

Greater La Pine Community Wildfire Protection Plan 2009 Update

August 3, 2009

DRAFT

Prepared by
Kate Lighthall
Project Wildfire
61150 SE 27th Street
Bend, OR 97702

(541) 322-7129

Klighthall@bendcable.com



Declaration of Agreement

The Healthy Forests Restoration Act requires that the applicable local government, the local fire department, and the state entity responsible for forest management agree to the Community Wildfire Protection Plan. The undersigned have reviewed this update and agree to its addition as an addendum to the Greater La Pine CWPP completed and approved on December 13, 2005.

Dan Daugherty, Interim Fire Chief
La Pine Rural Fire Protection District

Date

Kevin Benton, Unit Forester
Oregon Department of Forestry

Date

Tammy Baney, Chair
Deschutes County Board of Commissioners

Date

Dennis Luke, Budget Officer
Deschutes County Board of Commissioners

Date

Alan Unger, Commissioner
Deschutes County Board of Commissioners

Date

Name
La Pine City Council

Date

Lanell Bennett, Representative
Greater La Pine CWPP Steering Committee

Date


Acknowledgements

In the true spirit of collaboration, the following people are acknowledged for their participation and commitment resulting in the 2009 Update of the Greater La Pine Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

John Allen	Deschutes National Forest
Albert Bauer	Resident
Carol Bauer	Resident
Darrell Bennett	Resident
Lanell Bennett	Resident
Kevin Benton	Oregon Department of Forestry
Lisa Clark	Central Oregon Fire Management Service
Ken Davis	Resident
Dan Daugherty	Interim Fire Chief La Pine Rural Fire Protection District
Dennis Fiore	Bureau of Land Management
Melinda Fortner	Deschutes County
Patti Gentiluomo	Sunriver Owners Association
Jim Gustafson	Fire Chief La Pine Rural Fire Protection District
Ken Lane	Resident
Katie Lighthall	Project Wildfire
Adele Moilanen	La Pine City Council
Bob Otteni	La Pine Community Action Team
Stu Otto	Oregon Department of Forestry
Pete Powers	Deschutes National Forest
Mike Shields	Resident
Joe Stutler	Deschutes County Forester
Ginny Woodruff	Resident

Table of Contents

Declaration of Agreement	i
Acknowledgements	ii
Contact information	iv
Purpose	1
Collaboration	2
Background information	3
Community Base Maps	5
Community Profile	5
Wildland Urban Interface description	6
Nine Communities at Risk	6
Fuel Hazards and Ecotypes	7
Community Assessment of Risk	9
ODF Assessment of Risk Factors	9
Risk of Wildfire Occurrence	9
Hazard	10
Values Protected	10
Other Community Values	10
Protection Capability	11
Oregon Forestland Urban Interface Fire Protection Act of 1997 (Senate Bill 360)	11
Neighborhood Structural Vulnerability – NFPA 1144	14
Summary of three risk assessments	16
Fire Regime – Condition Class	16
Crown Fire Potential	19
Areas of special concern	20
Prioritized Hazard Reduction Recommendations and Preferred Treatment Methods	21
Federal and State owned lands	22
Industrial and non-industrial private timberlands	23
Private and County owned lands	25
Recommendations to Reduce Structural Ignitability	27
Structural vulnerability hazards and recommendations	28
Education	30
Action Plan and Implementation	30
Evaluation and Monitoring	32
Appendix A – Community Base Maps	

 Contact Information

Dan Daugherty, Interim Fire Chief
La Pine Rural Fire Protection District
51550 Huntington Road
La Pine, OR 97739
(541) 536-2935

Kate Lighthall, Program Coordinator
Project Wildfire
61150 SE 27th Street
Bend, OR 97701
(541) 322-7129

Ken Davis
Ponderosa Pines Homeowners Association
14724 Cambium Lane
La Pine, OR 97739
(541) 420-1835

Kevin Benton, Unit Forester
Oregon Department of Forestry
PO Box 670
3501 NE 3rd Street
Prineville, OR 97754
(541) 447-5658

Joe Stutler, Forestry Specialist
Deschutes County
61150 SE 27th Street
Bend, OR 97702

Lisa Clark, Fire Mitigation Specialist
Central Oregon Fire Management Service
3050 NE 3rd Street
Prineville, OR 97754
(541) 416-6864

This page intentionally left blank.

Greater La Pine Community Wildfire Protection Plan 2009 Update

Purpose

Since its creation in December 2005, the Greater La Pine Community Wildfire Protection Plan has been applied as it was intended by a wide variety of private landowners and public agencies to decrease the risks of high intensity wildland fire in the La Pine Basin.

The mission of the Greater La Pine Community Wildfire Protection Plan is ***to protect against loss of life, property and natural resources as the result of wildland fire.*** The Plan has met its mission and continues to serve as the leading document providing direction and guidance to those seeking to protect the resources of the La Pine Basin.

The Greater La Pine CWPP Steering Committee reassembled in April 2009 to review events, projects and activities that have occurred in the planning area that may have influenced or otherwise changed the original priorities of the 2005 Plan.

Although reducing the risk of high intensity wildland fire is the primary motivation behind this plan, managing the forests and wildlands for hazardous fuels reduction and fire resilience is only one part of the larger picture. Residents and visitors desire healthy, fire-resilient forests and wildlands that provide habitat for wildlife, recreational opportunities, and scenic beauty.

The Steering Committee further refined the purpose of the Greater La Pine Community Wildfire Protection Plan:

- To protect lives and property from wildland fires;
- To instill a sense of personal responsibility and provide steps for taking preventive actions regarding wildland fire;
- To increase public understanding of living in a fire-adapted ecosystem;
- To increase the community's ability to prepare for, respond to and recover from wildland fires;
- To restore fire-adapted ecosystems; and
- To improve the fire resilience of the landscape while protecting other social, economic and ecological values.

This update outlines the revised priorities, strategies and action plans for fuels reduction treatments in the wildland urban interface. The update again addresses special areas of concern such as evacuation routes, and makes recommendations for reducing structural vulnerability in prioritized communities at risk. This update is designed as an addendum to the 2005 CWPP which remains a living vehicle for fuels reduction, educational, and other projects to decrease overall risks of loss from wildland fire.

Collaboration

In 2002, President George Bush established the Healthy Forests Initiative (HFI) to improve regulatory processes to ensure more timely decisions, greater efficiency and better results in reducing the risk of catastrophic wildfire.

In 2003, the US Congress passed historical bi-partisan legislation: the Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA). This legislation directs federal agencies to collaborate with communities in developing hazardous fuels reduction projects, and in the prioritization of treatment areas as defined by a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). It further provides authorities to expedite the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review and approval process for fuels reduction projects on federal lands. The Act further requires that 50% of funding allocated to HFRA projects be used to protect communities at risk of wildland fire.

Since this enactment of this legislation, communities have had the opportunity to direct where federal agencies place their fuels reduction efforts. HFRA also allows community groups to apply for federal funding to make communities safer against the threat of wildland fire.

Although some of the authorities under HFI and HFRA have been subsequently challenged in federal courts, all have been successfully appealed and the original intent and authorities under each remain the same.

As a Steering Committee, community members of La Pine, Oregon came together with representatives from La Pine Rural Fire Protection District, the newly incorporated City of La Pine, Oregon Department of Forestry, the USDA Forest Service, the USDI Bureau of Land Management, Deschutes County and Project Wildfire to develop the Greater La Pine Community Wildfire Protection Plan. The plan was created in accordance with *Preparing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan: A Handbook for Wildland-Urban Interface Communities* (Communities Committee, Society of American Foresters, National Association of Counties, National Association of State Foresters 2005).

A draft of this addendum to the Greater La Pine CWPP was available for public comment for 30 days prior to the final signing and approval. Interested parties provided comments for consideration by the Steering Committee during this period.

The La Pine City Council approved the 2009 Update to the Greater La Pine Community Wildfire Protection Plan on _____. This CWPP Update was also formally adopted by Deschutes County by resolution # 2009-_____ on _____.

Updated Background Information

In 2006, residents of La Pine voted to incorporate and form the City of La Pine, Oregon. The newly incorporated city is located approximately 30 miles south of Bend along US Highway 97. The greater La Pine area also includes the southern portion of Deschutes County. Situated primarily among thick forests of lodgepole and ponderosa pine, the City of La Pine is home to 1,610 residents with a total estimated population of 18,000 in the greater La Pine area.

