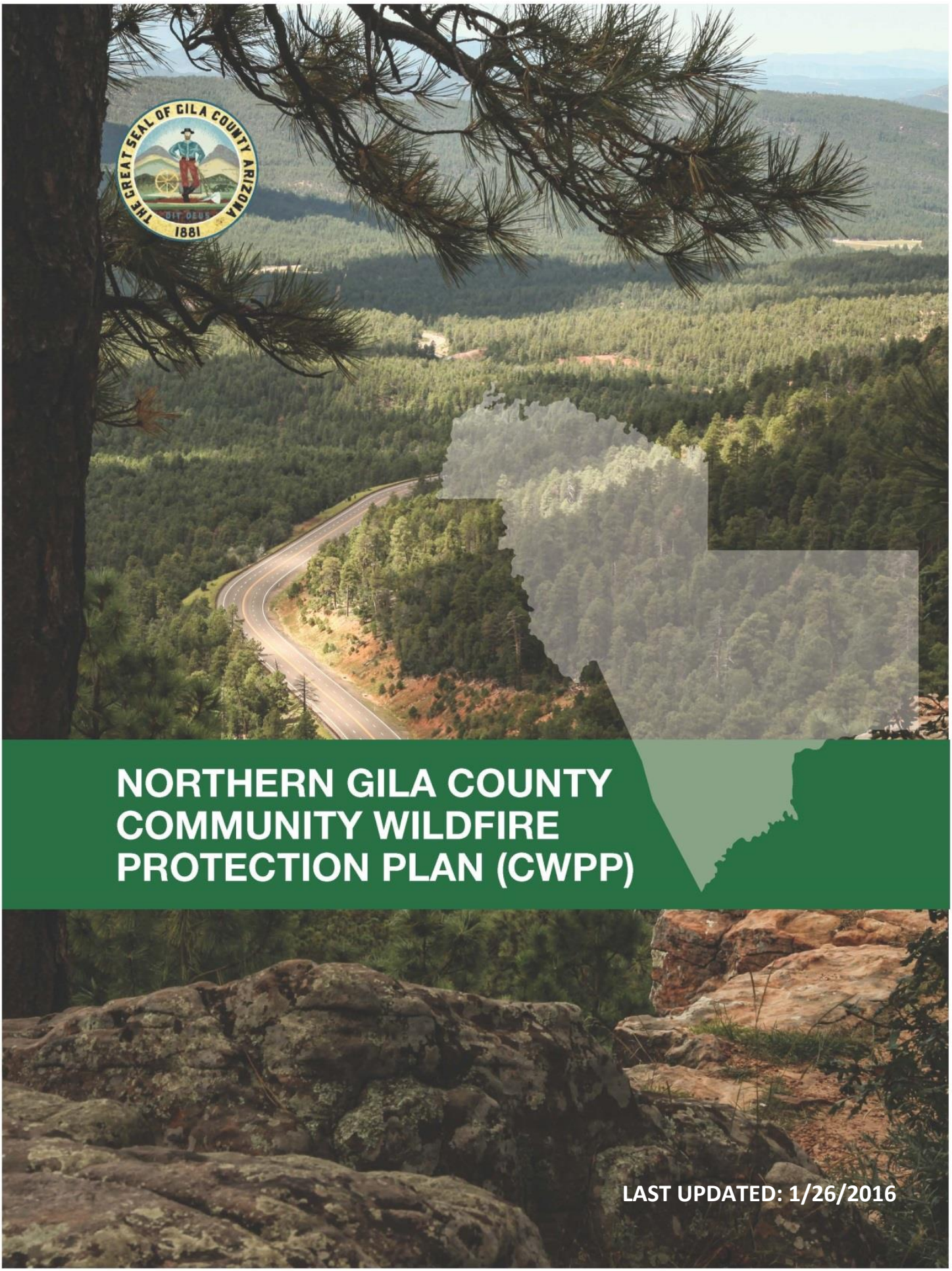

NORTHERN GILA COUNTY COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN (CWPP)

LAST UPDATED: 1/26/2016

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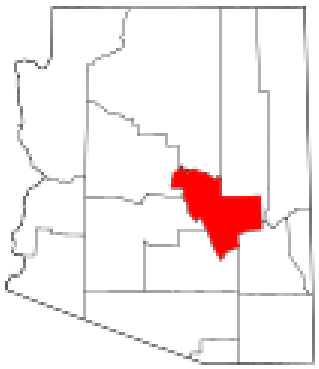

The purpose of this plan is to identify and prioritize fuel reduction opportunities across the landscape, to address structural ignitability, and to address local preparedness and firefighting capabilities with stakeholders.

[1] https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_of_Arizona_highlighting_Gila_County.svg

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PLAN APPROVAL

The Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA) of 2003 requires that the following entities must mutually agree to the final contents of a CWPP: the applicable local government (i.e., counties or cities); the local fire districts/departments; and the state entity responsible for forest management. The following entities have approved the 2015 Update to the Southern Gila County Community Wildfire Protection Plan:

Agency	Signature	Date
Arizona State Forestry Department		
United States Forest Service		
Beaver Valley Fire District		
Christopher Kohls Fire District		
Gisela Fire District		
Hellsgate Fire District		
Houston Mesa Fire District		
Payson Fire Department		
Pine Strawberry Fire District		
Pleasant Valley Fire District		
Whispering Pines Fire District		

Final Approval by:

Agency	Signature	Date
Gila County Office of Emergency Management		
Gila County Board of Supervisors		

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SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

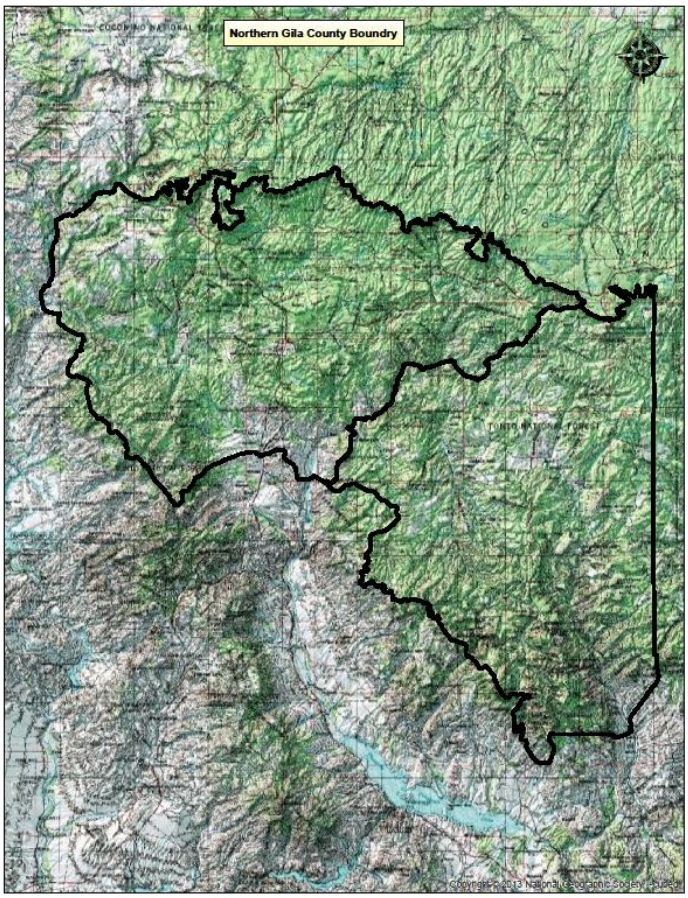
The Northern Gila County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) was originally developed in 2004, in response to the Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA) of 2003 for at-risk communities and unincorporated areas of the Mogollon Rim of Arizona by a "Core Team" of stakeholders. The original 2004 plan was referred to as the "Rim Country CWPP." As stated in the plan, "the goal of the Rim Country Community Wildfire Protection Plan since 2004 has been to provide for vital, healthy and dynamically stable human communities, built upon a similarly vital, healthy, and dynamically stable forest which is strongly resistant to wildfire, and wherein the positive role of fire is understood and managed for the benefit of all.[2]" Another goal of the Northern Gila County CWPP is to help local governments, fire departments, and fire districts improve fire prevention and suppression activities, and assist in identifying funding needs and grant opportunities. The CWPP was also designed to help identify at-risk public and private lands and to protect those lands from severe wildfire threat.

In 2006, the 2004 Rim Country CWPP was updated with continued input from Core Team members. The intent of the 2006 update was to provide progress updates to the initial 2004 CWPP with an emphasis on Fire Prevention, Public Education and Fire Protection actions and improvements. In 2015, the Gila County Office of Emergency Management sponsored another update to the CWPP with the intention of updating the resources, funding, and training activities, as well as any significant changes to the agencies or the communities they serve.

Acknowledging the geographic size of the county and diversity in land and fuels, Gila County also maintains a "Southern Gila County Community Wildfire Protection Plan" to address the specific fuels, landscape, and stakeholders in the southern area. The Northern Gila County CWPP covers the area north of Hellsgate Wilderness to the Verde River, south of the Mogollon Rim and Coconino and Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests, and west of the Fort Apache Indian Reservation. The Southern Gila County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) covers the remainder of Gila County. Federal lands within the Northern Gila County CWPP are administered by the US Forest Service, Tonto National Forest and the Bureau of Land Management.

[2] 2004 Rim Country CWPP

Map 1. Northern Gila County Boundary



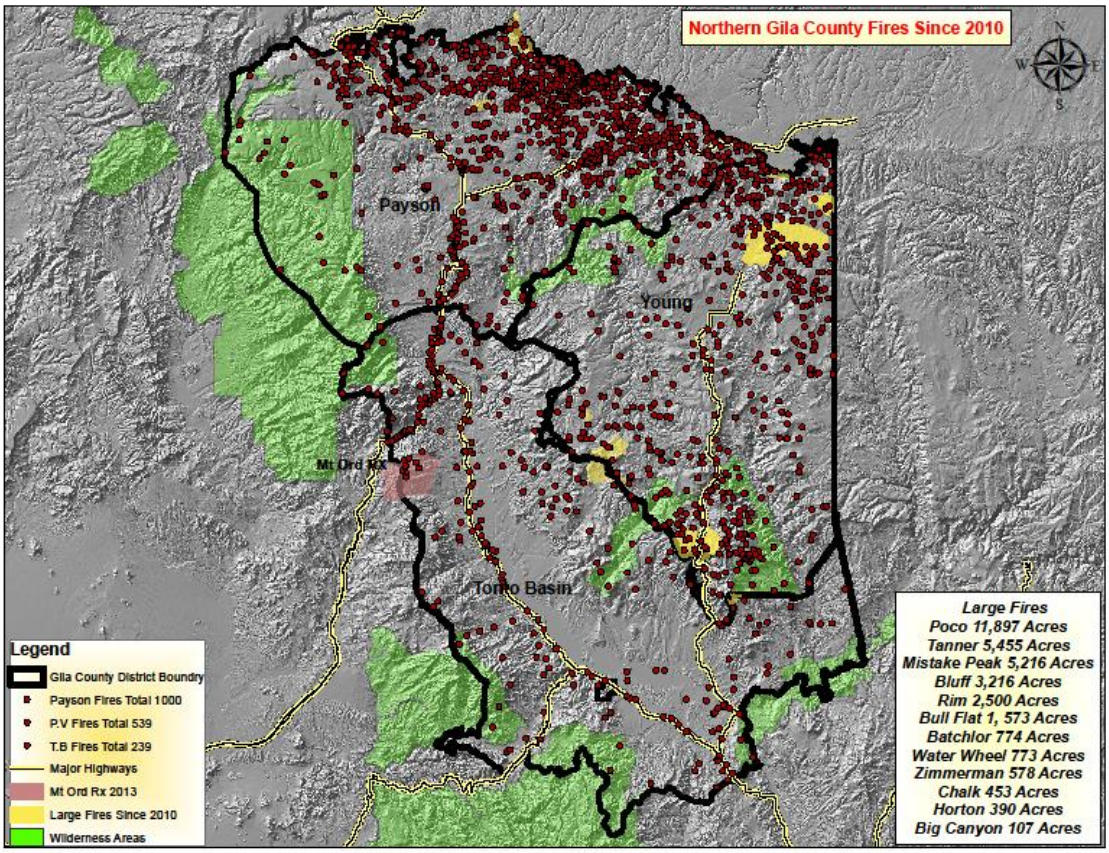
The Northern Gila County CWPP covers approximately 298,000 acres and is served by (8) fire districts and the Tonto National Forest (TNF). The population covered by the CWPP consists of approximately 24,000 residents living in over 88 defined communities, with holiday and weekend population increases of nearly 100% due to the recreational opportunities offered in the pine covered forests. With the large number of communities addressed by the plan, an important objective for the Northern County CWPP Core Team was to provide a method of accountability for mitigation measures undertaken. Another component is to adopt future mitigation measures that provide a united defense for approaching wildfire rather than separate measures that address only one community.

Within the Northern Gila County CWPP area, the Tonto National Forest (NF) Payson Ranger District (RD) provides fire suppression on the federal lands inside the forest boundaries. Forest fire suppression resources will also respond to areas where there is a potential for a fire to spread onto the National Forest. The Tonto NF also has personnel available to complete mitigation work on forest lands.

Identified team members for the Northern Gila County 2015 CWPP update include Beaver Valley Fire District, Christopher-Kohls Fire District, Hellsgate Fire District, Houston Mesa Fire District, Pine Strawberry Fire District, Pleasant Valley Fire District, Payson Fire Department, and government agencies including the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT), Arizona State Forestry Division (ASFD), Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS), the US Forest Service, Tonto NF, Gila County Office of Emergency Management, Gila County Sheriff's Department, and the Payson Police Department.

The 2015 update to the 2004 and 2006 Rim Country CWPPs focused on community preparedness, fire response improvements, forest fuel mitigation efforts and a review of risk management principles. The update also provided an opportunity for members of the Review Team to reassess community fire preparedness activities including "Firewise" designations by the Arizona State Forestry Division and grant funding opportunities. The 2015 Review Team also reviewed infrastructure improvements made by utility companies serving Northern Gila Country. High value assets identified within the forest boundaries include the Mt. Ord and the Diamond Point communication facilities. In 2013, forest personnel completed a 1,100 acre prescribed burn around the communication site on Mt. Ord where ponderosa pine and brush were consumed.

