Greater Redmond
Community Wildfire Protection Plan:
2017 Update
Wildfire threatens people and homes across the U.S. When homes are built in and around forests, they become part of the wildland-urban interface (WUI).

Much of the WUI occurs in fire-adapted forests, which need fire to be healthy. For much of the 20th century, an aggressive and successful effort suppressed most forest fires. However, fire cannot be excluded from fire-adapted forests forever. Now dense, unhealthy forests have created a hazard for people in the WUI.

A Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) is a strategic plan developed by the local fire department, federal and state land managers, cities, and communities.

A CWPP is developed to guide wildfire mitigation.

Each CWPP is designed for and by a specific community's needs which drive decisions and designations about scale, approach, an area of emphasis, and depth.

CWPP's are designed to mitigate and prepare for wildfire risk and recommend actions including fuels treatments, road improvements, evacuation planning, and prescribed fire to reduce risks.

CWPP's are important in facilitating community engagement in wildfire risk reduction and preparedness and are used to set a broad array of priorities.

A CWPP is a collaborative plan used to guide wildfire mitigation and facilitate fire adapted communities.
A brief history of WILDFIRE IN GREATER REDMOND

A LONG RELATIONSHIP WITH WILDFIRE

Historically, the Redmond area included a mix of open stands of Western Juniper, bitterbrush, sage, and grasslands, which were maintained by frequent low to moderate intensity fires. Today, with more development into the WUI and effective wildland fire suppression, the greater Redmond area is characterized by widespread stands of dense western juniper, bitterbrush, sage, and grasses.

The result of the fuel hazard and forest types in the Greater Redmond area is an overgrowth of trees and ladder fuels. Not only have large, stand replacement fires not occurred, but also the more frequent low intensity have not been allowed to burn either. These overly dense conditions lead to fire behavior that produces flame lengths over eight feet with crowning and torching that can result in stand replacement high severity fires.

The greater Redmond community has experienced many large fires in the last 100 years. In 1996 the Smith Rock Fire charred 300 acres and one home. Each year Redmond Fire and Rescue reports dozens of brush fires that reach 20+ acres, as well as many that are less than 100 acres that threaten lives and property. The community of Eagle Crest has had their own experience with fire with three fire occurrences within the past five years.

HUMAN CAUSED

The well-documented high frequency of lightning strikes in the greater Redmond area and the surrounding area has played a role in the fire frequency in Deschutes County. However, there is a storied history of human-caused fires in Eagle Crest with frequent tourist use and those lands within the CWPP Boundary with transient encampments.

• Historic Fires •

1981 Negus Fire

1996 Smith Rock Fire

2012 Pole Creek; Eagle Crest Fire

2015 Bark Mulch Fires (Eagle Crest)

2016 Lower Bridge Fire; Eagle Crest

Top: A group tours Eagle Crest to discuss a recent fire that had spread to commons. Above: A wildfire Northwest of Redmond on unprotected lands. Above: A 10 acre fire caused by a transformer outside Eagle Crest prompted evacuations in August 2016.
Earlier Updates (2006 & 2011)

Under the guidelines set forth in the National Fire Plan and the Healthy Forest Restoration Act of 2003, the Greater Redmond CWPP, approved in 2006, emphasized several key factors:

- Protect lives & property from wildland fires;
- Instill a sense of personal responsibility for taking preventative actions regarding wildland fire;
- Increase public understanding of the risks associated with living in a fire-adapted ecosystem;
- Increase the community's ability to prepare for, respond to and recover from wildland fires;
- Restore fire-adapted ecosystem;
- Create and maintain fire adapted communities; and
- Improve the fire resilience of the landscape while protecting other social, economic, and ecological values.

These factors are in alignment with current CWPP guidance for Oregon and nationally, as well as the current (2014) National Cohesive Wildland Fire Strategy.

The original 2006 Greater Redmond CWPP initialized efforts to reduce the threat of high-intensity wildland fires, managing the larger landscape to restore forest health and more resilient conditions and improving fire response by all fire agencies.

2017 Greater Redmond CWPP

2017 update: The updated CWPP's action plan has been re-organized according to the goals of the Cohesive Strategy: fire adapted communities, improved fire response, and resilient landscapes. Eagle Crest is now considered its own rating area in the 2017 plan.

Due to the work accomplished on private and public lands in the Eagle Crest rating area, the priority areas have shifted for future treatment planning. Considering the evacuation and ignition risk transient encampments pose, language was added to capture that risk.

Risks were re-evaluated based on the input from the steering committee and the aforementioned changes to the plan. The new risk evaluation created new prioritized areas within the Greater Redmond CWPP Boundary.