Situated at 4,300 feet in a classic wildland urban interface environment, the La Pine area is also home to abundant wildlife including deer, elk, mountain lion, and many species of birds and fish. Within the planning area there is also a significant amount of public land with developed and dispersed recreation sites which provide valuable recreation opportunities to both residents and visitors. In the summer months, the County estimates a transient population of up to 10,000 people that occupy these areas creating a seasonal challenge for those agencies responsible for fire suppression and evacuation.

Historically, the La Pine basin was predominately meadow with scattered tracts of lodgepole and ponderosa pine. Following logging in the first half of the 1900's many of these stands naturally regenerated to lodgepole pine. Lodgepole pine is a species that lives and dies by high intensity and active crown fires. It is therefore less desirable from a wildland fire standpoint because of the risk these stands pose to the communities of the La Pine basin. Today, with less stand management, logging activity and highly effective wildland fire suppression, the forestland is predominantly dense lodgepole pine with some mixed stands of lodgepole and ponderosa pine. Much of the understory consists of dense bitterbrush and manzanita with some areas of native bunchgrasses. Due to the lack of disturbance, these stands continue to become more and more overcrowded.

As part of the ongoing wildland fire risk management of the surrounding public and private forestlands, the US Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, Oregon Department of Forestry, Deschutes County and private landowners are engaged in hazardous fuels treatment projects across the planning area.

The Bureau of Land Management manages a portion of the federal lands in the Greater La Pine planning area and continues to make great strides to increase forest health and reduce the potential for high intensity wildland fire.

The following is a snapshot of BLM fuels treatment projects over the last few years.

- Newberry Estates Prescribed Burn – This 40 acre project was completed in spring of 2008.
- Newberry Mechanical Thinning – This 540 acre project, located on the west side of the Newberry Estates community, in between HWY 97 and Rosland Rd, was completed in 2007.
- Little Deschutes Tract Prescribed Burn – This 300 acre project was begun in the spring of 2009 and is located on the north side of State Rec Road, on the east bank of the Little Deschutes River.
- Burgess Road Mechanical Thinning – This 150 acre project was thinned during summer of 2007. The project area is located off the intersection of Burgess and Huntington Roads.
- La Pine State Park Mechanical Thinning – This project is located on the southeast side of La Pine State Park, off 5th Street and was completed in fall of 2008.
- Darlene Mechanical Thinning – This 1,200 acre project is located on the east side of the La Pine Industrial Park, southeast to Section 36. The project is slated to be done summer of 2009.
- Riverview Mechanical Thinning – This 520 acre project is located between Riverview Road and Hwy 97 and is slated to be completed summer of 2009.
- Foster Road Prescribed Burn – This 200 acre project is planned to start in the spring of 2009 and is located on the south side of State Rec Road, bordering the La Pine State Park.

The ultimate goal for these projects is to reduce the potential for high intensity fire that can spread to tree crowns, requiring costly suppression efforts and causing large losses on the landscape as well as in and around communities.

Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) continues to work with large landowners in the Greater La Pine area reducing hazardous fuels and providing survivable spaces in and around subdivisions. Through ODF grant programs, 53 acres of private lands have been treated.

Through ongoing funding opportunities including grants, Deschutes County has reduced hazardous vegetation on over 700 acres to provide for a more fire safe community.

The La Pine community has experienced four large fires that have threatened lives, property, wildlife and the landscape in the recent past. In 2001, the Crane Complex

Fire burned 713 acres and the Pine Forest Fire charred 120 acres, directly threatening one of the largest residential subdivisions in the area. In 2003, the Davis Lake Fire burned 21,181 acres and threatened homes and property at Wickiup Acres. In August 2005 the Park Fire burned 139 acres and caused the evacuation of 500 people from the La Pine State Park and over 200 residents in nearby subdivisions.

Both lightning-caused and human-caused fires continue to provide job security for local initial attack firefighters. Fortunately however, there have been no major fire incidents (over 100 acres) in the La Pine area since the inception of this CWPP.

Community Base Maps

The Steering Committee relied on the following maps and GIS data:

- Greater La Pine wildland urban interface boundary with nine identified Communities at Risk, and all private & public land ownership
- Historical fire starts and large fire history
- Fire Regime Condition Class and Oregon Forestland-Urban Interface Fire Protection Act of 1997 (SB 360) ratings
- Crown Fire Potential

For updated planning purposes, the Steering Committee referenced this data and relied on recent activities and fuels treatment projects in specific communities at risk.

Community Profile

The Greater La Pine community presents a unique challenge for the wildfire planning process. Not only are the core city business and residential areas at significant risk from wildfire, so too are the many subdivisions outside the city limits that have been developed in the thick of nearby forests. Dense stands of trees, topographical challenges and thick ground vegetation contribute to the overall wildland fire risk in the Greater La Pine planning area.

The climate in La Pine is typical of the east slopes of the Cascade Mountains, with most of the annual precipitation coming as winter snow or fall and spring rains. Summers are dry and prone to frequent thunderstorms. These thunderstorms frequently cause multiple fire ignitions.

The City of La Pine rests along US Highway 97, a major transportation route through the state. As central Oregon grows, more residents and tourists crowd the highway and increase congestion, particularly during the summer months when fire season reaches

its peak. As part of the central community, transportation routes are included in the consideration of the WUI boundary due to their critical role as roads and travel corridors that link communities together and serve as evacuation routes.

Wildland Urban Interface Description

The Healthy Forests Restoration Act defines wildland urban interface (WUI) as an area within or adjacent to an at risk community that has been identified by a community in its wildfire protection plan or, for areas that do not have such a plan, as an area:

- extending ½ mile from the boundary of an at risk community,
- extending 1½ miles from the boundary of an at risk community when other criteria are met such as a sustained steep slope or a geographic feature that creates an effective firebreak, or is classified as fire condition class 3 land,
- or that is adjacent to an evacuation route.

The Steering Committee reviewed and approved the WUI boundaries of the original 2005 CWPP. The Deschutes County line marks the southern edge of the WUI and the Upper Deschutes River Coalition CWPP borders the WUI to the north. The City of La Pine and seven of the nine identified communities at risk lie in the core of the Greater La Pine WUI boundary. The vast majority of land adjacent to the identified communities is federal land. The Greater La Pine wildland urban interface boundary is approximately 100 square miles. See maps in Appendix A.

The Steering Committee considered the following nine Communities at Risk for planning purposes:

- **Little Deschutes River** – 7,391 acres with 577 structures including named developments: Summit Acres, Lazy River, Pine Crest Ranchettes, Holmes Acres, Bradcomb, Potters Estates, Cagle Subdivision, La Pine Meadows, Sundown Park, and Wickiup Commercial.
- **Newberry Estates** – 324 acres with 191 structures
- **Ponderosa Pines** – 1,023 acres with 331 structures
- **6th & Dorrance Meadow** – 7,549 acres with 934 structures including named developments: Conifer Acres, Lechner Acres, Sand Lilly Estates, Woodland Park Homesites, Safari Acres, Glenwood Acres, Newberry Neighborhood, Timber Haven, Rosland Vacation Plat, Ponderosa Pines East, Deschutes River Acres, Rio Land, Bluewood, CL & D Ranch, Singing Pines, South Park, Pierce Tracts, and Dora’s Acres.
- **Masten Road Area** – 7,211 acres with 132 structures including named developments: Wagon Trail North, Hockman, The South Forty, and Deer Forest Acres.
- **Day Road Corridor** – 5,122 acres with 1,726 structures including named developments: Deschutes River Recreation

Sites, Terra De Oro Estates, Parkway Acres, Meadowcrest Acres, Tall Pines, Ammon Estates, Crane Prairie, Pine Meadows Tracts, Bieler Boys Estates, Danielle's Acres, Los Pinos, Alpine Meadows, Jacobsen's North Addition, Forest View, CW Reeve Resort, Lynne Acres, Anderson Acres, Jacobsen's South Addition, Evergreen Park, and Ahern Acres.