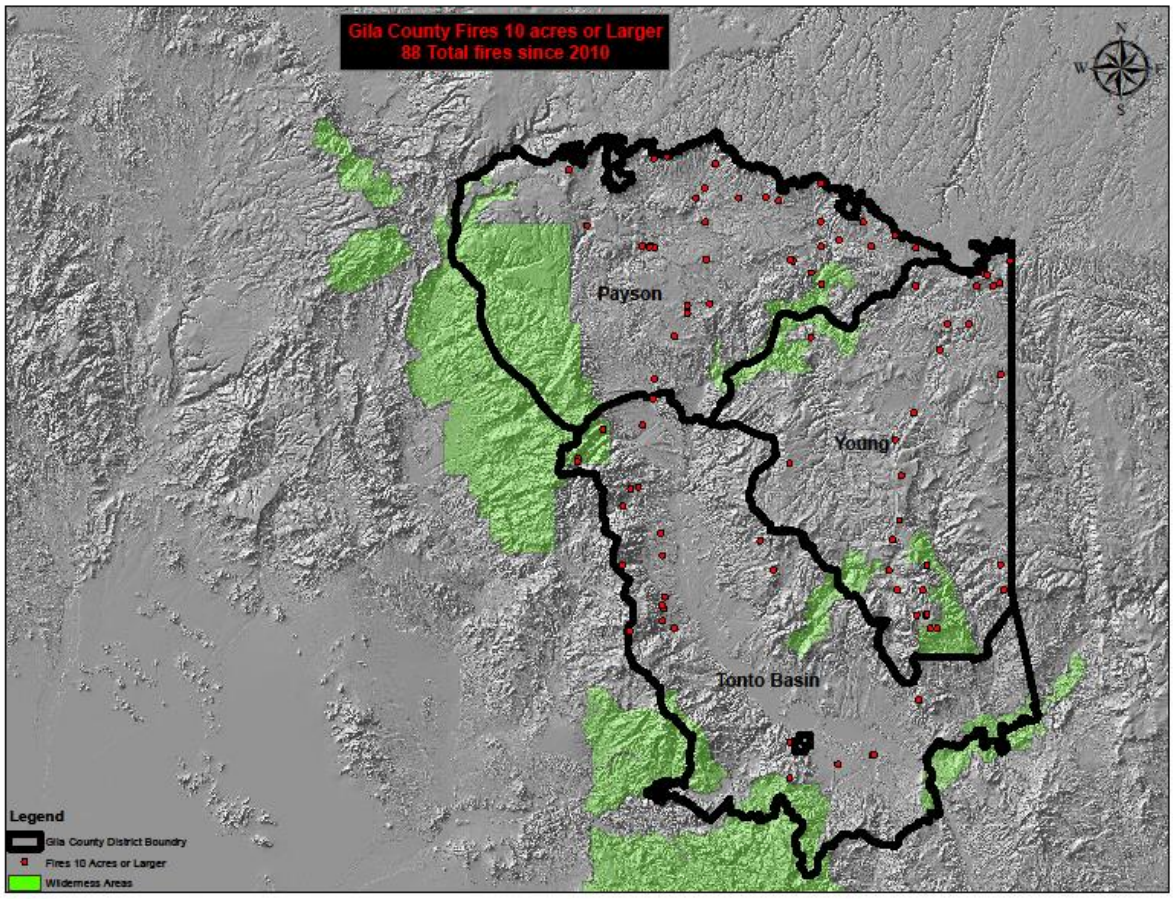
Map 2. Northern Gila County Fires Since 2010



The 2015 Review Team met and discussed the goals for fuels treatment projects, organizational changes, and community preparedness recommendations established in the original 2004 plan and during the 2006 CWPP update.

The 2015 Review Team analyzed the reported wildfire ignitions in Northern Gila County and recognized that there have been over 1000 reported wildfire ignitions in the planning area since 2010. The majority of the ignitions have occurred along roadways and Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) areas, and were human caused. The second leading source of ignitions has been lightning. Major fires have been occurring throughout Arizona with increased frequency following a continual drought and wildland fuel buildup. Major fires that have occurred in Arizona since the 2006 CWPP update was written include the Schultz, Horseshoe 2, Monument, Wallow, Gladiator, and Yarnell Hill fires. All but the Yarnell Hill fire were human caused. The Wallow Fire in 2011 is the largest fire in Arizona history and burned over 538,000 acres. The Yarnell Hill Fire in 2013 took the lives of 19 firefighters and caused the loss of 129 homes and structures. The Yarnell Hill Fire was started by lightning.

Map 3. Gila County Fires 10 acres or larger since 2010



Recent notable fires in Gila County include the Poco Fire in 2012 (north of Young), the Mistake Peak fire in 2012, the Bull Flat Fire, and the Tanner Fire in 2011 (south of Young). One of the critical elements in firefighter safety that poses an extreme hazard to personnel is the exposure of the firefighters to extreme environmental conditions. Two firefighters were transported by helicopter suffering from heat exhaustion after working shifts on the Mistake Peak and 257 fires in 2012. The 257 Fire was located in the Globe RD, south of Superior. Forest Service personnel began focusing their efforts on reducing heat related injuries to firefighting personnel on fires occurring in the region, state and nationally. These efforts include recognizing the operational challenges of managing an Incident-Within-An-Incident and the impacts on firefighter safety and operations.

A. WUI Identification Process

In 2009, the Arizona State Forestry Department, under the direction of the Governor of Arizona, issued an Arizona-Identified Communities at Risk rating for nearly 200 communities located throughout the State. These communities were given WUI ratings, with 39 communities located in Gila County. The ratings were based on the following criteria:

1. Fire Behavior Potential
2. Social, Cultural and Community Factors
3. Fire Protection Capability

Based on the three evaluation criteria, each community was given a Risk of Catastrophic Fire rating. Seventeen communities in the Northern Gila County CWPP coverage area were rated by the Arizona State Forestry Department. The chart below lists those communities, the associated WUI risk, and the Fire District/Department providing fire protection to the community.

Table 1. Arizona Identified Communities-At-Risk 2009

Community	WUI Risk	Fire District/Department
Beaver Valley	Low	Beaver Valley Fire District
Christopher Creek	High	Christopher Kohls Fire District
Colcord Estates	High	Christopher Kohls Fire District
Diamond Point	Moderate	Hellsgate Fire District
East Verde Park	Moderate	Payson Fire Department
Gordon Canyon	Moderate	Christopher Kohls Fire District
Houston Mesa	High	Houston Mesa Fire District
Kohls Ranch	Moderate	Christopher Kohls Fire District
Ox Bow/Round Valley	Moderate	Payson Fire Department
Payson	High	Payson Fire Department
Pine	High	Pine Strawberry Fire District

Community	WUI Risk	Fire District/Department
Ponderosa Springs	Moderate	Christopher Kohls Fire District
Star Valley	Moderate	Hellsgate Fire District
Thompson Draw	Moderate	Hellsgate Fire District
Tonto Village	High	Hellsgate Fire District
Whispering Pines	Moderate	Whispering Pines Fire District
Wonder Valley	Low	Houston Mesa Fire District
Young/Pleasant Valley	Moderate	Pleasant Valley Fire District
Strawberry	High	Pine Strawberry Fire District

The task of the 2015 Review Team required members to consider community safety needs along with the requirements of the HFRA including the fuels condition class, fire regime, resource management plans and Federal Land exclusions including Wildnerness areas. The committee determined that no further areas or communities met the definitions of the HFRA. The Review Team did recommend moving the community of Young and the Pleasant Valley Fire District to the Northern Gila County CWPP planning area. The team also reviewed the Northern Gila County CWPP's compliance with State, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), TNF, U.S. National Park Service (NPS) and tribal government objectives for the lands administered by each agency.

B. Goals of the Northern Gila County CWPP

The 2004 CWPP Core Team developed seven goals to assist in community and organizational planning. During the 2006 review, the Team revisited the established goals listed in the Rim Country CWPP and determined that the goals still reflected the needs of the communities and agencies providing fire protection and fuels management activities. These goals included:

- Improve fire prevention and suppression, emphasizing firefighter and public safety
- Reduce hazardous fuels, emphasizing public and private property protection;
- Restore forest, rangeland, and riparian health;
- Promote community involvement and provide for community protection;
- Recommend measures to reduce structural ignitability in the WUI;
- Encourage economic development in the communities from vegetative treatments;
- Encourage communities, subdivisions, and developments that are not within a fire district to either be annexed by an existing fire district or create their own district for enhanced wildland fire protection;

The 2015 Review Team consisted of members from federal and state agencies, local fire districts/departments, utility providers and community groups so that all community interests

were represented in the review of the 2004 CWPP. Review Team members include the following fire districts/departments and governmental agencies: Beaver Valley Fire District, Christopher-Kohls Fire District, Hellsgate Fire District, Houston Mesa Fire District, Payson Fire Department, Pine Strawberry Fire District, Whispering Pines Fire District, Gila County Office of Emergency Management, Arizona Department of Transportation, Arizona State Forestry Department, Arizona Department of Public Safety, the US Forest Service, Tonto NF, Gila County Sheriff's Department and the Payson Police Department.

The 2015 Review Team agreed with the above goals, and added two additional goals for the CWPP:

- Use the CWPP in conjunction with surrounding community and agency fire management plans.
- Maintain qualification for grant funding.

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SECTION II. COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

The 2015 update to the Northern Gila County CWPP identified changes made in the preceding years in community values, local fire district/department and community preparedness, agency infrastructure, population trends, and structure density. Another item reviewed was changes in Fire Insurance Services Office (ISO) ratings, which is a countywide classification system used to reflect a community's local fire protection agency's ability to suppress fires.

Each Fire District/Department and Agency is represented below in its own section.

A. Beaver Valley Fire District

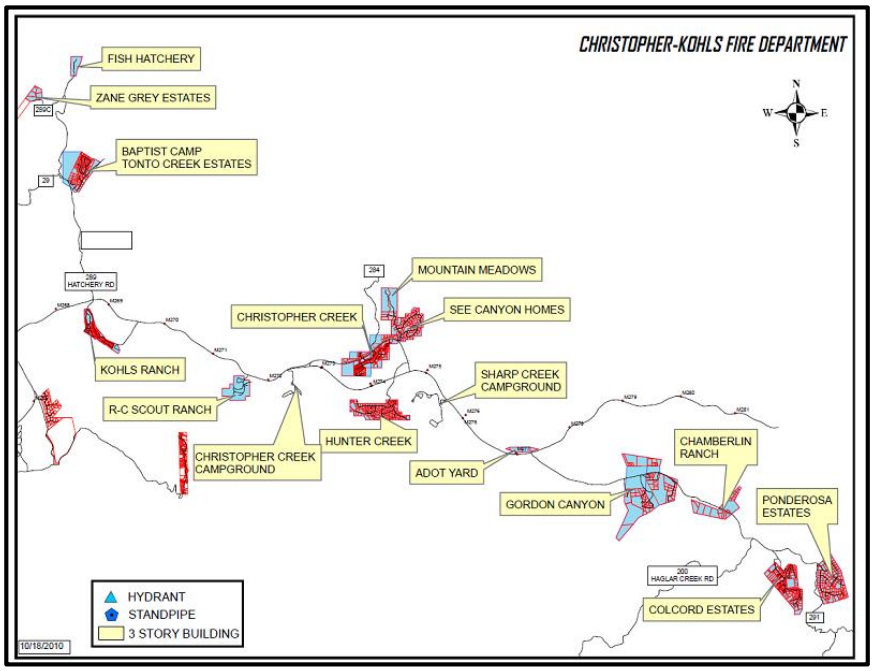
The Beaver Valley Subdivision and the surrounding area is located approximately 6 miles north of Payson on Houston Mesa Road. The tree lined East Verde River travels through the community providing river front access for home and property owners. Fire protection is provided by the Beaver Valley Fire District. The community of Beaver Valley was designated a Firewise community, one of the first in Gila County.

The Beaver Valley Fire District currently has (3) chief officers and (6) volunteer firefighters. Three members are Firefighter I & II qualified and two members are Certified Emergency Paramedics. Fire protection in the community is provided by one Type I Engine and one Type II Water Tender. A new command vehicle was recently added to the District's equipment roster. The Beaver Valley Fire District received a grant in 2012 that was used to purchase new turnout clothing, six new portable radios, and a local radio repeater. Firefighter and Fire Officer training and education, from introductory fire service education to wildland firefighting skills, is provided through the Gila County Community College located in Payson. Improved fire protection and training of personnel has led to a decrease in ISO rating from 8a to a 7 since the 2006 CWPP. Fire and emergency dispatch is provided by the Payson Interagency Agreement.

The Beaver Valley community has been very active in fire prevention efforts. The community completed its sixth year as a Firewise Community. The Fire District's web site includes information on Firewise activities and brush pit locations. There is also a log sheet for community members to record Firewise work hours and project activities.

B. Christopher-Kohls Fire District

The Christopher-Kohls Fire District (CKFD) provides fire, medical, and rescue services to over 1000 acres and a 20 mile section of Highway 260. Communities served by the District include: Kohls Ranch, Mountain Meadows, See Canyon, Hunter Creek, Christopher Creek, Colcord Estates, Gordon Canyon, Tonto Creek Estates, Zane Grey Estates and Ponderosa Estates to the top of the Mogollon Rim. The District also provides contract Fire and EMS services to the Tontozona area, R-C Boy Scout Camp, Mountain Meadows Ranch Bible Camp, and Tonto Rim Bible Camp. Many of the communities are completely surrounded by Tonto National Forest lands. The population varies throughout the year, with a peak of approximately 10,000 people either residing or camping within the community (during summer and fall, particularly on the weekend for recreational activities), and dropping to hundreds of persons during winter months.



