogan County
A2	Develop a database compiling information for Okanogan CD, WA DNR and other entities HIZ assessments to provide information to IMTs. Possibly looking to Oregon for examples.	Multiple agencies and entities in Okanogan County provide some form of risk assessment service to property owners. The data from these reports may be useful to IMTs during an incident. Developing the means to pull that data through a digital database shared between agencies would allow the information to be easily accessible. Challenges to consider would include digitization of records, and privacy concerns.	L	1, 2	LT	WA DNR, Okanogan CD, USFS	Many	Throughout Okanogan County
A3	Initiate an incentive based promotional program for community defensible zone treatments in rural subdivisions or housing clusters	Partner with OCLTRG to utilize Equitable Mitigation program for residents unable to participate in cost share.	M	1, 5, 6	MT	Okanogan CD	WA DNR, Firewise sites, towns and cities, OCLTRG	Within the core WUI of Okanogan County
A4	Maintenance of home site defensible space treatments and promotion of new ones.	Provide incentives, financial, and technical assistance to property owners to maintain already implemented defensible space, and to complete new fuels mitigation projects all three zones around homes in the county.	M	4, 1	MT	Okanogan CD, OCLTRG	WA DNR, Firewise sites, towns and cities, OCLTRG	Within the core WUI of Okanogan County

Item C: Community Outreach, and Education

Item #	Action Item	Activity Description	P	CWPP Objective s	Status/ Timelin e	Lead Agency	Partner Organizations	Project Location
	properties in the upper Methow Valley.							
C21	General Education of CWPP.	Continuing outreach efforts to provide education on the non-binding CWPP and provide yearly status updates on CWPP projects to the public through social channels and traditional media (newspapers, newsletters, radio).	M	1,2,3,7	O	Okanogan CD	All Partners	Throughout Okanogan County
C22	Reader Boards for Okanogan-Douglas-fire District 15.	Additional funds to enable Okanogan-Douglas-fire District 15 to develop reader boards at stations and high traffic areas would assist the district in communicating with residents and visitors about current conditions and evacuations.	M	1,2,3	ST	Okanogan-Douglas-fire District 15	Okanogan County, Okanogan CD, WA DNR, WSDOT	Throughout Okanogan-Douglas-fire District 15's service area.
C23	Implementation of general wildfire educational programs.	Provide consistent generalized information on fire risk to the public, providing the educational and technical basis for many of the fire mitigation and prevention actions described in the CWPP.	H	1,2,3	O	Okanogan CD, WA DNR	OCFDs, OCEM, USFS, CTCR.	Throughout Okanogan County
C24	Enhanced Communication of Burn Restrictions and Regulations.	Providing the public with material and notice of all burn bans, restrictions, and burning regulations. This includes sign posting, in field regulatory contacts, and radio ads to reduce wildfire occurrence and severity.	H	1,2,3,4	ST	WA DOE, WA DNR, Okanogan County	ORAP Membership	Throughout Okanogan County
C25	Collaborate with local tourism centric businesses (hotels, recreation guiding etc.) and land managers to develop	Okanogan County residents have expressed significant concerns with the potential for non-residents unfamiliar with living with wildfire on the landscape to accidentally cause an ignition that may lead to a major wildfire incident. Tourism is a major	H	1,2,3,4	ST	Okanogan CD	WA DNR, USFS, CTCR, Local Business, Okanogan County,	Throughout Okanogan County

Next Steps

- Respond to and if necessary incorporate public comments and late arriving partner comment.
- Review final document
- Submit CWPP to Okanogan County Emergency Management for review and approval by County.
- Was approved by county, WA DNR and FEMA are provided copies to review and approve.

Thank you!

CWPP Questions & Feedback

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