- **Huntington South** – 3,492 acres with 173 structures including named developments: Newberry Business Park, Hinkle Road Tracts, La Pine Industrial, Huntington Meadows, Finley Butte and Roan Park.
- **Wickiup Acres** – 33 acres with 26 structures – no fire protection from La Pine RFPD, wildland fire protection only from Oregon Department of Forestry.
- **Section 36** – 629 acres with 5 structures – no fire protection from La Pine RFPD, wildland fire protection only from Oregon Department of Forestry.

Fuel Hazards and Ecotypes

The Greater La Pine area is a mosaic of vegetation types including:

- Ponderosa pine
- Lodgepole pine
- Manzanita
- Bitterbrush
- Riparian areas

Ponderosa pine is currently found in meadows and in scattered tracts of lodgepole pine stands. There are relatively few pure stands of ponderosa pine remaining in the La Pine basin.

Historically, ponderosa pine forests contained more understory grasses and shrubs than are present today. These plants combined with fallen pine needles, formed fast-burning fuels that led to recurrent widespread burning. Frequent low-intensity ground fires that occur with a fire return interval of 11-15 years characterize the fire regime for ponderosa pine. The pattern of low ground fires and stand dynamics resulted in the open park-like conditions that early inhabitants and visitors found in the region.

Less stand management, logging activity and highly effective wildland fire suppression, have significantly altered the ponderosa pine forest type. Removal of the larger “yellow belly” pines has dramatically decreased clumpy open forests, replacing them with more evenly spaced and smaller “black-bark” forests. Similar to other species of conifer forest types, the suppression of fire has greatly increased the stocking levels (number of trees) and density of trees, creating ladder fuels and putting the stands at

risk of attack from insects and disease. These factors have contributed to more intense fires in ponderosa pine forests in recent years.

Mature **lodgepole pine** in central Oregon is characterized by dense, uniform stands, an absence of other species, and a general lack of understory shrub or herbs (although bitterbrush is often found with mature lodgepole pine). Lodgepole pine forests exhibit a moderate severity fire regime with a fire return interval between 60 and 80 years. Fire in lodgepole pine stands can be low, moderate, or severe over time and often result in full stand replacement.

In addition to fire, mountain pine beetles are worth noting as a significant disturbance agent as the two processes are linked. The fire cycle in lodgepole pine is 60-80 years and occurs as follows: a stand replacement fire leads to stand regeneration → Dead snags from the fire fall to the forest floor and fuels begin to accumulate → Windstorms blow more trees to the ground → Forest fires burn some of the downed logs and lead to heart rot in the standing trees → The heart rot stresses the stands and makes it vulnerable to attack by the mountain pine beetle → A major outbreak of the mountain pine beetle causes significant mortality and soon the conditions are ripe for another stand replacement fire.

Manzanita is a shrub that occurs throughout the Greater La Pine area, usually mixed with other shrub species such as bitterbrush. Manzanita is established both through sprouts and seeds that are stimulated by fire. Fires in manzanita are conducive to rapid and extensive fire spread due to both physical and chemical characteristics. Manzanita is particularly susceptible to fire due to its stand density, presence of volatile materials in the leaves, low moisture content of the foliage and persistence of dead branches and stems.

Bitterbrush occurs throughout the Greater La Pine area on all aspects and elevations. Fire severely damages bitterbrush, especially if rain is not received shortly after a burn. Bitterbrush is fire dependent, but not fire resistant. It regenerates mostly from seed after a fire and is often from caches of seeds made by rodents. Bitterbrush will sprout after burning regardless of the severity of the burn and matures relatively quickly. Consequently, the greater La Pine wildland-urban interface area is rich with patches of bitterbrush that provide fire-ready ladder fuels for taller tree stands.

A **riparian area** is defined as the strip of moisture-loving vegetation growing along the edge of a natural water body. The exact boundary of the riparian area is often difficult to determine because it is a zone of transition between the water body and the upland vegetation. The Little Deschutes River and Paulina Creek flow through the greater La Pine WUI boundary creating large riparian areas along the middle and northeastern portions of the planning area. Vegetation types in these riparian areas vary from grasses, forbs and willows. The primary concern from a wildland fire perspective is during the spring and autumn when the vegetation has either cured or “greenup” has not begun.

The result of the fuel hazards and forest types in the greater La Pine area is an overgrowth of trees, forest floor fuels and an abundance of dead or dying vegetation that contribute to a substantially elevated risk of wildland fires that are difficult to control. These overly dense conditions lead to fire behavior that produce flame lengths over eight feet with crowning and torching that can result in stand replacement severity fires.

Not only have large, stand replacement fires not occurred, but also the more frequent low intensity fires have not been allowed to burn either. This practice of fire exclusion along with insufficient vegetation/fuels reduction has resulted in the buildup of excessive live and dead fuels.

Community Assessment of Risk

The Steering Committee reviewed the assessment process for the 2005 Greater La Pine Community Wildfire Protection Plan. Three assessment methodologies were utilized: the Oregon Department of Forestry Assessment of Risk Factors and Fire Regime Condition Class & Oregon Forestland-Wildland Urban Interface Fire Protection Act of 1997 (SB 360) classification ratings. The group also used the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1144 Structural Vulnerability Assessment.

Since that time, no new data has been collected that will show the significant amount of treatments performed in the Communities at Risk and their surrounding federal lands.

The Senate Bill 360 Classification Committee is just now in the process of reclassifying lands in ODF protected areas.

Ultimately, the Steering Committee agreed that without new data and new SB 360 ratings to confirm any measurable changes on the landscape, they will utilize only the ODF Assessment of Risk Factors and NFPA 1144 Structural Vulnerability Assessment as tools to evaluate priorities for this update.

The group also agreed to only assess the Communities at Risk that have completed significant fuels reduction and other projects: Newberry Estates and Ponderosa Pines.

ODF Assessment of Risk Factors

Risk of Wildfire Occurrence

The risk of wildfire occurrence refers to the likelihood of a fire occurring based on historical fire occurrence, home density and ignition sources. The risk is based on historical evidence of fire starts as well as ready ignition sources like abundant dry lightning storms, debris burning, equipment use, juveniles, widespread camping, and arson.

The current condition of the vegetation on the federal and private lands within the greater La Pine WUI poses an extreme risk of catastrophic loss from wildland fire. La Pine is also threatened by the likely possibility of a crown fire sweeping into the community, or by embers falling on the community from an adjacent wildland fire.

Hazard

The hazard rating describes resistance to control once a fire starts based on weather, topography (including slope, aspect and elevation), vegetation and crown fire potential. As stated earlier, less logging activity and effective wildland fire suppression has led to a forestland of dense lodgepole pine with some mixed stands of lodgepole and ponderosa pine. Much of the understory consists of dense bitterbrush and manzanita with some areas of native bunchgrasses. Due to the lack of disturbance these stands continue to become more and more overcrowded.

A wildland fire could start within the communities or in any of the forested areas adjacent to and/or surrounding the communities. With a fire of any significance, it could be difficult to assemble the resources necessary to adequately address all of the fire and life safety issues that could arise in the early stages of emergency operations. The potential exists for a catastrophic wildland fire for any number of reasons, during any time of year.

Values Protected

The human and economic values protected in the Greater La Pine planning area are based on home density per ten acres and community infrastructure such as power substations, transportation corridors, water and fuel storage, etc.

There are approximately 6,900 homes in the unincorporated area of La Pine, with an appraised value of \$925 million. In addition, there are approximately 29,430 acres of private land with an appraised value of \$185 million. 170 businesses operate in the La Pine area, with an appraised value of \$71 million.

The essential infrastructure includes utilities, roads, water and sewer systems and has an approximate replacement value of \$275,000 per mile for electrical transmission lines; \$150,000 per mile of electrical distribution lines; and \$2 million per electrical sub-station. Loss to roads, water and sewer systems would be minimal because most are underground or otherwise not flammable.

If a large wildland fire occurs in this area which resulted in the closure of US Highway 97, the economic loss to local businesses and central Oregon in general could exceed \$3.5 million per day.

Other Community Values

Of high importance to residents and business owners in La Pine is the value placed on scenic beauty and recreational opportunities that exist on public lands both within and adjacent to the planning area.