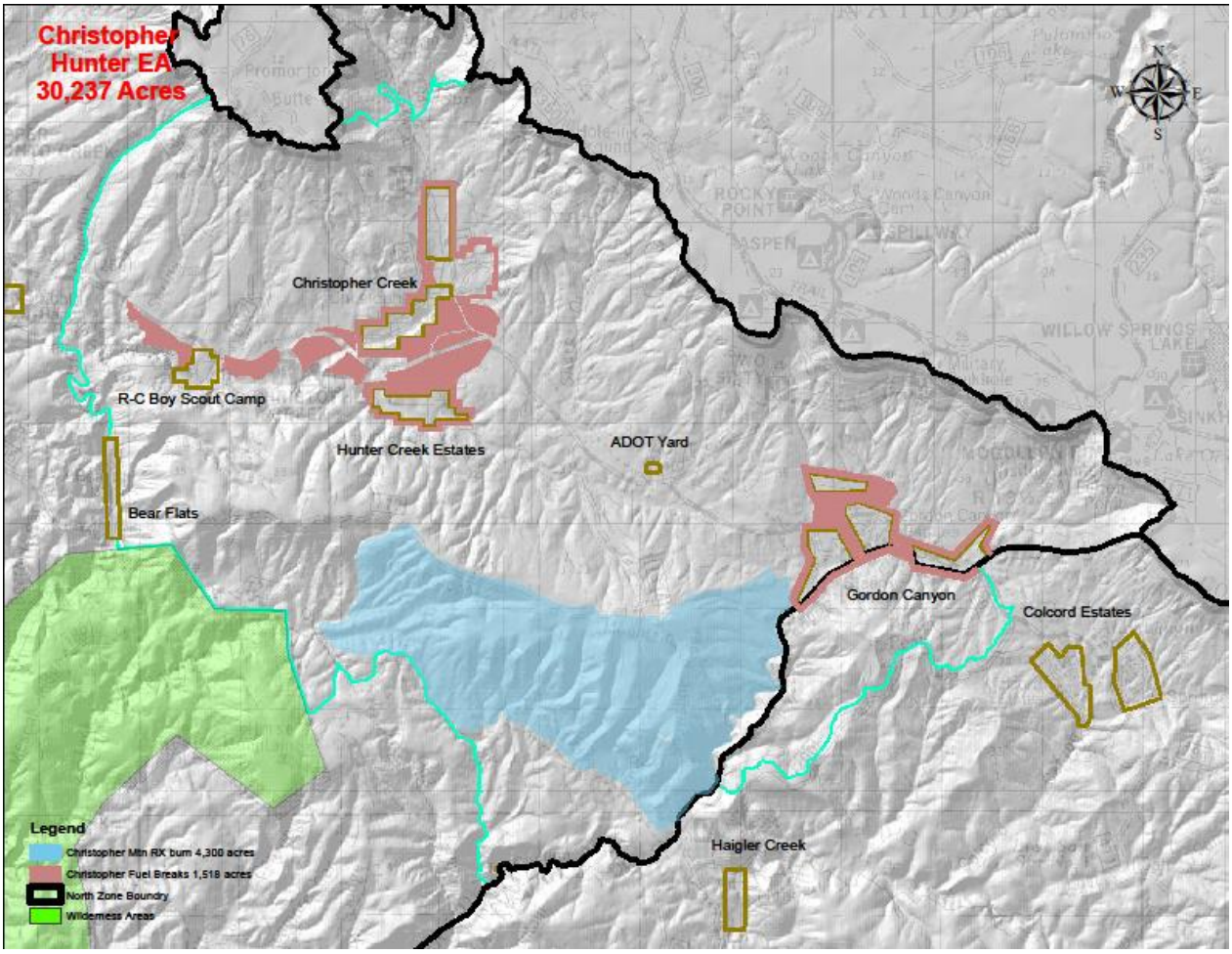
Three fire stations spread throughout the community provide quick response times to emergencies. The CKFD is currently staffed with (2) full-time members at Fire Station 51. Stations 52 and 53 are staffed by volunteers. Management positions include (1) Fire Chief, (3) Fire Captains and a small number of volunteers. A call back system along with automatic and mutual aid provides for improved response capabilities to emergencies within the district. The CKFD has one Engine Boss qualified member through Incident Qualifications System (IQS), one Engine Boss Trainee, and six members are FFII qualified. Several of the members are also Faller and Ignition qualified. The Fire District is also using Nixel for communicating with both residents and visitors via text message or email.

The CKFD provides emergency response using (1) Rescue Ambulance, (2) Type I Engines, (1) Type III Engine, (2) Type VI Engines, (1) Tactical Water Tender and (2) Support Water Tenders. With the increase in permanent staffing, decreased response times and improved apparatus capabilities, the District's ISO rating dropped from a 6/8B to a 5 for the major portions of the community. Areas outside the service area are rated a 10.

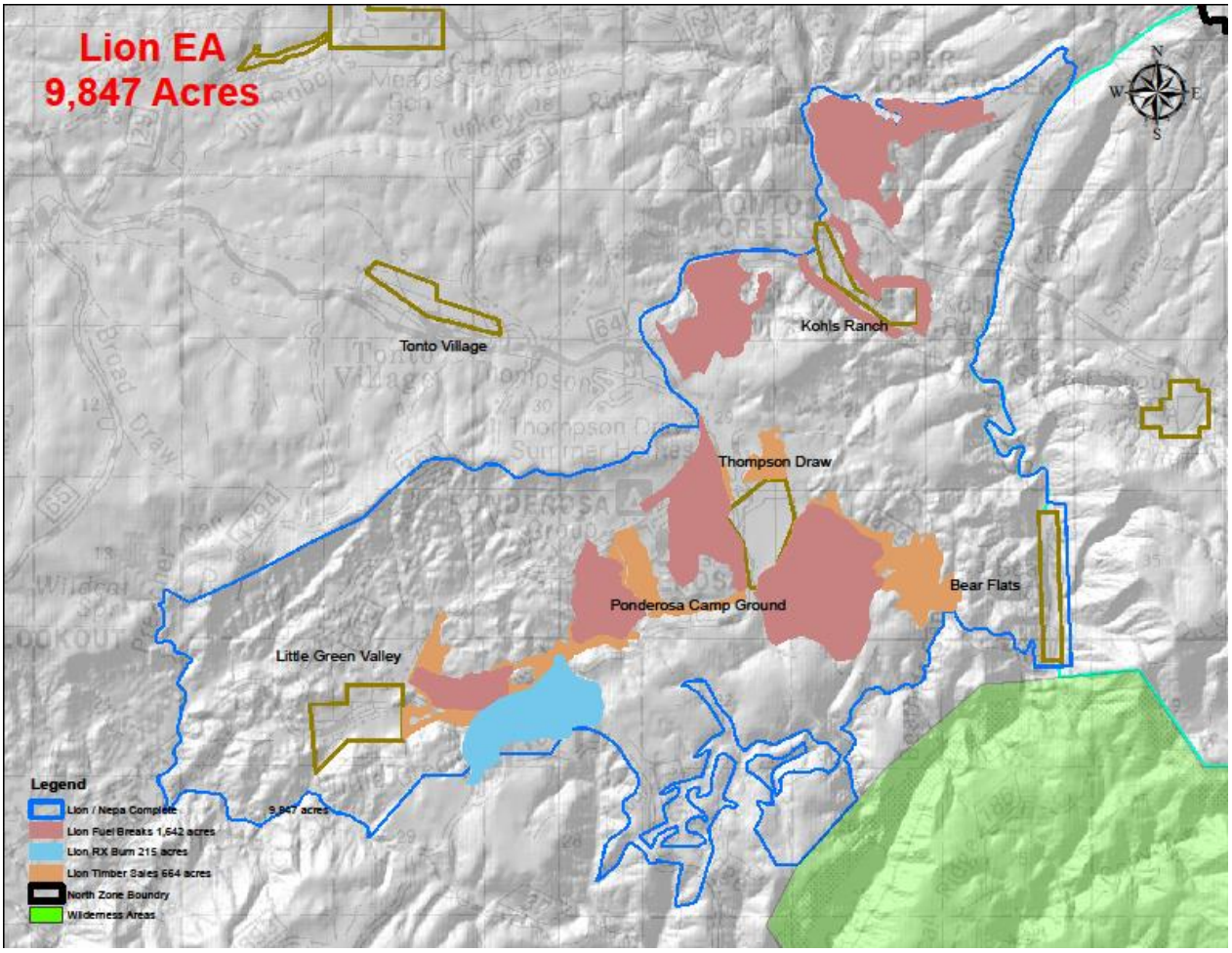
The members of the Christopher-Kohls Fire District participate in the communities they serve by providing advice on personal and home fire safety by presenting topics to the community such as defensible space around buildings, firewood storage, forest litter on rooftops, spark arrestors on chimneys, and placement of smoke detectors. Members also complete Firewise evaluations of properties within the District.

The Christopher-Kohls Fire District has been active in seeking fuels modification projects to improve the safety of the district. Over 318 acres have been treated and the District is seeking a $200,000 grant to treat an additional 90 acres. The required matching funds have come from residents or the district.

Map 4. Christopher Hunter Environmental Assessment Area



Map 5. Lion Environmental Assessment Area



C. Gisela Fire District

Gisela is a small community of approximately 500 people located 17 miles south of Payson off of Highway 87, located nearby is the community of Rye. Recreation is one of the main attractions to Gisela including swimming on Tonto Creek and hiking canyon trails. The Fire District has one paid position, the Fire Chief, and up to 12 volunteer firefighters. Utilizing several fire apparatus including two water tenders, the District is limited in its fire suppression capabilities by the lack of a water source to fill up fire apparatus. A request was made to the County Road Department through the Board of Supervisors for the installation of a surplus military water bladder.

The District serves the community from one central fire station, and has an ISO rating of 9. Emergency dispatch is provided by the County Sheriff's Office.

Firefighters are equipped with full wildland firefighting equipment and receive dispatches by handheld radio pagers. Training is an identified need for District personnel including access to Firefighter I and II courses.

D. Hellsgate Fire District

The Hellsgate Fire District was formed by the merger of the Diamond Star and Tonto Village Fire Districts in 2008. The combined District serves many communities including: Star Valley, Tonto Village, Meads Ranch, Zane Grey Meadows, Lion Springs, Diamond Point/Summer Homes, Ellison Creek/Summer Homes, and Thompson Draw, a total population of approximately 3500 people. In the middle of the Fire District service area is the Hellsgate Wilderness Area. The District provides emergency response from three fire stations; Station 21 is located in Star Valley, Station 22 is located in Tonto Village and Station 23 is located in Meads Ranch.

The Hellsgate Fire District permanent staffing includes a Fire Chief, a Battalion Chief, which is currently vacant, three full-time Captains and three full-time Engineers. Station 21 is staffed with two full-time firefighters, one Captain and one Apparatus Engineer and one Reserve Firefighter. Station 22 is staffed with one full-time employee and one or two Reserve Firefighters. Station 23 is covered by volunteers. District apparatus includes three Type I Engines, one Type III Engine, one Type VI Engine and two Water Tenders.

The Fire District's ISO rating was re-evaluated in the spring of 2015 and the rating dropped to a 4 for the majority of the fire district with the increased availability of water in the communities and additional water tenders. The Bear Flats community is rated an 8B due to the distance from the closest fire station.

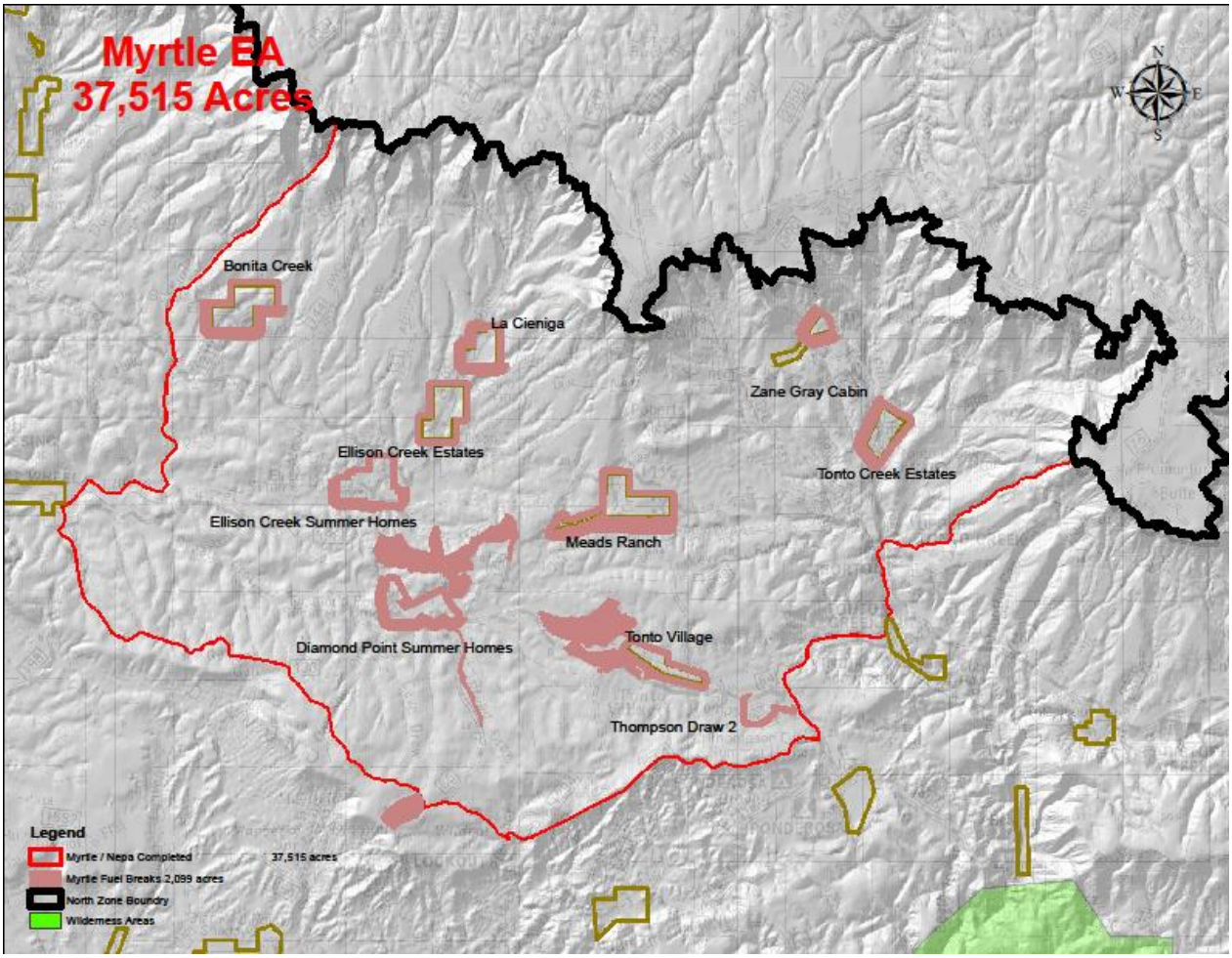
Wildland training and certification is a major ongoing issue with the District. Hellsgate FD has applied for a SAFER (Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response) Grant from FEMA to assist with recruitment and retention of personnel. Recruitment and retention of Volunteer Firefighters has been a problem with the District as with most other small fire agencies. Currently, there are six certified Engine Bosses and one Engine Boss Trainee. Nearly all of the personnel are certified wildland firefighters. The District also has one qualified Dozer Boss and several qualified Fallers. Personnel receive annual Wildland Refresher Training (RT-130) through joint training with the Forest Service and local fire districts. Personnel also attend classes to maintain and improve their firefighting skills and certifications by attending the Arizona State Wildland Academy in Prescott. Personnel also are able to complete Incident Command System (ICS) classes through the Arizona Division of Emergency Management.