The plan acknowledged the risk of unprotected lands within the planning boundary. These are lands that have no fire protection of any kind. Fires that occur in these areas can potentially impact lives and property.

The updated plan categorizes the wildfire risk of individual neighborhoods and describes an array of priority actions. The plan additionally addresses the continuing challenge of the ever growing and changing WUI. Read the entire updated plan at projectwildfire.org/cwpps.

2 new Firewise Communities & 2,600 acres treated on public lands since 2011
WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A FIRE ADAPTED COMMUNITY?

Community members, businesses, and local government in the WUI and other wildfire prone areas collaborate to prepare and mitigate the effects of wildfire.

A fire adapted community takes preventative and proactive action to reduce the risk of wildfire by using collaborative partnerships to develop and implement a CWPP that will guide home preparedness, healthy forests land management, business resilience, fire department planning and government participation in fuel mitigation and community resilience. A local CWPP guides action to implement safety measures and fuel management to protect residents, homes, businesses, natural areas, and cultural resources against wildfires. A fire-adapted community takes a role in the planning, implementation, and periodic updating of the CWPP that will guide their appropriate risk management strategies. Community members engage their neighbors to participate in fire mitigation strategies in order to adequately prepare the community against the threat of wildfire.
SUMMARY OF 2017 CWPP UPDATE

FUEL MANAGEMENT GOALS
The 2017 CWPP update proposes to reduce the risk to lives and property from future large wildfires by reducing hazardous fuels on county and federal lands within and adjacent to the WUI in Greater Redmond, along highways, forest roads, and trails. Additionally, the update includes minimizing the risk of crown fires, reducing the risk of firebrands and embers, improving conditions for suppression efforts, utilizing opportunities to continue active management of fuel loads on wildlands, and fostering public engagement and dialogue on living with wildfire.

MITIGATION ACTION PLAN SUMMARY
The 2017 CWPP update seeks to engage homeowners on the home ignition zone through site visits and public information campaigns and support them to reduce structural ignitability and increase their preparedness. The priority areas to target with preparedness messaging have shifted to those areas that may not have been highlighted in past iterations.

The Greater Redmond CWPP plans to continue fuels reduction projects on lands spanning ownership as well as continued prescribed burning in the areas where that is appropriate.

Priority Actions

> Assess and reduce fuels within individual home ignition zones
> Empower communities to take action in strategic ways, i.e. Firewise or Sweat Equity
> Provide timely and frequent education on Deschutes County evacuation protocols.
> Increase understanding and education for vacant lot owners within the CWPP Boundary.
> Support resilient landscape activities by the Bureau of Land Management such as thinning, mowing and prescribed burning.
> Continue providing public information for all prescribed burning operations.
> Apply for funding opportunities for Greater Redmond residents.
GREATER REDMOND PRIORITIES

Priority Areas
Each area within the Greater Redmond had its wildfire risk rated by a suite of factors. Some of those factors include, but are not limited to:

- Number of homes (density)
- How often fires occur (fire occurrence)
- Weather
- Fire Response
- Community Preparedness
- Amount of vegetation (Fire Fuels)
- Infrastructure present (schools, churches, main roadways, etc.)

After the total score for the risk assessment was considered, the following are the priority areas:

- Northwest
- Urban Northwest
- Northeast
- Urban Southwest
- Southwest - Eagle Crest
- Southeast
- Urban Northeast
- Urban Southeast
- Southwest - Old Bend-Redmond

WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS
Every area in Deschutes County accepts some level of wildfire risk; the Greater Redmond area is no exception. Much of the native vegetation in Deschutes County is adapted to wildland fire. Specifically, in the Greater Redmond area, an important item to note is in the Northwest rating area, there are some lands that do not have any fire protection of any kind. These residents should be preparing for fire season well in advance with defensible space, evacuation kits, and routes.

The CWPP acts as a vehicle to not only promote work on public lands but to educate and empower private landowners to take preparedness steps well ahead of fire season. Within the document, there are recommendations to reduce structural ignitability, create defensible space, and evacuation preparedness information.
Project Wildfire is a Deschutes County community organization that facilitates, educates, disseminates, and maximizes community efforts toward effective fire planning. Project Wildfire’s mission is to prevent deaths, injuries, property loss, and environmental damage due to wildfires in Deschutes County. We achieve this by building partnerships, sharing resources, and eliminating redundancies. Typically Project Wildfire succeeds where individuals and solo agencies do not. Many of our goals are achieved by developing long-term wildfire prevention and education strategies designed to reach an ever-changing community.

This summary is based on a larger report entitled, Greater Redmond Community Wildfire Protection Plan 2017 available at www.projectwildfire.org/cwpps.