The loss of recreational use by visitors to the area as a result of scenic quality, specifically large “burn over” areas, will have an unknown economic impact not only to the La Pine area, but to the remainder of Deschutes County and neighboring cities like Bend, Redmond and Sisters. If a large wildland fire occurs in this area, the result will be catastrophic loss to both the developed and dispersed recreational opportunities in the greater La Pine area.

Protection capability

Fire protection capability in the Greater La Pine planning area ranges from low to high with an average ranking of moderate. The ratings are based on fire protection capability and resources to control and suppress wildland and structural fires. The ratings also consider response times and community preparedness.

La Pine Rural Fire Protection District

The La Pine RFPD provides first response structural and wildland fire coverage within its 115 square mile service district. The District provides Emergency Medical Services, including Advanced Cardiac Life Support transport, within a 1,000 square mile boundary.

Two communities within the greater La Pine WUI boundary are not protected by the La Pine Rural Fire Protection District: Wickiup Acres and Section 36. Both areas are afforded wildland fire protection by Oregon Department of Forestry.

The District is managed by a five-member elected board of directors. The District consists of 15 career and 13 volunteer positions involved directly in fire and EMS operations. The District also houses resident students who participate in the Fire/EMS program at Central Oregon Community College. All firefighting personnel have received training in wildland firefighting practices, structural fire protection and suppression techniques, and other related topics. The District has adopted the National Incident Management Systems (NIMS) Incident Command System and all personnel have received training and continue to train in its use. There are five career personnel and 19 support volunteers not involved in fire and EMS.

The District works out of one centrally located fire station and two satellite stations. It maintains a fleet of three structural fire engines, three Advanced Cardiac Life Support ambulances, three heavy brush engines, one light brush engine, three water tenders and three staff/utility vehicles.

The District is a party to the Central Oregon Mutual Aid Agreement. In the event of a major fire the department may request assistance from all other fire departments that are signatory to the agreement. In addition to Central Oregon Fire Departments, this includes The US Forest Service, Oregon Department of Forestry, and the Bureau of Land Management. Conversely, when these agencies need assistance and the District has resources available, it assists them. The La Pine Rural Fire Protection District and Sunriver Fire Department cooperate in “automatic aid” which includes response zones in certain parts of each district.

Oregon Department of Forestry

Within the greater La Pine WUI, private forestland is protected by the Central Oregon District of the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF). ODF provides wildland fire response for fires burning on, or threatening private forestlands paying a Forest Patrol Assessment. There are some areas within the greater La Pine WUI that receive dual protection from ODF and the La Pine RFPD because they are located within the rural fire protection district and are also classified as private forestland within the ODF district. In those cases La Pine RFPD provides initial response and transfers fire command to ODF upon their arrival.

Oregon Department of Forestry provides one Type 6 engine in the La Pine area during fire season, typically June through October. Nine additional engines are available for response in the Prineville-Sisters unit. Statewide resources are also available to ODF including initial attack hand crews, dozers, water tenders, helicopters, air tankers, and overhead staff positions.

USDA Forest Service and USDI Bureau of Land Management

The Forest Service and BLM provide wildland fire protection on the federal lands within the greater La Pine area. Together, they are identified as the Central Oregon Fire Management Service (COFMS). COFMS includes the Deschutes National Forest, the Ochoco National Forest, the Crooked River National Grassland, and the Prineville District of the BLM. These four units are managed cooperatively under combined leadership, with an Interagency Fire Management Officer, two Deputy Fire Management Officers, and a Board of Directors including decision makers from both agencies, with Forest Service District Rangers and BLM Field Managers. COFMS has a central dispatching facility in partnership with the Oregon Department of Forestry that serves as a communications hub for fire and fuels operations, as well as safety and training issues for COFMS. In total, COFMS provides the following resources: 15 engines, 4 initial attack hand crews, 6 prevention units, 2 dozers, 2 water tenders, 1 helicopter with module, 35 smokejumpers, 2 Inter-regional Hotshot crews, 1 air tanker, 1 National Fire Cache, 1 interagency dispatch center and 20 overhead staff positions.

Anytime an incident grows beyond the capability of the local resources a request may be made to the State and to the Pacific Northwest Coordination Center for additional wildland fire fighting resources.

Law Enforcement

Police services are provided by Deschutes County Sheriff in the La Pine basin. The Sheriff's Department has responsibility for ensuring the safe and orderly evacuation of the community in the event of a major emergency. A number of resources have been allocated to accomplish this task including hi/lo sirens on vehicles; emergency notification via radio and television; reverse 9-1-1 capability; Sheriff's Department staff; La Pine Rural Fire Protection District staff and community-wide volunteers. Any other issues relative to a major emergency are addressed by the Countywide Disaster Plan and the County Department of Emergency Services.

Oregon State Police assists the federal agency law enforcement efforts and cooperates with Deschutes County for protection in the greater La Pine area.

Community Preparedness

Also under the category of Protection Capabilities, the ODF Assessment of Risk examines a community's level of organization and preparedness to respond in an emergency situation. The assessment looks at whether the area has an organized stakeholder group that looks out for its own area through mitigation efforts, a phone tree, etc. Or, does the area only receive outside efforts such as newsletters, mailings or FireFree information from other groups? In the Greater La Pine WUI, the Communities at Risk varied from having a high level of organization to not having any. The Steering Committee used local knowledge to determine the level of preparedness.

The Steering Committee chose to assess only those communities where significant fuels treatment and other projects have occurred – Newberry Estates and Ponderosa Pines.

The following table is an updated summary of the nine Communities at Risk, the value ratings and total score for each community in each category. The original ranking is also listed for comparison. The higher the total score in this assessment, the higher the overall risk.

Table 1 – ODF Assessment of Risk

Community	Risk	Hazard	Protection capability	Values protected	Structural vulnerability	Total score	Prior Rank	New Rank
6th & Dorrance	High (35)	Extreme (67)	Moderate (10)	High (35)	Moderate (52)	199	2	1
Day Road Corridor	High (35)	Extreme (69)	Moderate (10)	High (35)	Moderate (45)	194	3	2
Wickiup Acres	High (30)	Extreme (74)	High (19)	Low (2)	High (69)	194	4	3
Masten Road Area	High (30)	Extreme (72)	Moderate (10)	Moderate (22)	Moderate (46)	180	6	4
Huntington South	High (30)	Extreme (69)	Moderate (10)	Moderate (22)	Moderate (44)	175	7	5
Newberry Estates	High (40)	High (54)	Low (8)	High (40)	Moderate (32)	174	1	6
Little Deschutes River	High (30)	Extreme (64)	Moderate (10)	Moderate (22)	Moderate (45)	171	8	7
Ponderosa Pines	High (35)	High (52)	Low (8)	Moderate (25)	Moderate (36)	156	5	8
Section 36	High (30)	Extreme (74)	High (19)	Low (2)	Low (26)	151	9	9

Risk: Describes the likelihood of a fire occurring based on historical fire occurrence and ignition sources.

Hazard: Describes resistance to control once a fire starts based on weather, topography and fuel.

Protection capability: Describes fire protection capability and resources based on type of protection, response times and community preparedness.

Values protected: Describes the human and economic values in the community based on home density per ten acres and community infrastructure such as power substations, transportation corridors, water and fuel storage, etc.

Structural vulnerability: Describes the likelihood that structures will be destroyed by wildfire based on roofing and building materials, defensible space, separation of homes, fire department access and street signage.

Total score: A sum of all the points from each category surveyed.

Rank: An ordered numerical ranking based on the total points.

Neighborhood Structural Vulnerability

NFPA 1144 is an assessment of structural vulnerability. It evaluates survivability of structures in the event of a wildland fire. Under the 2005 Greater La Pine CWPP, local fire professionals and neighborhood leaders conducted the assessment in each of the nine Communities at Risk. For this CWPP Update, the Steering Committee provided information on Newberry Estates and Ponderosa Pines. The assessment is based on

factors such as roofing and building materials, defensible space and distance between structures, and fire department access.

Table 2 is a summary of the NFPA 1144 Structural Vulnerability exercise. The higher the total score for each community, the higher the risk.