Seven communities served by the Hellsgate Fire District, including Thompsons Draw I & II, Bear Flats, Summer Home and Pine Ridge have been certified by the Arizona State Department of Forestry as Firewise communities. The District has four certified personnel who conduct home assessments and present annual refresher messages at homeowners' meetings. Emergency evacuation of the community is the responsibility of the Gila County Sheriff. Community shelter locations have been identified at the high school, the rodeo grounds, and the Moose Lodge which

can feed and care for 150 people. Seven different horse arenas have been designated for horse evacuations for Northern Gila County.

The main community hazard in addition to wildland fires is the highway transportation corridor, Highway 260E. Daily highway traffic includes numerous tractor-trailer trucks carrying hazardous materials. One high-value asset in the community is the power transfer station and high voltage power lines, owned by APS which is located in the District.

Map 6. Myrtle Environmental Assessment Area



E. Houston Mesa Fire District

The Houston Mesa community is located northeast of the town of Payson. In addition to Houston Mesa, the District provides fire protection to the communities of Mesa del Caballo, Freedom Acres, and Wonder Valley. The Houston Mesa Fire District also covers islands of private land inside the Tonto National Forest boundary. Most of the Fire District sits atop Houston Mesa, a prominent plateau. Access to the community is mainly on Houston Mesa Road. Since the 2006 CWPP update, the Insurance Service Office rating for the Fire District has dropped from an 8 to currently a 5 based on improvements in training and the community's water supply.

Staffing levels for the Fire District include (1) Fire Chief, (3) Captains, (7) firefighters, and (11) volunteer members. All personnel are wildland qualified and attend regional wildland fire training. The Fire District provides service utilizing (1) Type I Engine, (1) Type VI Engine, (1) Type III Support Water Tender purchased in 2009, and (1) chief officer vehicle. All apparatus are equipped with fully enclosed cabs to improve firefighter safety and crew communication. In March of 2015, dispatch levels have increased for all wildland fire reports utilizing regional aid automatic agreements.

The communities of Freedom Acres and Wonder Valley have been designated by the Arizona State Forestry Department as Firewise communities, demonstrating the citizens' concern for their community's fire safety. Public education activities include "One Less Spark One Less Fire," a campaign designed to provide constant reminders during the fire season to reduce the numbers of vehicle and equipment fires in addition to escaped campfires throughout the Houston Mesa Community.

F. Payson Fire Department

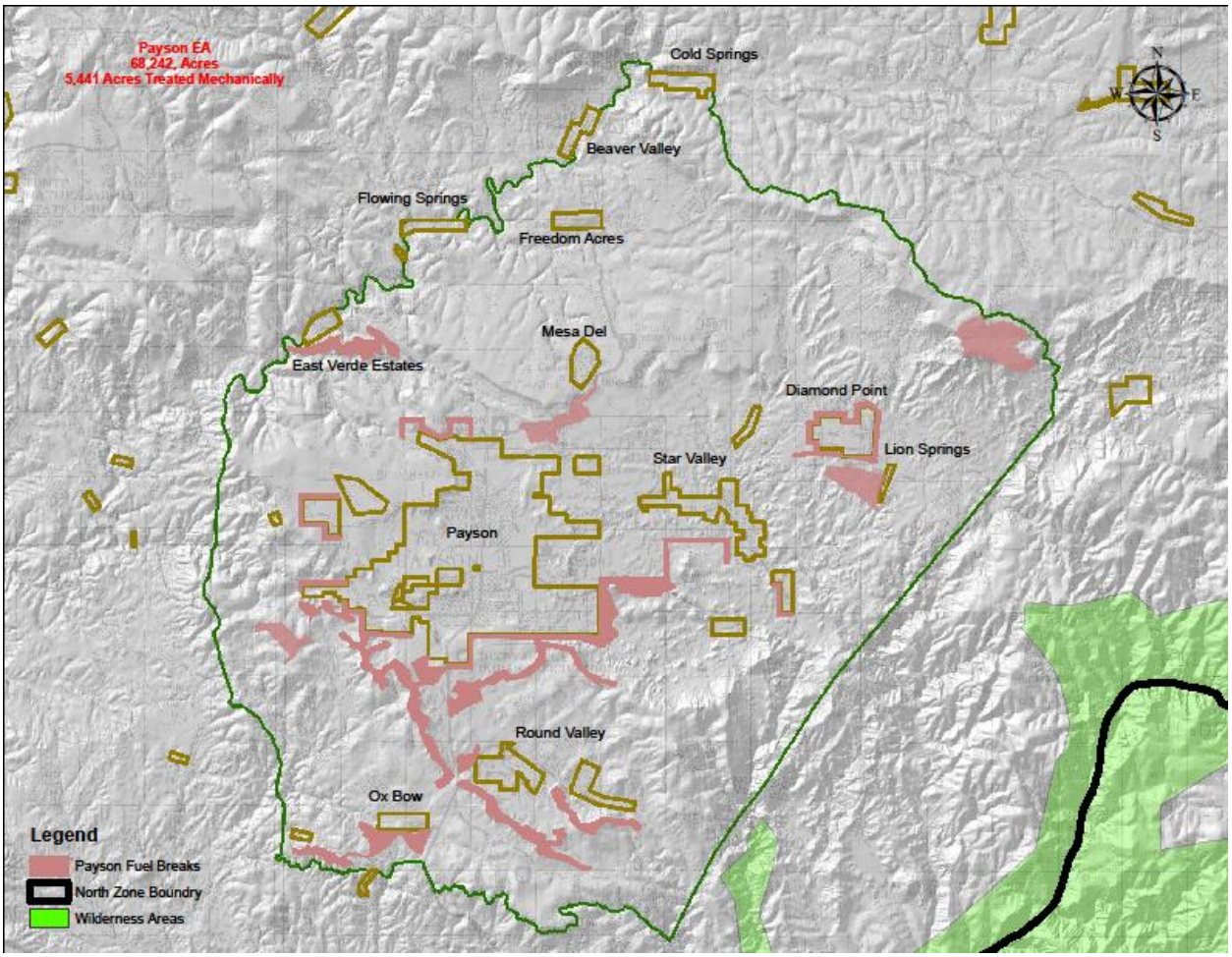
The Town of Payson is located among the majestic mountains of the Mogollon Rim. The elevation of approximately 5,000 feet provides for a mild climate, with temperatures nearly 20 degrees cooler than Phoenix and surrounding valley areas. From giant saguaros that march up the low hills to ponderosa pine covered forests cover at higher elevations, the Payson area provides a unique outdoor experience for residents and visitors. The Town of Payson is surrounded by the Tonto National Forest, a major recreational focus for outdoor enthusiasts. The 40-acre Green Valley Park is an excellent location for fishing, picnicking, and recreation activities.

The Payson Fire Department (PFD) serves the Town of Payson, the Ox Bow/Round Valley and East Verde Fire Protection Districts providing fire, EMS, and rescue services from three fire stations. The PFD also provides emergency services to the Tonto Apache Reservation through an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA). PFD provides all emergency services to the reservation with the exception of wildfire suppression which is the responsibility of the BIA office in Kingman. The Department does respond to wildfires on the Reservation and is working on an agreement with BIA for wildfire responses.

Current staffing includes (3) full-time personnel at each station and (1) shift Battalion Chief. The Department also has (8) reserve firefighters. PFD provides annual refresher training for the neighboring fire agencies. The Department has added (1) Type I engine, (1) Type VI engine, and (1) Type II Support Tender. All firefighters are Type II certified and three personnel are Engine Boss certified. All full-time personnel have been issued a portable radio and full wildland personnel protective equipment. Apparatus have also been equipped with Mobile Data Computers (MDC) and GPS units and are using an ESRI based Air National Guard Geo Integration Office (GIO) file for mapping. The ISO rating for Payson has dropped to a three from a five with the addition of a third fire station, an improved record management system and a sustained water supply and reservoir system for the community.

Payson has participated for about 10 years in fuels management programs. In 2001, the group "Regional Payson Area Project" was established as a mechanism to work on fuels reduction efforts around Payson. This included the creation of five pits to allow free dumping fuels residents removed from their properties. Currently this group still lacks structure, but has continued to staff two pits with volunteers, and with the assistance of the Forest Service to burn those pits, is still providing a valuable service to the area. In 2008, the Town of Payson received a $50,000 Resource Advisory Committee Grant to construct fuel breaks on approximately 80 acres of Forest System Lands. Currently, approximately 250 acres have been treated. A grant application has been submitted for 2015 with a planned treatment of an additional 60 acres. The following communities currently are certified as Firewise or will shortly be designated Firewise: East Verde Park, Chaparral Pines, Rim Club, Elk Ridge and Manzanita Ranch. Several Firewise videos and information on preparing properties for wildfire are available in the community library. The Fire Department also provides links to Arizona State Forestry Department's Firewise, "Ready Set Go," and "Are You Prepared" information.

Map 7. Payson Environmental Assessment Area



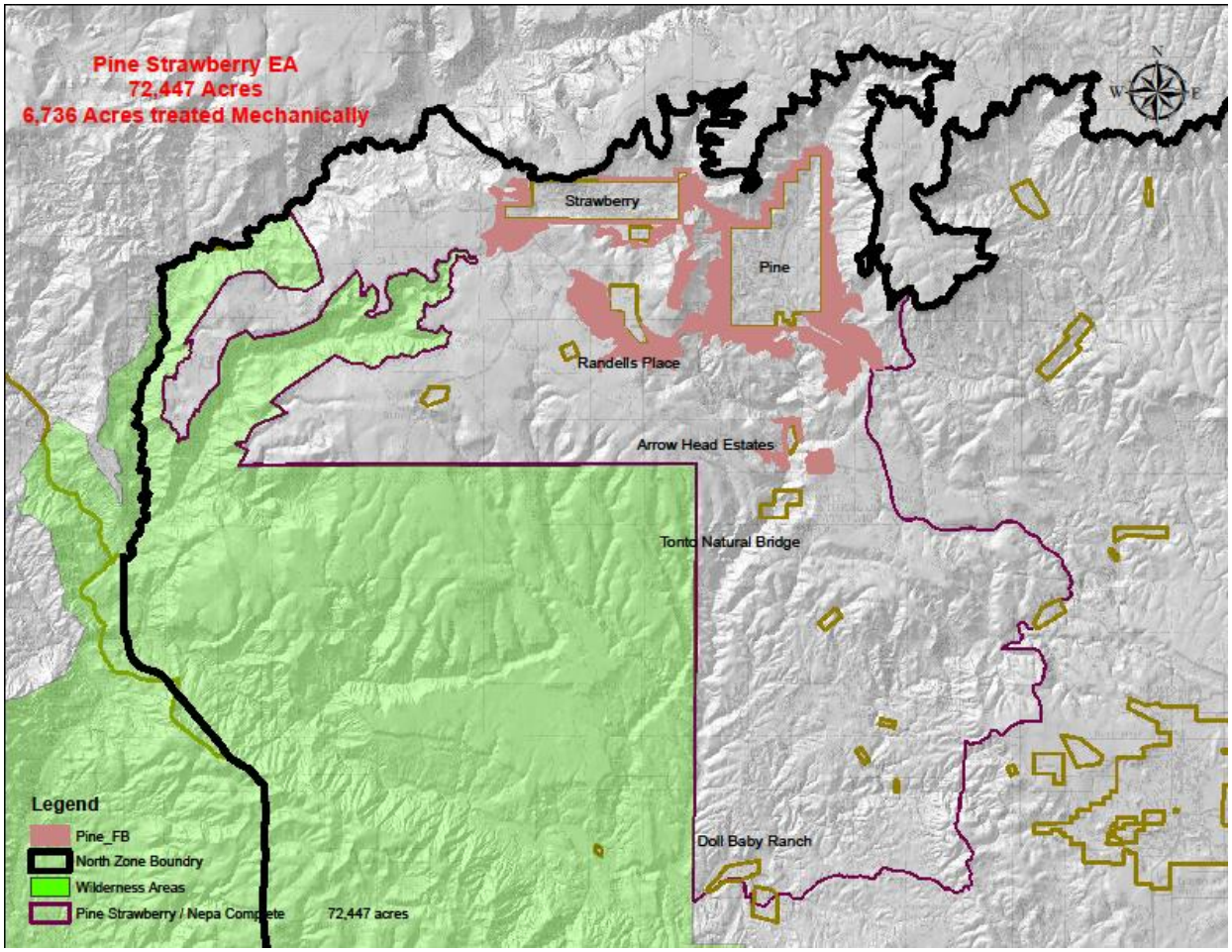
G. Pine Strawberry Fire District

The communities of Pine and Strawberry have taken a very proactive approach to wildfire protection in the past decade and are recognized for their wildfire prevention efforts in Gila County. The Fire District has received federal grants from 2005 through 2011 and conducted community-wide brush removal projects. A feature of the project included the assistance provided to private property owners who cleared brush on their property to Firewise standards. The cut brush was then picked up by the District and hauled to the Buckhead landfill site and burned.