Table 2 – NFPA 1144 Structural Vulnerability

Community	Total score	New Rank
Wickiup Acres	69	1
6th & Dorrance	52	2
Masten Road Area	46	3
Day Road Corridor	45	4
Little Deschutes River	45	5
Huntington South	44	6
Ponderosa Pines	36	7
Newberry Estates	32	8
Section 36	26	9

The Steering Committee agreed to combine the two revised risk assessments and the following table summarizes both risk assessments and assigns an overall rank for each of the nine Communities at Risk.

Table 3 – Summary of the combined risk assessments

Community at Risk	ODF Assessment Rank	SV - NFPA 11 Assessment Rank	Add ranks for total score	New overall rank of both assessments
6th & Dorrance	1	2	3	1
Wickiup Acres	3	1	4	2
Day Road Corridor	2	4	6	3
Masten Road Area	4	3	7	4
Huntington South	5	6	11	5
Little Deschutes River	7	5	12	6
Newberry Estates	6	8	14	7
Ponderosa Pines	8	7	15	8
Section 36	9	9	18	9

The Steering Committee agreed that these rankings reflected what they know to be true based on local knowledge. The group determined new priorities for the CWPP Update as follows:

Highest Priorities:

- 6th & Dorrance Area
- Wickiup Acres
- Day Road Corridor
- Masten Road Area

High Priorities:

- Huntington South
- Little Deschutes River
- Newberry Estates
- Ponderosa Pines
- Section 36

Oregon Forestland-Urban Interface Fire Protection Act of 1997

While not utilized as one of the assessment tools for this update, the Steering Committee offers and promotes the standards for private lands outlined under this legislation so it is noted here for reference.

The Oregon Forestland-Urban Interface Fire Protection Act, also known as Senate Bill 360, enlists the aid of property owners toward the goal of turning fire-vulnerable urban and suburban properties into less volatile zones where firefighters may more safely and effectively defend homes from wildfires. The law requires property owners in identified forestland-urban interface areas to reduce excess vegetation around structures and along driveways. In some cases, it is also necessary to create fuel breaks along property lines and roadsides.

The process of identifying forestland-urban interface areas follows steps and definitions described in Oregon Administrative Rules. Briefly, the identification criteria include:

- Lands within the county that are also inside an Oregon Department of Forestry protection district.
- Lands that meet the state’s definition of “forestland.”
- Lands that meet the definition of “suburban” or “urban”; in some cases, “rural” lands may be included within a forestland-urban interface area for the purpose of maintaining meaningful, contiguous boundaries.
- Lots that are developed, that are 10 acres in size or smaller, and which are grouped with other lots with similar characteristics in a minimum density of four structures per 40 acres.

Forestland-urban interface areas are identified in each county by a classification committee. Once areas are identified, a committee applies fire risk classifications to the areas. The classifications range from “low” to “high density extreme,” and the classification is used by a property owner to determine the size of a fuel break that needs to be established around a structure. The classification committee reconvenes every five years to review and recommend any changes to the classifications. As noted earlier, this process is underway now in Deschutes County.

The Oregon Department of Forestry is the agency steward of this program. It supplies information about the act’s fuel-reduction standards to property owners. ODF also mails each of these property owners a certification card, which may be signed and returned to ODF after the fuel reduction standards have been met. Certification relieves a property owner from the act’s fire cost recovery liability. This takes effect on properties that are within a forestland-urban interface area and for which a certification card has not been received by the Department of Forestry. In these situations, the state of Oregon may seek to recover certain fire suppression costs from a property owner if a fire originates on the owner's property, the fuel reduction standards have not been met, and ODF incurs extraordinary suppression costs. The cost-recovery liability under the Oregon Forestland-Urban Interface Fire Protection Act is capped at \$100,000.

The specific recommendations under Senate Bill 360 for private lands are outlined under Prioritized Hazard Reduction Recommendations and Preferred Treatment Methods in this CWPP.

Fire Regime - Condition Class

Although not used as an assessment tool for this Update, the Steering Committee still notes the overall condition of the landscape in the Greater La Pine WUI in terms of Fire Regime - Condition Class. With significant treatments conducted in two of the nine Communities at Risk, the original data regarding Condition Class in the remaining seven communities is still relevant and provides for treatment direction in the new priorities.

Fire Regime - Condition Class considers the type of vegetation and the departure from its natural fire return interval.

Five natural (historical) fire regimes are classified based on the average number of years between fires (fire frequency) combined with the severity of the fire on dominant overstory vegetation. Fire regimes I through IV are each represented on the landscape in the greater La Pine planning area. Lodgepole pine for example has a 60-80 year fire interval with the potential for full stand replacement fires. Lodgepole pine therefore falls within Fire Regime IV which describes species with fire return intervals between 35 – 100 years. Ponderosa pine has an 11-15 year natural fire interval with a low potential for stand replacement fires. Therefore, ponderosa pine falls under Fire Regime I which describes species with fire return intervals between 0-35 years.

The following table summarizes Fire Regimes.

Table 4 – Fire Regimes

Fire Regime Group	Fire Frequency	Fire Severity	Plant Association Group
I	0 – 35 years	Low severity	Ponderosa pine, manzanita, bitterbrush
II	0 – 35 years	Stand replacement	Western juniper
III	35 – 100+ years	Mixed severity	Mixed conifer dry
IV	35 – 100+ years	Stand replacement	Lodgepole pine
V	> 200 years	Stand replacement	Western hemlock, mixed conifer wet

Condition Class categorizes a departure from the natural fire frequency based on ecosystem attributes. In Condition Class 1, the historical ecosystem attributes are largely intact and functioning as defined by the historical natural fire regime. In other words, the stand has not missed a fire cycle. In Condition Class 2, the historical ecosystem attributes have been moderately altered. Generally, at least one fire cycle has been missed. In Condition Class 3, historical ecosystem attributes have been significantly altered. Multiple fire cycles have been missed. The risk of losing key

ecosystem components (e.g. native species, large trees, soil) is low for Class 1, moderate for Class 2, and high for Class 3.

Table 5 summarizes Condition Class.

Table 5 – Condition Class

Condition Class	Attributes
Condition Class 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fire regimes are within or near an historical range. ▪ The risk of losing key ecosystem components is low. ▪ Fire frequencies have departed from historical frequencies (either increased or decreased) by no more than one return interval. ▪ Vegetation attributes are intact and functioning within an historical range.
Condition Class 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fire regimes have been moderately altered from their historical range. ▪ The risk of losing key ecosystem components has increased to moderate. ▪ Fire frequencies have departed (either increased or decreased) from historical frequencies by more than one return interval. This change results in moderate changes to one or more of the following: fire size, frequency, intensity, severity or landscape patterns. ▪ Vegetation attributes have been moderately altered from their historic ranges.
Condition Class 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fire regimes have been significantly altered from their historical range. ▪ The risk of losing key ecosystem components is high. ▪ Fire frequencies have departed (either increased or decreased) by multiple return intervals. This change results in dramatic changes to one or more of the following: fire size, frequency, intensity, severity, or landscape patterns. ▪ Vegetation attributes have been significantly altered from their historic ranges.

Crown Fire Potential

As noted under the ODF Assessment of Risk, the potential for a fire to reach tree crowns and travel rapidly through canopies is extreme in each of the nine Communities at Risk due to the lodgepole pine component throughout the Greater La Pine WUI. Crown fires in lodgepole pine are usually stand replacement fires and are considered high intensity events that can cause catastrophic results to homes and property located within those stands.

Areas of special concern

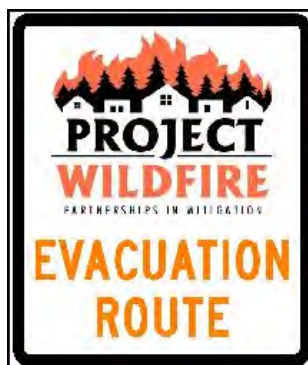
Critical transportation routes

Critical Transportation Routes do not have a standard definition in Deschutes County. For purposes of the Greater La Pine CWPP, the Steering Committee defines Critical Transportation Routes as:

- all routes necessary for the support of routine flow of commerce to and/or through the greater La Pine area,
- all routes that could be used for potential evacuation of citizens and/or visitors from a wildland fire threat to public safety,
- routes needed for emergency ingress and egress to a wildland fire incident, not including unimproved or “two-track” roads,
- and, all routes needed to protect and support critical infrastructure (power substations, communication transmission lines, water and fuel storage, public service facilities, recreation facilities, etc).

As noted in the 2005 CWPP, the Steering Committee is concerned with the lack of maintained roads leading in and out of the high risk areas in the WUI boundary. Should an evacuation be necessary, the Steering Committee expressed great concern over the quality of the evacuation routes. Many of the egress routes in the La Pine area are dirt roads that contribute to substantial dust and debris clouds as vehicles attempt to use them. During the summer months, after a few cars travel the road, the dust is so dense that it is not safe for vehicles to continue using the road until the dust settles. Lack of maintenance has led to deteriorated road surfaces with large potholes, ruts and washboards that slow evacuation efforts and cause some vehicles to break down, further complicating a mass departure from the area. The current condition of the evacuation routes is a life safety issue.

Working with Deschutes County and Project Wildfire, the Ponderosa Pines and Newberry Estates Communities at Risk have taken advantage of a signage program to increase visibility of evacuation route signs along roads. The signs are made from high intensity reflective material and indicate proper exit routes from these neighborhoods.



The Steering Committee expressed great concern over the need to identify, develop and protect critical transportation routes as part of this planning process. A detailed look at specific ingress/egress issues for each Community at Risk is included under Recommendations to Reduce Structural Vulnerability. This issue is also highlighted under Action Plan and Implementation.

Vacant lots

Within the Greater La Pine Community Wildfire Protection Plan boundary, over 50% of the private lands are vacant lots. Many of those are owned by “absentee owners”. In general, vacant lots owned by absentee owners present a specific threat to neighborhoods in that owners have no connections to the neighborhoods and in most cases do not recognize their responsibility to contribute to the safety of the entire neighborhood by reducing the hazardous vegetation on their properties. The risk of destructive wildland fires is thereby greater inside these neighborhoods due to the lack of owner attention on vacant lots.

Deschutes County is the property owner for approximately 700 acres of half-acre or larger lots. Deschutes County has worked diligently in the past four years to reduce hazardous fuels on these lots. Deschutes County will continue to pursue fuels reduction projects with the goal of treating and maintaining all of the county owned lands in the greater La Pine area.

Prioritized Hazard Reduction Recommendations and Preferred Treatment Methods

The Steering Committee agreed that the Greater La Pine Community Wildfire Protection Plan and this 2009 Update to the Plan are tools that can be used for many outcomes. The following is an outline of the priorities and preferred treatments under the Greater La Pine Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

Prioritized Communities at Risk

Based on the combined assessment as shown in Table 3 and group consensus the Steering Committee has identified the following prioritized Communities at Risk for hazardous fuels reduction treatments on public and private lands in the Greater La Pine WUI:

Highest Priorities:

- 6th & Dorrance Area
- Wickiup Acres
- Day Road Corridor
- Masten Road Area

High Priorities:

- Huntington South
- Little Deschutes River
- Newberry Estates
- Ponderosa Pines
- Section 36

Priorities and goals

With critical needs assessed and priority areas listed, the Steering Committee identified the following goals to meet the purpose on page 1 of the Greater La Pine CWPP:

- Reduce hazardous fuels on public lands
- Reduce hazardous fuels on private lands (both vacant and occupied)
- Reduce structural vulnerability
- Increase education and awareness of wildfire threat
- Identify, improve and protect critical transportation routes

Federal and State owned lands

Federal lands make up a majority of the Greater La Pine CWPP and each of the nine Communities at Risk is adjacent to public land managed by either the Forest Service or the Bureau of Land Management. State owned lands represent only a small percentage of the lands within the plan area.

The state also bears fire protection responsibility for the La Pine State Park which borders the Greater La Pine WUI boundary. Although it is outside the greater La Pine WUI, the Steering Committee expresses great concern over the significant threat to adjacent neighborhoods and recommends that it be recognized as a priority area for fuels treatment.

It is the intent of the Steering Committee that the Greater La Pine WUI is subject to expedited measures for hazardous fuels treatment and allocation of funds to protect the communities and neighborhoods as stipulated by the Healthy Forests Restoration Act.

The Steering Committee recognizes the effectiveness and value of maximizing treatment efforts in areas that are adjacent to federal, state, or private projects and recommends that future projects consider these benefits when selecting areas for treatment.

The standard of the Greater La Pine CWPP is to decrease the risk of high intensity wildland fire behavior by reducing and maintaining fuel loads to that which can produce flame lengths of less than four feet in the areas within the ¼ mile buffer of each community at risk. This enables safe and effective initial attack. This standard will be achieved by the federal and state landowners through a variety of treatment methodologies such as prescribed burning and mechanical treatments.

Based on the combined risk assessments shown in Table 3, the priorities of the Greater La Pine Community Wildfire Protection Plan with regard to federal and state owned lands within the WUI are as follows:

1) Condition class 2 and 3 lands and all areas where crown fire potential is rated extreme:

A) Within ¼ mile of each Community at Risk of the WUI utilizing the following priorities:

Highest Priorities:

6th & Dorrance Area
Wickiup Acres
Day Road Corridor
Masten Road Area

High Priorities:

Huntington South
Little Deschutes River
Newberry Estates
Ponderosa Pines
Section 36

B) Within 300 feet of any evacuation route from each Community at Risk. Specific treatment should address fuels issues on a landscape scale rather than acre by acre.

2) Condition class 2 and 3 lands and all areas where crown fire potential is rated extreme, beyond ¼ mile of each prioritized community at risk, in ¼ mile increments until the WUI boundary is reached.

3) Although the treatments should focus on Condition Class 2 and 3 lands, maintenance of Condition Class 1 land is also a top priority where treatment is critical to maintain this status within the CWPP area. Treatment and maintenance of Condition Class 1 lands before treatment begins again in other places is an important component of keeping communities safe.

In general, the dominant strategy in all areas should be thinning from below, in an effort to restore large tree, open park-like ponderosa pine dominated forests. In exclusively lodgepole pine stands where site conditions are favorable to ponderosa pine, intensive thinning should occur with a reforestation strategy to restore a proper ratio, as determined by the agency, of lodgepole to ponderosa pine. In exclusively lodgepole pine stands where site conditions are not favorable to ponderosa pine, thinning should occur to provide a minimum of 20' X 20' spacing, and excessive dead/down fuels should be removed followed by understory maintenance.

Industrial and non-industrial private timberlands

The Steering Committee recommends continued partnerships with private timberland owners that encourage the following standard and treatments.

The standard of the Greater La Pine CWPP is to decrease the risk of uncharacteristic wildland fire behavior by reducing and maintaining fuel loads to that which can produce flame lengths of less than four feet in the areas within the ¼ mile buffer of each identified Community at Risk. This enables safe and effective initial attack. This standard will be achieved by the industrial and non-industrial timberland owners through a variety of treatment methodologies such as prescribed burning and mechanical treatments.

The priorities of the Greater La Pine Community Wildfire Protection Plan with regard to industrial and non-industrial timberlands within the WUI are as follows:

1) Condition class 2 and 3 lands and all areas where crown fire potential is rated extreme:

A) Within ¼ mile of each Community at Risk of the WUI utilizing the following priorities:

Highest Priorities:

6th & Dorrance Area
Wickiup Acres
Day Road Corridor
Masten Road Area

High Priorities:

Huntington South
Little Deschutes River
Newberry Estates
Ponderosa Pines
Section 36

B) Within 300 feet of any evacuation route from each Community at Risk. Specific treatment should address fuels issues on a landscape scale rather than acre by acre.

2) Condition class 2 and 3 lands and all areas where crown fire potential is rated extreme, beyond ¼ mile of each prioritized community at risk, in ¼ mile increments until the WUI boundary is reached.

3) Although the treatments should focus on Condition Class 2 and 3 lands, maintenance of Condition Class 1 land is also a top priority where treatment is critical to maintain this status within the CWPP area. Treatment and maintenance of Condition Class 1 lands before treatment begins again in other places is an important component of keeping communities safe.