The Pine Strawberry NEPA has been completed and covers 72,447 acres. 17,105 acres have been designated for thinning and 40,927 acres for prescribed burning. Currently, 6,736 acres have been mechanically treated. In 2006, the Pine-Strawberry Fire District raised $78,000 in public donations to maintain the fuel breaks that were constructed in 2003 on federal lands. In 2008, the Pine/Strawberry Firewise community group raised $35,000 to purchase native grass seed to be planted on the fuel breaks surrounding their communities. Native grasses can be burned every few years eliminating the need for expensive hand crew and mechanical clearing.

Pine Strawberry Fuels Reduction (PSFR) Inc., a 501-C3 was formed in 2007 to assist the Fire district in Firewise education and brush removal. In 2012 grant funding ended and PSFR has been operating with private sector funding. A 300 meter fuel break has been completed and twice, the fuel break has been thinned, the last in the spring of 2015. Within the two communities, nearly 800 acres in high risk areas have received brush removal or been burned, with another 160 acres scheduled for pile burning on the south border of Pine when the weather permits. PSFR will again conduct brush removal and is projected to remove approximately 700 tons of material.

Map 9. Pine Strawberry Environmental Analysis Area



The small community of Arrowhead Estates which is located within the Fire District but five miles south of Pine, has had a 70 acre fuel break completed and an additional 25 acres within the community cleared of brush. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) Church Camp at Lomia Campground, having been designated by the Forest Service as an extremely high fire risk area, completed clearing 200 acres of brush.

Pine Strawberry Fire District

The Pine Strawberry Fire District staffs two fire stations 24 hour a day, one in each community. District staffing has increased since 2004 from 4 to currently 5 personnel on duty. The District also has added a part-time Fire Marshall. The number of fire apparatus has increased with the addition of (1) Type I and (1) Type III engines, for a total of (2) Type I engines. The District also has (2) Type II water tenders capable of transporting 5,150 gallons of water to incidents. Additional equipment added to the District includes a truck, trailer, and Bobcat purchased by grant funds and utilized in brush removal and disposal.

Dispatching for the Fire District is going to be transferred to the Payson Fire Department Communications Center, allowing for a greater sharing of radio frequencies and standardized communications and operations between agency personnel. Communication upgrades include the addition of radio repeaters and cell phone boosters. Programmable VHF portable radios have been purchased by the District. With the communications improvements, additional staffing and other actions, the Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating for the district has been lowered from a 7 to a 5.

Training and Incident Command System qualifications have been a focus of the Fire District. A designated Training Coordinator is responsible for an active training program. Working with the Northern Fire Chiefs Association (NFCA), the District adopted the unified task book to standardize training and qualifications. Currently, District personnel have attained IQS qualifications including Strike Team Leader Trainee (1), Engine Boss (4) and Trainee (2), Crew Boss trainee (2) and Faller class A-C (8). 25 firefighters are Red Carded wildland firefighters. Fire personnel have also had an opportunity to earn an associate of Arts degree in Fire Science through the Gila County Community College System. The NFCA has created a strong mutual aid system which provides for the sharing of firefighting resources at the local level. An Automatic Aid agreement was also created by the NFCA and is currently being adopted by fire districts/departments. The Arizona Fire Chiefs Association has created a statewide Mutual Aid agreement which will be implemented within the District once the dispatch function has been transferred to Payson Fire Department.

Community notification and water systems improvements have been accomplished with the cooperation of the Pine Strawberry Water District. The Water District has an agreement in place with the Fire District which allows for the use of One Call Now, an automated notification system for emergency messages and community updates. Over 5,500 property owner phone numbers have been placed into a database allowing for automated phone calls. The water district has also installed seven pressurized hydrants on the Pine Creek Canyon Road with two additional hydrants in other areas of the community. Two separate drafting tanks as well as a drafting pond are maintained within the District.

The Fire District has a designated public education coordinator that provides structural fire safety and Firewise information. The Pine Strawberry Fire District has received funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Assistance to Firefighter grant program on two occasions, which has been used to create the “Billy the Bushwacker” child education program. The program is designed for children ages 8-11 and provides education on wildfire prevention principles. The program has been such a success that the “Billy the Bushwacker” program has been used throughout the State of Arizona and is available on the State Fire Prevention website. The district also has a public education trailer that is used at community events. Information on Firewise standards and fire safety education materials are given out to the public during these

events. Firefighters are also trained in Firewise standards and can conduct Firewise assessments of private property and assist homeowners in brush removal planning.

The District has also developed a wildfire safety information CD, "Protect Your Property from Wildfires," with interagency cooperation and private sector funding. CDs were distributed to all property owners through a mass mailing. The CDs were reprinted in 2009 by Pine Strawberry Fuel Reduction, Inc. In 2006, Pine Strawberry, Inc. used private sector funds to purchase 20 metal Firewise signs that are posted along main access and egress routes in Pine and Strawberry. The Gila County Public Works Department assisted in installation of these signs.

H. Pleasant Valley Fire District

The Pleasant Valley Fire District (PVFD) serves the community of Young and surrounding areas. Consisting of approximately 20 volunteers and two reserves, the District provides both fire and EMS response for the citizens. Personnel attend two fire training classes and two EMS training classes each month. Personnel include one Paramedic and one EMT while one firefighter is attending EMT class. Additional personnel are CPR and Basic Fire Aid certified. Dispatching for the District is provided by six personnel who provide dispatching from their private residences working 12 hour shifts. Additional communications can be provided by the resident Gila County Sheriff's Deputy when required. Available within the middle of Young is a fixed helicopter landing zone with several other landing zones identified throughout the area. Due to lengthy ground transport times, the availability of landing zones within the community is a valuable asset.

The PVFD apparatus roster includes one Type I Engine, one Type III Engine, one Type IV Engine, and one Type VI Engine. Water is an important consideration for the District and shuttle operations can be accomplished using three Support Water Tenders, the largest has a capacity of 5,000 gallons of water. Rescue in the community is provided using two ford F-350 vehicles. All apparatus with the exception of Tender 3 and Engine 3 are equipped with radios.

Firefighter training is a priority of the Pleasant Valley Fire District. Currently, four firefighters have completed the Arizona State Basic Structure Fire Training and two firefighters are currently attending the training class. Two of these firefighters have also completed Firefighter 1 and 2 training and Hazardous Material Training. One firefighter has completed the US Forest Service Wildland Basic Firefighter Training. One Firefighter has completed the Arizona State Pump Operations Training.

I. Whispering Pines Fire District

Whispering Pines is a rural community located north of the town of Payson and east of the communities of Strawberry and Pine. The Fire District is comprised of the communities of Whispering Pines, Rim Trail, Washington Park, Geronimo Estates/Elusive Acres, Cowan Ranch Bonita Creek and portions of Verde Glen. In addition, the District provides services to Camp Geronimo and Camp Shadow Rim. Access to the communities and the Fire District are on either Houston Mesa Road or Control Road, FSR-64. Recent improvements to bridges on Houston Mesa Road at second and third crossings, which is one of the designated evacuation routes for the District, has led to a much safer and more reliable route of evacuation.

The Whispering Pines Fire District (WPFD) currently staffs four fire stations. Station 71 is the primary and Administrative Office of the District, located in the community of Whispering Pine. This station is staffed 24 hours a day with one certified firefighter/EMT or FF/Paramedic. A new fire station, #72, is currently under construction in the community of Rim Trail and will provide apparatus bays for three units. Station #72 is staffed by volunteer personnel. Station #73 is located in the community of Geronimo Estates/Elusive Acres and is also staffed with volunteer personnel. Station #74 is located in the community of Bonita Creek and is also staffed with volunteer personnel. Total staffing for the WPFD includes (2) chief officers, (2) fire captains, and (13) firefighters. All fulltime members are fully Incident Qualification System (IQS) FF Type I qualified, State certified structural FFII and either Paramedic or EMT certified. Improvements in apparatus, training, water supply and personal protective equipment have led the District to seek ISO re-evaluation of their rating during May of 2015.

The WPFD has been successful in obtaining Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) Program grant funding since 2009. These funds have been used to improve wildfire suppression capabilities. "The VFA grant, formerly known as the Rural Community Fire Protection, can provide Federal financial, technical, and other assistance to State Foresters and other appropriate officials to organize, train and equip fire departments in rural areas and rural communities to suppress fires.[3]"

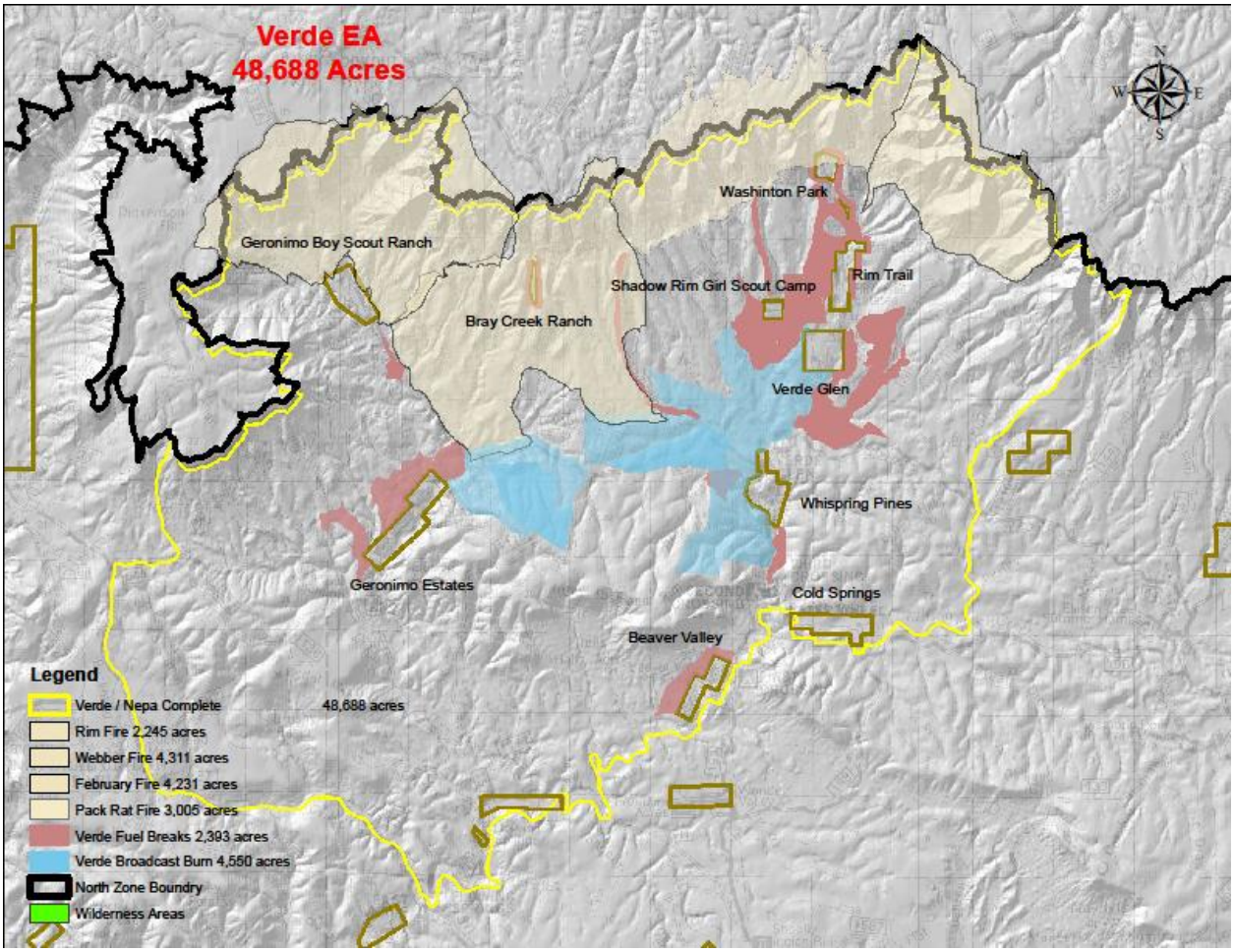
District fire apparatus includes (2) Type I engines, (2) Type VI engines, (1) Type VII engine, (2) Type III support water tenders, and (1) rescue unit. Five of the fire apparatus have mobile radio repeaters and all staff members have portable radios. Using VFA grant funding, all personnel have been provided wildland personal protective equipment including wildland packs and New Generation fire shelters. The WPFD operates under the Northern Gila County Automatic Aid Agreement which has increased fire dispatch response units and personnel.

[3] http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/partners/vfa/

In 2014, the WPFD received grant funding from the ASFD to pay for 30% of the costs of installation of three 50,000 gallon water bladders. The bladders have been designated as a firefighting water supply and were purchased to improve the availability of water for both District and Forest Service usage. Gila County also added a 10,000 gallon dip tank at a dedicated water storage location in the District. A 600 GPM portable drafting pump was added to the District's equipment inventory and is used to support water tender shuttle operations.

Community activities include the successful designation of Bonita Creek as a Firewise Community in 2008. A fuel modification program designed to protect Bonita Creek has been completed. The District is active and annually presents fire prevention, Firewise and One Less Spark programs to the public. Using an extensive email campaign, property owners within the District are provided with information on activities in the surrounding area as well as fire activity updates and weather conditions. Area wide emergency notification will be conducted using the Gila County emergency notification system currently under development as of plan writing in January 2016.

Map 11. Verde Environmental Assessment Area



J. United States Forest Service (USFS): Tonto National Forest

The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) was a founding member during the writing of the Rim Country CWPP in 2004 and the writing of the 2006 update. The USFS continues to be a major participant in the development and review of the Northern Gila County Community Wildfire Protection Plan in 2015. The mission of the Forest Service has been to provide strong leadership in the management of diverse ecosystems and heritage resources. With over 90% of all lands in Gila County administered by the Forest Service and other federal agencies and a directive to maintain and restore social, economic and ecological resources, Forest Service personnel coordinate their efforts with the local fire districts/departments and agencies.

The Forest Service focuses on forming lasting partnerships with local agencies, communities and organizations. In order to be responsive to these community members, personnel have developed an integrated approach to restoring watersheds for economic and ecological health and improved water quality.

Forest Updates

The Forest Service currently has 15 engines covering the Tonto NF, 7 are Type III and 8 are Type VI. Additional staffing includes a Type III helicopter during the fire season May 1 to the middle of August. Three Interagency Hotshot Crews are also hosted on the forest at Payson, Mesa, and Globe. Fire management staffing includes 4 Division Chiefs, 6 Suppression Battalion Chiefs, and 1 Fuels Battalion Chief.

All firefighting personnel must meet the 1995 Federal Interagency Fire Program Management (IFPM) Qualifications. These changes were required following the South Canyon Fire in Colorado in 1994 where 14 wildland firefighters were killed. Under the 1995 Federal Wildland Fire Policy and Program Review, all Federal wildland fire agencies must "establish fire management qualifications standards to improve firefighter safety and increase professionalism in fire management programs.[4]" Local agency personnel who respond to incidents on forest lands must also meet the requirements of IFPM.

Tonto NF has updated personnel and equipment within the past five years with the goal of improving firefighter safety. Examples of equipment Improvements include: the replacement of old fire shelters with the New Generation model, upgrading portable radios with new Bendix-King VHF radios which have been provided to all fire crew members since 2010, and the addition of two Global Positioning System (GPS) units that have been placed on all apparatus.

Regional improvements in fire suppression capabilities include the opening of the Phoenix Interagency Dispatch Center, located at the Mesa Gateway Airport. The new dispatch center has

[4] http://www.ifpm.nifc.gov/fire/firemanagement.htm

assumed the dispatching responsibilities for the Tonto NF along with the Bureau of Land Management, Pima Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and San Carlos BIA. A training and mobilization facility has been built at the Mesa facility to improve regional training of firefighters. The airport also hosts an air tanker reloading facility capable of loading the DC-10, a Very Large Air tanker (VLAT) which was designed to deliver up to 11,600 gallons of fire retardant. The Mesa facility is also capable of loading an additional 5 air tankers at the same time.

Forest Service Grant Requirement

All local government projects that receive grant funding must have met National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements. Proper documents must be in place prior to funding with clear boundary markers in place. Projects must also have an archeological survey completed and cleared for work to begin. Local communities must have a CWPP in place if treatments are proposed next to private lands in conjunction with private lands treatments. Grant funding has been reduced at the federal level 10% within the past several years due to federal budget cuts.

Northern Gila County Non-Federal Land Grants

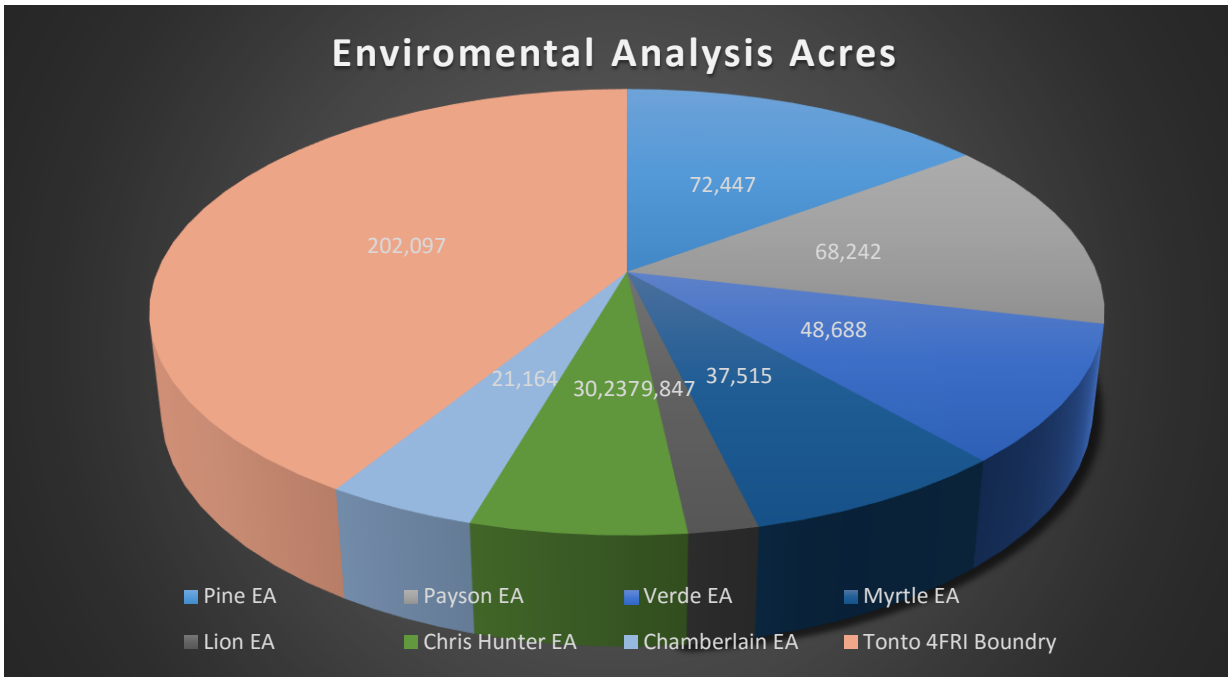
Fiscal Year 2009 Funding	$1,274,286.03
Fiscal Year 2010 Funding	$359,061.52
Fiscal Year 2011 Funding	$454,545.00
Fiscal Tear 2012 Funding	$0.00
Fiscal Year 2013 Funding	$133,278.00
2009-2013 Funding Total	$2,221,170.55

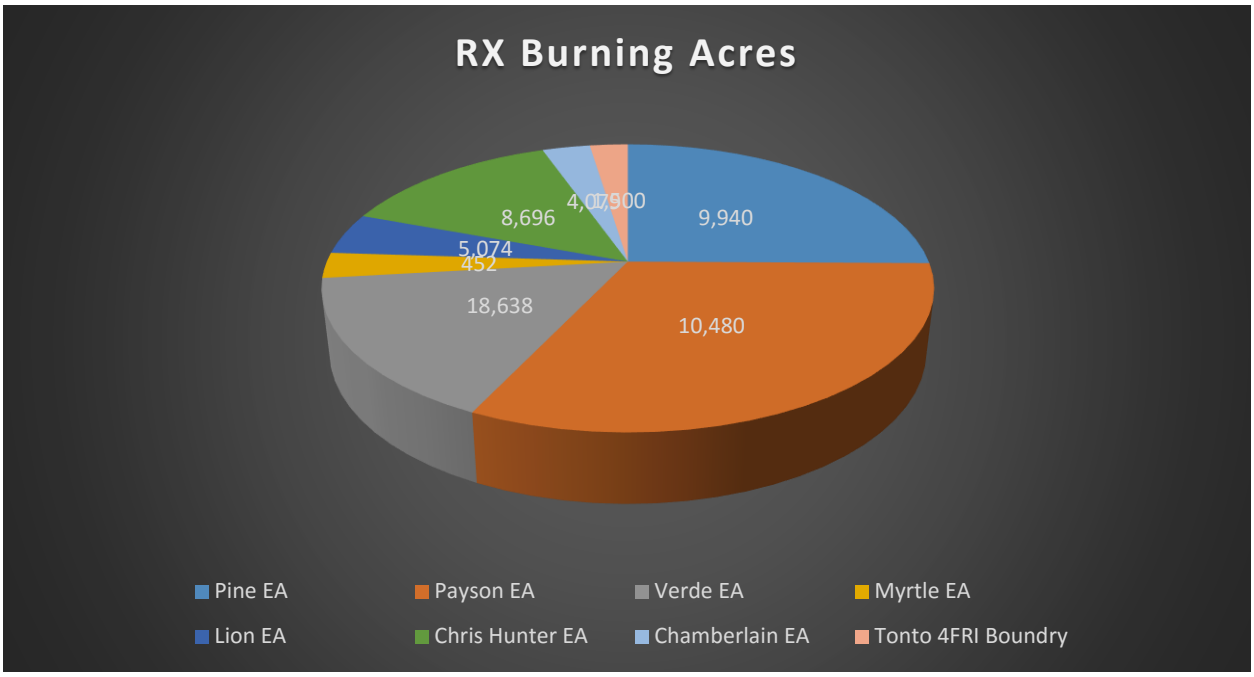
Payson Ranger District Treatment Areas:

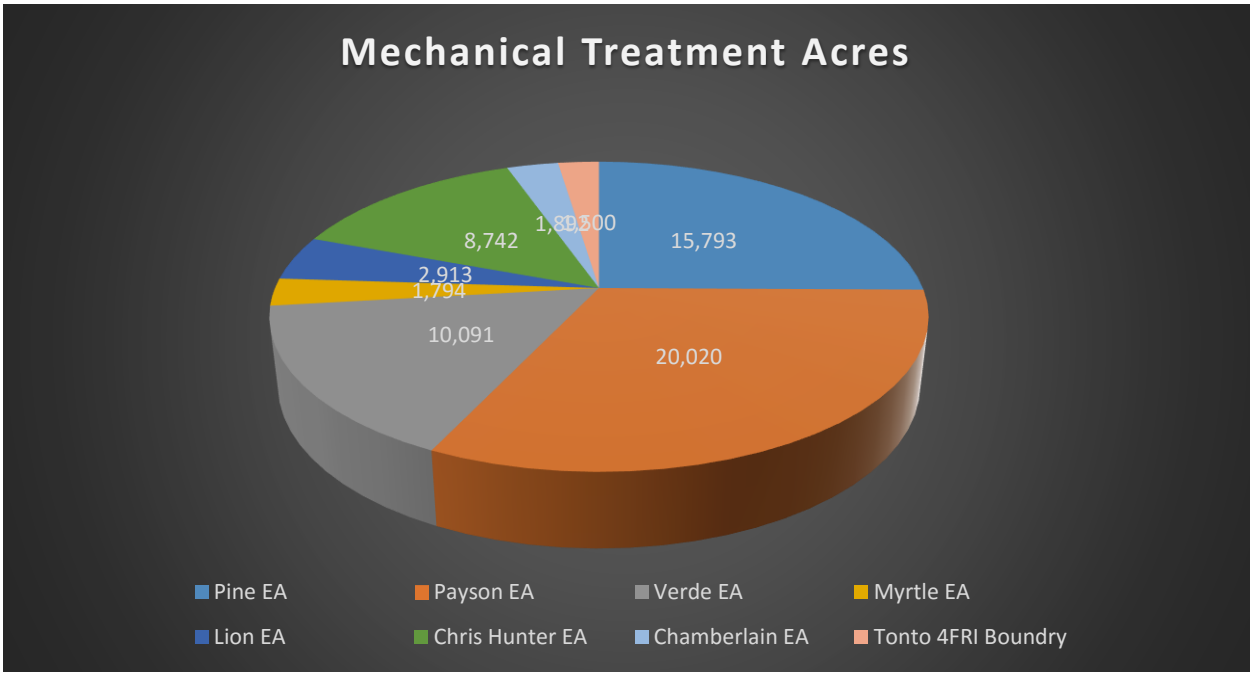
Since 2001, the Payson Ranger District has been strategically planning on a landscape scale to address the restoration of fire-adapted ecosystems as well as treat high hazard areas immediately adjacent to communities at risk. Six planning areas have approved NEPA and represent a substantial work program for the District. The planning areas are:

1. Verde Environmental Assessment Area covering 48,688 acres,
2. Payson Environmental Assessment Area with 10,307 acres for thinning and 35,037 acres for prescribed burning,
3. Pine/Strawberry Environmental Assessment Area which includes 72,447 acres,
4. Christopher/Hunter Environmental Assessment Area covering 30,237 acres,
5. Chamberlain Environmental Assessment area covering 3,403 acres for thinning

6. Myrtle Environmental Assessment Area with 17,846 acres. The Myrtle Environmental Assessment Area was completed and signed in September of 2012. This area has provided the Payson RD with a completed landscape hazardous fuels analysis. In 2013, the Parallel RX was a treatment using broadcast burning. The cost per acre was $50.00 dollars per acre. The intended results were to provide for a reduced fuels loading on the treated areas for a ten year period.







Four Forest Restoration Initiative (4 FRI)

Responding to the threat of high-intensity wildfires to Arizona communities, the Southwest Region National Forests, Apache Sitgreaves NF, Coconino NF, Kaibab NF and Tonto NF, have created the 4 Forest Restoration Initiative (4FRI) working with over 30 partners and stakeholders. The Statewide strategy for over 2.4 million acres will over a ten year period, restore the structure, pattern, composition, and health of fire-adapted ponderosa pine ecosystems; reduce fuels and

the risk of unnaturally severe wildfires; and provide for wildlife and plant diversity. The restoration-based work opportunities are expected to create a variety of jobs across northern Arizona.