In general, the dominant strategy in all areas should be thinning from below, in an effort to restore large tree, open park-like ponderosa pine dominated forests. In exclusively lodgepole pine stands where site conditions are favorable to ponderosa pine, intensive thinning should occur with a reforestation strategy to restore a proper

ratio, as determined by the agency, of lodgepole to ponderosa pine. In exclusively lodgepole pine stands where site conditions are not favorable to ponderosa pine, thinning should occur to provide a minimum of 20' X 20' spacing, and excessive dead/down fuels should be removed followed by understory maintenance.

Private and County owned lands

The Steering Committee recommends that County owned lands be treated in the same manner as privately owned lands.

Private lands with structural improvements

On private lands with structural improvements, the goal is for each structure to meet the specific standards for classified lands as identified in the Oregon Forestland – Urban Interface Fire Protection Act of 1997, also known as Senate Bill 360. This statute outlines standards and requirements for defensible space on private property that receives fire protection from Oregon Department of Forestry.

The Oregon Department of Forestry provides wildland fire protection in the Greater La Pine planning area and the Steering Committee supports the goals and standards of Senate Bill 360. Five classifications are possible under the Act – Low, Moderate, High, Extreme and High Density Extreme. East of the Cascades however, only three are possible due to an automatic rating for weather. The nine Communities at Risk fall under the ratings of High, Extreme or High Density Extreme. The Steering Committee agreed that the required standards under each classification from Senate Bill 360 are the goal to achieve on private and county owned lands throughout the Greater La Pine WUI.

A detailed description of the standards is available from the Oregon Department of Forestry in the handbook for the Oregon Forestland – Urban Interface Fire Protection Act of 1997. This information is also available at www.oregon.gov/ODF/fire/SB360.

The minimum Default Standards under the Oregon Forestland – Urban Interface Fire Protection Act of 1997 are:

- Establish a primary fuel break of 30 feet around structures;
- Create fuel breaks around driveways longer than 150 feet;
- Remove tree branches within 10 feet of chimneys;
- Remove any dead vegetation that overhangs a roof;
- Remove flammable materials from under decks and stairways;
- Move firewood 20 feet away from structures;

If a property is classified as High, the standard includes the above requirements and a secondary fuel break around structures up to 20 feet if the structure has a flammable roof. For properties rated Extreme or High Density Extreme, secondary fuel breaks

around structures up to an additional 70 feet are required if the structure has a flammable roof. The Steering Committee strongly encourages property owners to identify their own property classifications and follow defensible space guidelines for High, Extreme and High Density Extreme.

Property owners can also achieve the Senate Bill 360 standards by taking advantage of FireFree and Firewise suggestions to create and/or maintain defensible space, a fire-resistant buffer that allows for effective first-response firefighting and a significantly reduced risk of the spread of fire. These national education programs promote a variety of fire safe actions to help prevent the spread of fire to protect individual homes and neighborhoods. Information about these programs can be found at www.firefree.org and www.firewise.org. More information is also listed in this plan under Recommendations to Reduce Structural Vulnerability.

Vacant lots

Within the Greater La Pine WUI, over 50% of the private land is considered vacant, or lots with no structural improvements. Many of those are owned by “absentee owners”. In general, vacant lots owned by absentee owners present a specific threat to neighborhoods in that owners have little to no connections to the neighborhoods and in most cases do not recognize their responsibility to contribute to the safety of the entire neighborhood by reducing the hazardous vegetation on their properties. The risk of destructive wildland fires is thereby greater inside these neighborhoods due to the lack of owner attention on vacant lots.

The Steering Committee recommends that those vacant lots and acreages that are dominated by hazardous wildland fuels follow the guidelines under Senate Bill 360 for “High Density Extreme” which also includes the standard of a 20-foot fuel break around each vacant lot with an additional 80 feet of fuel break for a total of 100 feet of defensible space around the lot.

The Steering Committee recommends that those acres that are primarily agricultural in use follow the guidelines under Senate Bill 360 for “High”. Those guidelines are the same as described above for the Default Standards and also include a secondary fuel break of an additional 20 feet (a total of 50 feet).

On private and County owned lands that are vacant lots, the goal is for each lot to have an established and maintained 20-foot fuel break along property lines and the sides of every road, or adhere to any subsequent county ordinance that addresses vacant lots.

Priority areas for completion based on Table 3:

Highest Priorities:

- 6th & Dorrance Area
- Wickiup Acres
- Day Road Corridor
- Masten Road Area

High Priorities:

Huntington South
Little Deschutes River
Newberry Estates
Ponderosa Pines
Section 36

 Recommendations to Reduce Structural Vulnerability

Structural Vulnerability

Since the adoption of the 2005 Greater La Pine CWPP, many neighborhoods have taken steps to decrease the vulnerability of structures to wildland fire. It is a goal of this CWPP that all structures within the plan area are as fire safe as possible; and that all neighborhoods and structures survive in the event of a wildland fire.

The Steering Committee utilized the Structural Vulnerability risk assessment based on the NFPA 1144 survey. The following updated table identifies the main hazards for structures and communities at risk in Greater La Pine. For each hazard or risk listed, an action is recommended to address the threat or decrease the risk. The communities are listed in priority order from Table 3.

Table 6 – Structural Vulnerability Hazards & Recommendations

New Priority	Community	Primary Hazards	Recommended Actions	Done
1	6th and Dorrance	Defensible space – hazardous vegetation	FireFree, Fire Wise, SB 360 compliance	
		Structural composition	FireFree, Fire Wise, SB 360 compliance	
		Some high structural density	FireFree, Fire Wise, SB 360 compliance	
		No water supply	Develop water supply	
2	Wickiup Acres	Defensible space – hazardous vegetation	FireFree, Fire Wise, SB 360 compliance	
		Structural composition	FireFree, Fire Wise, SB 360 compliance	
		Insufficient water system	Upgrade to support structural fire flow	
		Poor condition of interior roads	Identify, upgrade and maintain	
3	Day Road Corridor	Defensible space – hazardous vegetation	FireFree, Fire Wise, SB 360 compliance	
		Structural composition	FireFree, Fire Wise, SB 360 compliance	
		Some high structural density	FireFree, Fire Wise, SB 360 compliance	
		No water supply	Develop water supply	
4	Ponderosa Pines	Defensible space – hazardous vegetation	FireFree, Fire Wise, SB 360 compliance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 70% comply
		Structural composition	FireFree, Fire Wise, SB 360 compliance	
		High structural density	FireFree, Fire Wise, SB 360 compliance	
		Insufficient water system	Upgrade to support structural fire flow	
		Insufficient evacuation routes	Fuel breaks 08, Signs 09, now maintain	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Poor condition of interior roads	Identify, upgrade and maintain	
5	Masten Road	Defensible space – hazardous vegetation	FireFree, Fire Wise, SB 360 compliance	
		Structural composition	FireFree, Fire Wise, SB 360 compliance	
		High structural density	FireFree, Fire Wise, SB 360 compliance	
		No water supply	Develop water supply	
		Insufficient evacuation routes	Establish route(s), sign and maintain	
		Poor condition of interior roads	Identify, upgrade and maintain	
6	Little Deschutes River	Defensible space – hazardous vegetation	FireFree, Fire Wise, SB 360 compliance	
		Structural composition	FireFree, Fire Wise, SB 360 compliance	
		High structural density	FireFree, Fire Wise, SB 360 compliance	
		Insufficient water supply	Develop draft sites	
		Insufficient evacuation routes	Establish route(s), sign and maintain	
7	Newberry Estates	Defensible space – hazardous vegetation	FireFree, Fire Wise, SB 360 compliance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 66% comply
		Structural composition	FireFree, Fire Wise, SB 360 compliance	
		No water supply	Develop water supply	
		Insufficient evacuation routes	Fuel breaks 08, Signs 09, now maintain	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Poor condition of interior roads	Identify, upgrade and maintain	
8	Huntington South	Defensible space – hazardous vegetation	FireFree, Fire Wise, SB 360 compliance	
		Structural composition	FireFree, Fire Wise, SB 360 compliance	
		No water supply	Develop water supply	
		Insufficient evacuation routes	Establish route(s), sign and maintain	
		Poor condition of interior roads	Identify, upgrade and maintain	
9	Section 36	Defensible space – hazardous vegetation	FireFree, Fire Wise, SB 360 compliance	
		Structural composition	FireFree, Fire Wise, SB 360 compliance	
		No water supply	Develop water supply	
		Insufficient evacuation routes	Establish route(s), sign and maintain	
		Poor condition of roads	Identify, upgrade and maintain	

Table 7 provides a checklist for residents seeking to reduce the risk of major losses to their homes and properties. The list is compiled from tips and suggestions from the FireFree and Firewise programs, which promote homeowner responsibility for reducing fire hazards on their property. The Steering Committee approves this combined checklist. More information about these programs can be found at www.firefree.org and www.firewise.org.