The project is consistent with the Tonto Land Management Plan for area 5D. Under Management Area 5D, "Activity fuels and natural fuels will be reduced to manageable levels. Fuels management activities may include fuel wood, harvest chipping, and piling and/or prescribed broadcast burning.[5]"

Photo from http://www.fs.usda.gov/4fri

4FRI Prescribed Fire Objectives

Initial entry burns will use backing fire and strip head fire in Ponderosa Pine and Pinyon/Juniper stands to reduce:

- Dead and down fuel loading from 15-20 tons per acre to 10-15 tons per acre
- Understory vegetation by 25-60%
- Slash fuels by 25-90%

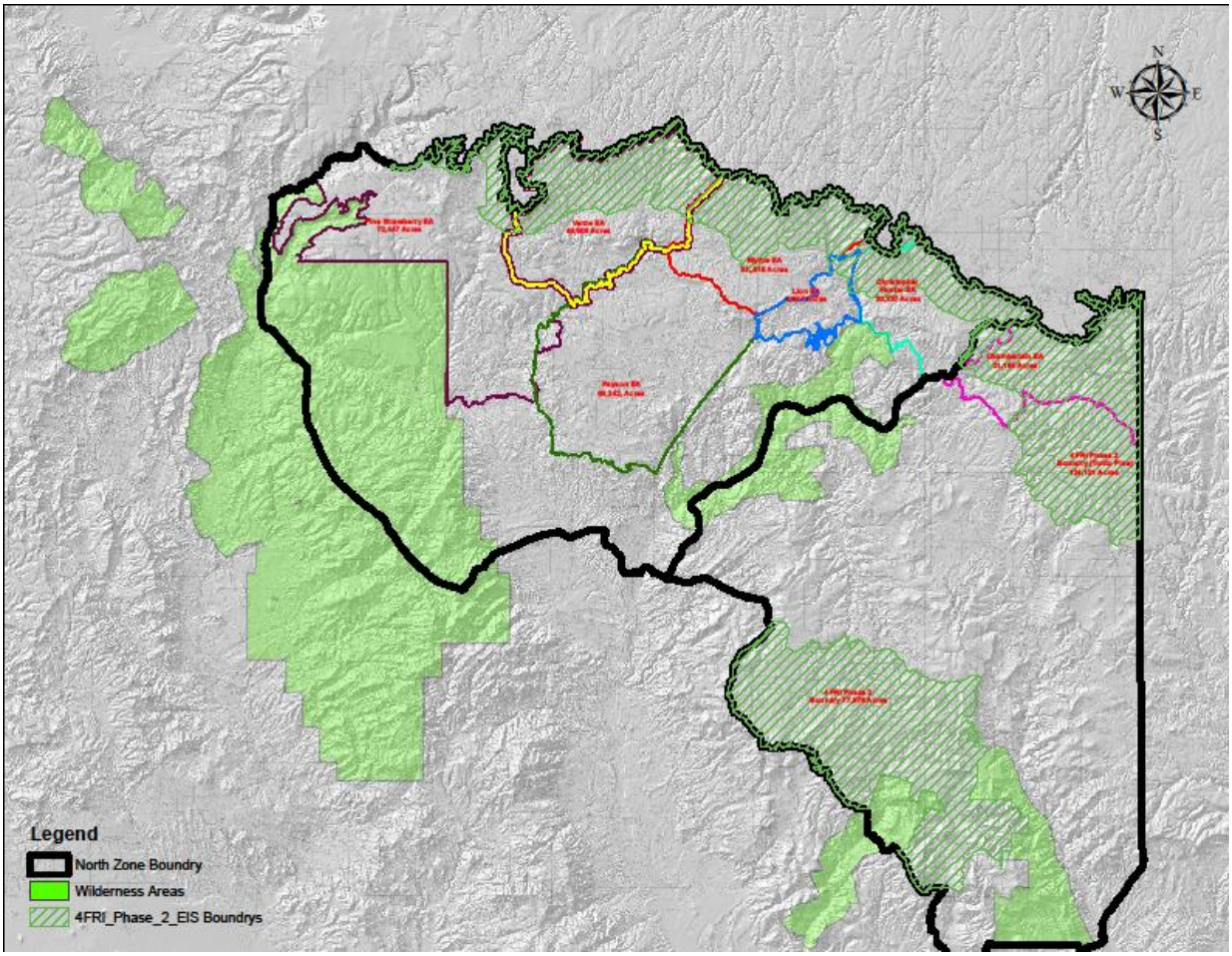
[5] TNF LRMP, P. 160, Amendment 25 08/2006

- Over story by no more than 20%

Maintenance burning in ponderosa pine will reduce dead and down fuel loadings to 3-5 tons per acre and reduce the understory vegetation by 35-90%.

In continuous chaparral fuel stands, head fire use will reduce the over story density by 50-80% and achieve a mosaic burn pattern to create a range of age classes in brush stands. Chaparral will be managed on a 30 year prescribed fire rotation to achieve an improved water yield and forage production and allow for herbaceous species growth in areas from 1 to 200 acres in size.

Map 10. Analysis Area 4 FRI EIS



Desired Effects of Prescribed Fire

The desired effects of the prescribed burning in the Ponderosa Pine and Pinyon/Juniper stands include:

- Reduction of under story fuels
- Reduction of dead and down fuels
- Minimal reduction of over story fuels in ponderosa pine
- Reduction of activity fuels
- Reduction of over story fuels and dead component in chaparral
- Reduction of piled fuels

The range of the acceptable results, expressed in quantifiable terms in:

- Ponderosa Pine/Pinyon/Juniper:
    - Reduction of Time Lag fuel loadings of 1, 10, 100, 1000 hour fuels by 40-85%
    - Reduction of under story fuels 35-90%
    - Retention or recruit a minimum of 1 snag per acre in areas with mature over story vegetation
    - 75-100% retention of desirable trees
- Chaparral Burning:
    - Reduction in over story density by 50-80%
    - Creation of openings of 1-200 acres in size
    - Achievement of a mosaic burn pattern by varied ignition patterns
    - Reduction of 1 hour and 10 hour fuels by 1-5 tons per acre.

Funding

The projected cost of the 4FRI project is anticipated to be approximately $3,250,000 over a ten-year period. The source of the funding will be Wildland Fire Hazardous Fuels (WFHF) 12 Fuels Reduction accounts with supplemental funding when available.

K. American Red Cross Northern Arizona Chapter

The American Red Cross Northern Arizona Chapter formerly known as the Grand Canyon Chapter serves approximately 76,000 square miles and 725,000 people throughout the Apache, Coconino, Gila, Mohave, Navajo, La Paz and Yavapai counties. The American Red Cross (ARC or Red Cross) independently provides mass care to all disaster victims as part of the broad program of disaster relief, as outlined in the charter provisions enacted by the United States Congress Act of January 5th, 1905 and the Disaster Relief Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-288 as amended by the Stafford Act of 1988.)

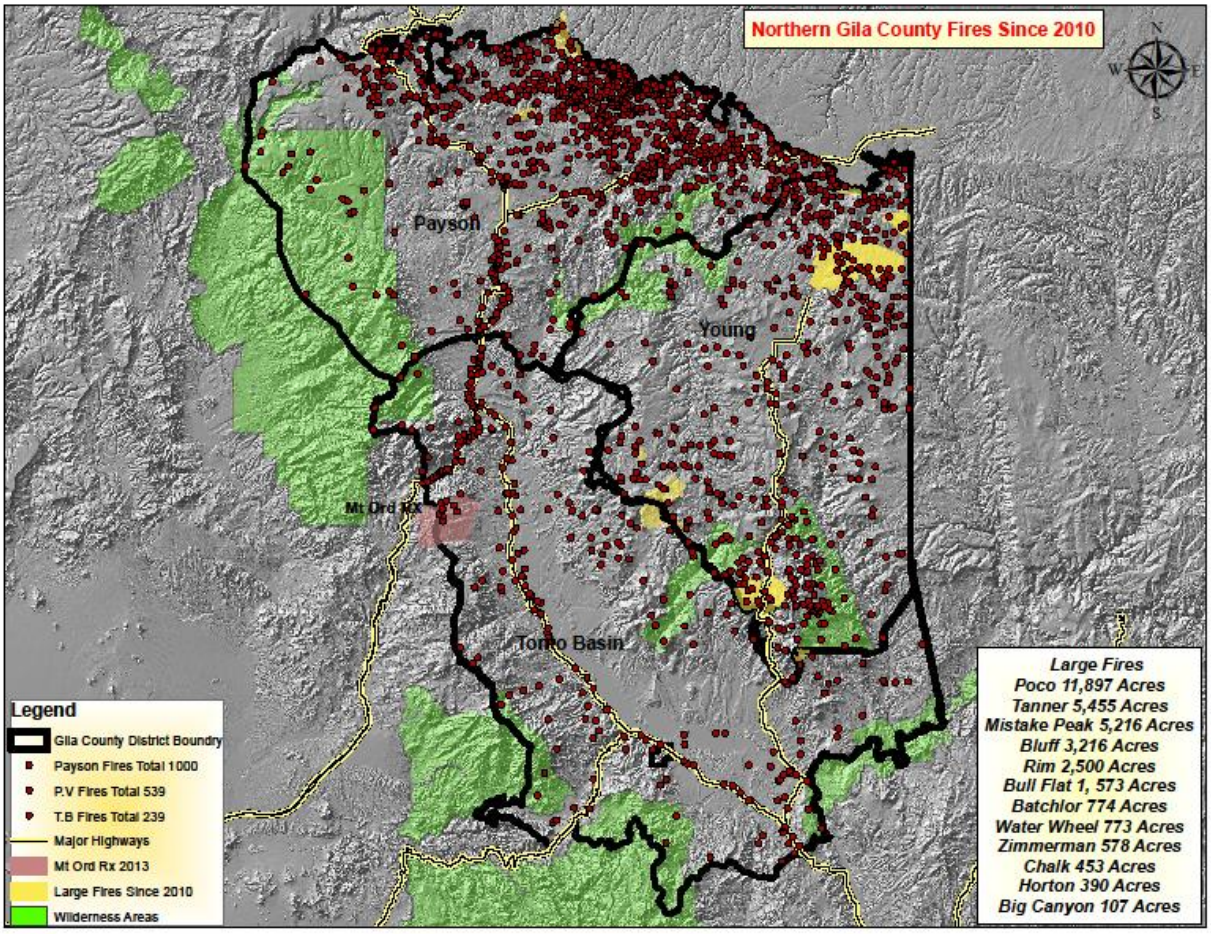
In partnership with Gila County agencies, the Northern Arizona Chapter's initial response activities will focus on meeting the urgent needs of disaster victims i.e., providing emergency shelter. The provisions of the ARC disaster services will be considered based on the needs of disaster victims, the emergency/disaster situation, and available resources. Close coordination will be necessary between the ARC and local, state and federal government agencies.

Another function of the Red Cross is to assist communities in preparation for natural and manmade disasters such as wildfires, floods, and earthquakes. The Red Cross also provides educational programs including the Home Fire Preparedness Campaign and Pillowcase Project which help community members before, during and after an emergency.

L. Arizona Department of Transportation

The Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) has an important role in fuel management activities along highways 87 and 260. Current fire activity maps demonstrate the need for fuels work along these roadways. ADOT crews have been active mowing along the right-of-way on both highways. The map below clearly shows the fires starting along the two major highways bisecting Northern Gila County and the importance of roadway maintenance. On Highway 260, a 20-foot clearance is being maintained on both sides of the roadway. On Highway 188, the goal is to maintain annually the sections where the majority of fires are starting. The route was mowed in 2014, but funding is not available for 2015 for the project. Spraying of roadside vegetation is coordinated with the Arizona Natural Resources Department, for 2015 a treatment goal is 50% coverage of vegetation on Highway 188 from milepost 214 to milepost 276 is planned. All project work is accomplished through the Department's annual budget.

Map 8. Roadside Fire Starts in Northern Gila County Since 2010



M. Arizona Public Service (APS)

Arizona Public Service (APS) is Arizona's largest and longest-serving electric company, founded in 1886, 5 years after Tombstone's gunfight at the OK Corral and nearly a quarter-century before Arizona became a state. The goal of APS is to create affordable and reliable electricity for more than 1.1 million retail and residential customers in 11 of Arizona's 15 counties. The corporate vision is to create a sustainable energy future for Arizona.

APS has added the position of Fire Mitigation Specialist, who will be participating with fire districts/departments in creating a safe energy supply. The Fire Mitigation Specialist (FMS) will be the point of contact for incidents either weather related or fires, when APS infrastructure is involved or threatened. The role of the FMS will be one of working with Incident Management Teams (IMT) to ensure the safety of personnel and resources on the ground with both clear and timely information and oversight. Coordinating with the IMT will ensure that APS resources are considered in the planning and operations phases of incidents.

The FMS will also work on the pole clearing project which will require significant communication and coordination with State, Local, and Federal agencies. The FMS will be supporting the integrated Vegetation Management (IVM) projects occurring throughout the State. A key function will be supporting ASF's vegetation management efforts. Further cooperation with ASF and the USFS will include fire prevention activities as well as the possible use of prescribed fire to reduce fuel loading around company assets.

APS is moving forward with an extensive pole clearing project in 2015 with the goal of clearing vegetation under approximately 75,000 poles on a three year cycle. On a yearly basis, APS will be clearing approximately 30,000 poles per year. APS is also researching the possibility of purchasing equipment that could be used to pre-treat poles in advance of a fire.

N. Arizona State Forestry Department

The Arizona State Forestry Division (ASFD) provides resources for the prevention and suppression of wildland fires on over 22 million acres of State Trust Lands and private property located outside incorporated communities. ASFD provides services for fire prevention, urban and community forestry, forest stewardship, forest health, and has a wide variety of grants available[6]. Fire prevention efforts include helping communities learn about Firewise activities and youth education. Northern Gila County currently has eight communities that have been designated as "Firewise" with other communities in the adoption process. ASFD also hosts a two-day class on home safety assessments. Other fire prevention activities include granting funds to communities to reduce the hazardous fuels within and around communities and private lands and on State Trust Lands.

- The State Forestry Department also acquires used fire apparatus and equipment, refurbishes the equipment and then transfers the title to rural fire districts/departments.
- The Forest Stewardship program offers forest land owners guidance and assistance with management plans.