Table 7 – Defensible Space Checklist

What can I do to help prevent losses to my property and my neighborhood?

- Post easy-to-read address signs so emergency crews can find your home.
- Reduce the density of nearby trees.
- Clear wood piles and building materials at least 20 feet away from your home.
- Remove low tree branches and shrubs. Trim up juniper and other trees at least 4 feet from the ground. Remove “ladder fuels” among trees.
- Keep grass and weeds cut low.
- Remove all branches and limbs that overhang roofs.
- Remove leaves & needles from gutters, roofs and decks.
- Remove dead plants and brush.
- Maintain a minimum of 30 feet of defensible space around your home.
- Screen vents and areas under decks with 1/8” metal mesh or fire resistant siding.
- Keep decks free of flammable lawn furniture, toys, doormats, etc.
- Choose fire-resistant roofing materials like metal, tile or composition shingles.
- Trim vegetation along driveways a minimum distance of 14’ wide x 14’ high for fire trucks.
- Choose fire resistive plants. Visit www.extension.oregonstate.edu/deschutes to view *Fire-Resistant Plants for the Home Landscape*.
- Use alternatives to burning debris like composting or chipping.
- If burning debris – call the Burn Line at the La Pine Fire Department at 541-536-9056 to see if burning is allowed. Do not burn building materials.

Education

As stated in the Purpose of the Greater La Pine CWPP, three of the goals for this planning effort are to:

- Instill a sense of personal responsibility for taking preventative actions regarding wildland fire,
- Increase public understanding of living in a fire-adapted ecosystem, and
- Increase the community's ability to prepare for, respond to and recover from wildland fires.

With these goals in mind, education and outreach are top priorities for the Greater La Pine CWPP. The rapid influx of new residents is just one reason the Steering Committee places high value on the education of La Pine area residents and landowners. Many new residents are unfamiliar with wildland fire and have limited experience with issues like defensible space. Residents and visitors will continue to benefit from clear examples of what a fire resilient forest and community look like as well as easy access to resources that help them take action.

The La Pine Rural Fire Protection District maintains active membership in the Central Oregon Fire Prevention Cooperative, the Central Oregon FireFree Program and routinely partners with Project Wildfire for educational efforts in each area. The Steering Committee for the Greater La Pine CWPP is committed to maintaining and enhancing these partnerships.

Some neighborhoods in the greater La Pine area are well organized through homeowners associations and other organized groups. These groups provide valuable ongoing education to their populations about the risks of catastrophic wildland fire and ways to reduce those risks. The Steering Committee supports these groups and encourages the formation of them in the greater La Pine area to address the educational needs of current and incoming residents about living in a fire adapted environment and increasing personal responsibility for creating defensible space.

Local residents are encouraged to contact the La Pine Rural Protection Fire District for information. Residents may also find additional information on how they can reduce hazards and protect themselves from loss due to wildland fires at www.firefree.org and www.firewise.org.

Action Plan and Implementation

The Steering Committee recognizes that the Greater La Pine CWPP is a living tool with multiple applications. The following priority actions are intended to assist individuals and agencies in the implementation of this CWPP across the Greater La Pine area.

Priorities

Reduce hazardous fuels on public lands

Immediately following the acceptance and signed approval of this plan, the Steering Committee will make copies of the 2009 Update to the Greater La Pine CWPP available to all federal and state land managers including the Deschutes National Forest, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Oregon Department of Forestry. The intention of the Steering Committee is to engage in continued discussions with the La Pine community and adjacent landowners to implement the CWPP and accomplish hazardous fuels reduction projects that address the prioritized Communities at Risk in the most expeditious manner possible.

The Steering Committee recognizes the effectiveness and value of maximizing treatment efforts in areas that are adjacent to federal, state or private projects and recommends that future projects consider these benefits when selecting areas for treatment.

Reduce hazardous fuels on private lands

The intention of the Steering Committee is to engage in continued discussions with landowners to facilitate fuels reduction projects on private lands utilizing the list of prioritized Communities at Risk. These actions can be accomplished through education activities or grants for specific projects on private lands.

Reduce Structural Vulnerability

The Steering Committee is again charged with the task of engaging community members to review the Structural Vulnerability Assessment in this CWPP and identify projects that will strengthen the potential for the neighborhoods to survive a high intensity wildland fire within the Greater La Pine WUI. Tables 6 and 7 can be utilized as a resource for homeowners to improve the fire resistance of their homes on an individual basis and also by groups to implement education programs in the individual sub regions.

The Steering Committee is also charged with the task of working with the La Pine Rural Fire Protection District to identify and assess the water resources available for fire suppression in the Communities at Risk. The Steering Committee will make recommendations for projects to ensure adequate water resources are available for fire suppression.

Increase Awareness and Education

The Steering Committee will work with the La Pine Rural Fire Protection District and Project Wildfire to review the educational programs available and identify potential projects for implementation in those Communities at Risk that do not already participate in fire prevention education activities.

Identify, Improve and Protect Critical Transportation Routes

The Steering Committee will work with the La Pine Rural Fire Protection District, Deschutes County, and Oregon Department of Transportation to identify and map existing transportation and evacuation routes in each Community at Risk. The Steering Committee will assist in conducting further assessments to determine the evacuation needs of each Community at Risk and identify potential projects developing new routes and/or improving existing routes.

The Steering Committee encourages discussions with fire agencies and local landowners that address the issue presented when effective evacuation from an area is not available. Utilizing the 2009 Interagency Evacuation Guidelines, the Steering Committee will consider whether “sheltering in place” and safe staging areas are an option.

The Steering Committee will continue to encourage federal land managers to work with local landowners to minimize closures of roads that could be used as alternate evacuation routes from Communities at Risk.

Fund Projects

The Steering Committee will encourage and assist community groups in seeking funding for fuels reduction, educational, and other projects to decrease overall risks of loss from wildland fire.

Evaluation and Monitoring

The Steering Committee faced a complex task in the comprehensive update of the Greater La Pine Community Wildfire Protection Plan. Implementing and sustaining these efforts will require a significant commitment. Building a collaborative and cooperative environment with La Pine Rural Fire Protection District, community-based organizations, local government and the public land management agencies has been the first step in reducing the risk of loss from wildland fire. The Steering Committee pledges to maintain this cooperation with the public over the long-term with the commitment of all the partners involved.

At a minimum, the Steering Committee shall include: the Program Coordinator from Project Wildfire; a Chief Officer from La Pine Rural Fire Protection District; a representative from Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF); a representative from Central Oregon Fire Management Service (COFMS), and Deschutes County along with members of the La Pine area public.

The Steering Committee agrees that the Greater La Pine Community Wildfire Protection Plan will be a living document, intended to promote fuels reduction,

educational, and other projects to decrease overall risks of loss from wildland fire; updated and revisited at least annually to address its Purpose.

La Pine Fire Protection District will work with Project Wildfire to convene the Steering Committee at least once per year, or as often as the Steering Committee deems necessary to implement and review the Greater La Pine Community Wildfire Protection Plan. Topics for discussion can include:

- Identification and assessment of new or treated risks.
- Evaluation and tracking of progress toward goals.
- Updating of maps.
- Adoption of new and/or revised priorities.
- Identification of specific projects.
- Discussion of grant opportunities and determination of projects eligible for funding.
- Writing of grants.
- Identification of appropriate projects to address additional items as outlined in the Action Plan for Structural Vulnerability, Education and Critical Transportation Routes.
- Coordination of additional items, projects and assessments.

La Pine Rural Fire Protection District and Project Wildfire will ensure that the evaluation and monitoring activities listed above are addressed by the Steering Committee each year. As members of the Steering Committee change, La Pine Rural Fire Protection District and Project Wildfire will ensure that it maintains a balanced representation of agency and public members, with a continued focus on inviting interested parties to participate in the review and planning process.