The ASFD also provides grant opportunities to help communities reduce hazardous fuels, and acquire apparatus and supplies for firefighters including wildland personal protective equipment (PPE). The grant focus is on opportunities for cost sharing with urban communities. A high priority for grant funding includes the community adoption of Firewise standards and on projects that are "Community" focused rather than on individual projects that stand alone. Due to the continued drought, reduced snowfall, and warmer than usual spring conditions in 2015, an increase in ignitions is again predicted. For 2015, State Forestry crews will possibly be located within Gila County for fuel mitigation activities.

[6] https://azsf.az.gov/what-we-do-0

O. Gila County Office of Emergency Management

The Gila County Office of Emergency Management (GCOEM) centralizes the direction and control of the planning, coordination and management of disaster preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery. According to SARA (Superfund Amendments Reauthorization Act) Title II, emergency management agencies must develop emergency response plans for hazardous materials incidents. These requirements led the EM agencies to create response plans that deal with any type of emergency that might occur within their planning area. The GCOEM has developed or is the process of developing emergency response plans for activities including wildfires, floods, and hazardous materials spills. The goal of all response plans is to minimize the risk to the public.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) defines hazard mitigation as, "any sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to life and property from natural hazards." Another way to understand hazard mitigation is as the prevention component of the emergency management process.

- Preparedness activities are the emergency plans, training, drills, and exercises that individuals, communities and first responders participate in on almost daily basis. These are things done to get ready for an emergency or disaster before it happens.
- Response is the short-term, emergency actions taken to address the immediate impacts of a hazard.
- Recovery is the longer-term process of restoring the community back to normal or pre-disaster conditions.
- Mitigation activities are actions that will prevent or eliminate losses, even if an incident does occur. Mitigation can reduce or eliminate the need for an emergency response and greatly reduce the recovery period.

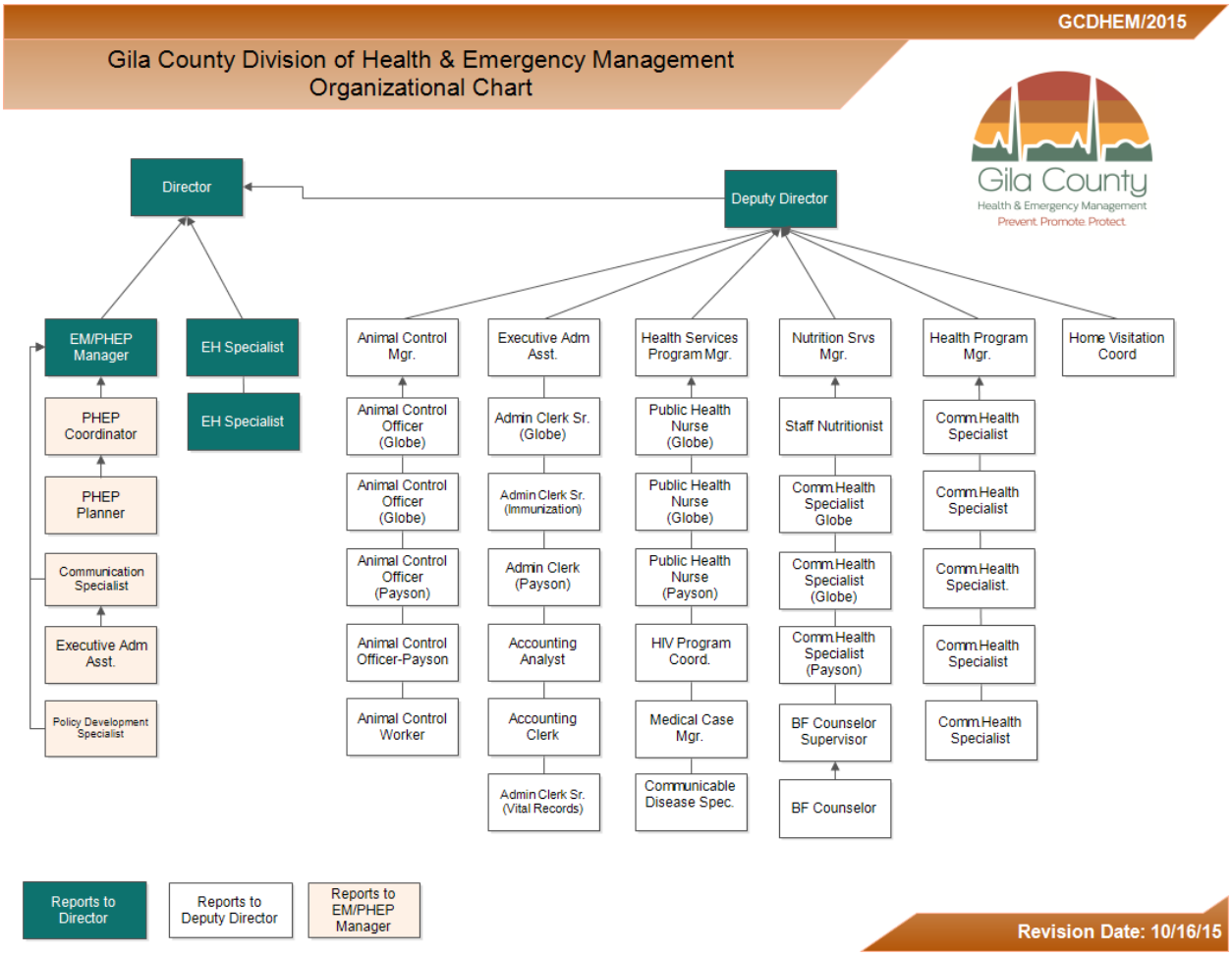
The role of the GCOEM is to:

- Act as the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) coordinator
- Develop, review and update Emergency Response Plans
- Serve as a Communications Specialist during EOC operations

EOC Activation

The Gila County Emergency Operations Center is activated based on information supplied to the Office of Emergency Management by Incident Commanders in the field. At the same time, information will be collected by emergency dispatch centers and relayed to the Emergency

Management Office. The Director of Emergency Management will then determine the need to open the EOC based on the complexity and needs of field personnel.



The role of the County EOC will be one of facilitating the orders from Incident Commanders. During an EOC activation, using the Web EOC platform, orders will be filled first from resources available from within the County. Neighboring Counties will be able to view the Web EOC event and the State will be notified. If the County is unable to fill a request from field personnel, neighboring Counties will be contacted. If orders are still unfilled from the neighboring Counties, the State will then attempt to fill orders from the field personnel.

Other roles filled by the Office of Emergency Management include:

- Serving as the Training Coordinator for First Responders in the county.
- Developing and maintaining the Emergency Alert System (EAS), coordinating and monitoring countywide radio frequencies used for the EAS.

P. Gila County Public Works Division, Road Maintenance Department

The Gila County Public Works Division Road Maintenance Department is responsible for the improvement and maintenance of the County Maintained Road System. The Department's primary goal is to provide a safe and accessible road system to move citizens and commodities around the county. The Department assists other agencies in responding to emergencies such as vegetation fires. The Road Maintenance Department maintains seven water tenders available for emergency water supplies during initial attack operations. The water tenders are also used to fill and maintain the water bladders placed throughout the county which are designated for emergency use only.

Q. Gila County Sheriff's Office-Northern Gila County (Payson)

The Gila County Sheriff's Office supports programs and partnerships that assist the community and add to the security, as well as the enjoyment, of living in Gila County. The Sheriff's Office monitors road conditions and is responsible for community evacuations during wildfires. The Gila County Sheriff's Office of Volunteer Organizations may be utilized to assist in situations such as road closures during wildfires. The Sheriff's Office maintains an up-to-date list of evacuations routes throughout the County. Currently, no changes in evacuation routes are planned.

Volunteer Groups in the Gila County Sheriff's Office include:

- Payson Posse
- Mounted Posse
- Tonto Search and Rescue
- Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)

R. North Gila County Community Emergency Response Team

The North Gila County Community Emergency Response Team (NGCC) is a community based volunteer organization operating under the authority of the Gila County Sheriff's Office. Made up of over 40 volunteers, NGCC provides information to citizens about local hazards. Volunteers are trained in basic skills to prepare their community and stay safe when professional responders are not available. NGCC members are able to help themselves and others before, during, and after a disaster.

Vital services provided by NGCC include:

- Responding to emergencies and providing much needed service and support to first responders and community members.
- Members assist in the Emergency Operations Center by staffing the reception area, maintaining check-in/check-out of EOC personnel, and completing After Action Reports (AAR).
- CERT members assist law enforcement in providing traffic control during high traffic conditions.
- Light Search and Rescue along with basic first aid to community members.

The North Gila County CERT recently received from the Gila County Emergency Management Office a refurbished command and control trailer equipped with multiple radio systems and a backup generator, enabling NGCC to utilize the trailer for various county emergencies and community events.

NGCC also provides support to area hospital/health care facilities during evacuation and disaster exercises.

S. Payson Police Department

The Payson Police Department (PPD) is the primary law enforcement agency for the town of Payson and its 15,500 residents. The Payson Police Department is responsible for criminal and traffic enforcement duties within the Town of Payson. During wildfire emergencies, the PPD is responsible for community evacuations of residents in coordination with Payson Fire Department.

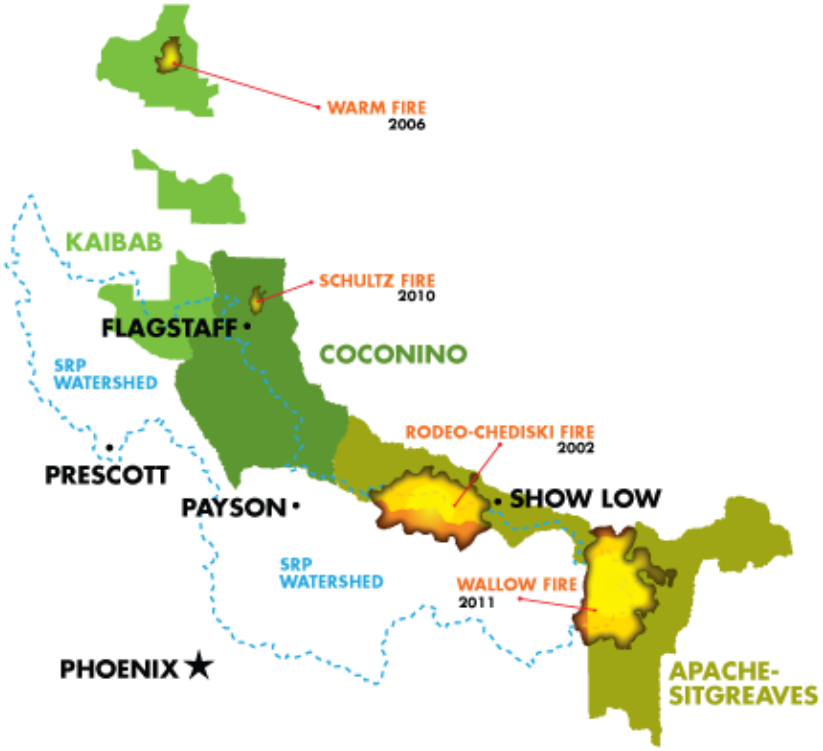
Evacuation routes are pre-planned and permanently mapped and on file with the Town of Payson. These evacuation plans are incorporated in the Town's Emergency Operation plan. Evacuation Centers are pre-determined and agreements are currently in place with the identified establishments. Yearly, the staff of the Payson Police Department is trained on the evacuation procedures and the plans are exercised.

The Payson Police Department also works closely with the Gila County Sheriff's Office and the Arizona Department of Public Safety with evacuation procedures and emergency traffic control resulting from a wildfire within various jurisdictions.

T. Salt River Project (SRP)

The Salt River Project (SRP) is the oldest multipurpose federal reclamation project in the United States, serving central Arizona since 1903. SRP is one of the nation's largest public power utilities, providing electricity and water to more than 2 million people in Central Arizona. The goal of SRP is to: "Develop working relationships with local residents, organizations and community leaders which helps SRP provide the infrastructure needed to meet service area power and water needs.[7]" SRP infrastructure in Gila County consists mainly of high-voltage transmission lines including 500kV, 230kV and 115kV lines. Each power line siting corridor is maintained for fire safety with various fuel modification work as required.

The SRP has begun to recognize the need for a fuels modification program, especially around the C.C. Cragin Reservoir, to maintain a healthy forest which provides for clean water and a sustained source for electrical power generation. Since 2002, more than a quarter of SRP's watershed was burned by megafires such as the Rodeo-Chediski and Wallow fires.



Four Forest Restoration Initiative

The first efforts to address the issue on a widespread scale began with the signing of a 2011 agreement that launched the Four Forest Restoration Initiative – a U.S. Forest Service-endorsed plan to thin 50,000 acres of forest annually for 20 years across the Tonto, Coconino, Apache-Sitgreaves and Kaibab national forests. SRP is working with numerous groups including the

[7] http://www.srpnet.com/menu/About/generalinformation.aspx

National Forest Foundation, the U.S. Forest Service, the Ecological Restoration Institute at Northern Arizona University, the Nature Conservancy, the state Forestry Department and private industry to seek joint solutions.

SECTION III: COMMUNITY MITIGATION PLAN

This section of the NGCCWPP identifies a set of priorities for mitigating the threat of a major fire in Northern part of the County. The Review Team identified areas where wildland fuels treatments would reduce the threat of wildland fires in the WUI. The Team also attempted to create a list of completed fuels treatment projects. Other topics reviewed in this section include recommendations for improved wildland fire response, improved community safety, and educational and public information opportunities.

The definition of mitigation used by the Team was adopted from a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) publication. "The purpose of mitigation planning is to identify policies and actions that can be implemented over the long term to reduce risk and future losses. A Mitigation Plan forms the foundation for a community's long-term strategy to reduce disaster losses and break the cycle of disaster damage, reconstruction, and repeated damage. The planning process is as important as the plan itself. It creates a framework for risk-based decision making to reduce damages to lives, property, and the economy from future disasters[8]."

A. Fuel Reducation Activities and Priorities

A primary goal of the of the 2015 Review Team of the Northern Gila County CWPP (NGCCWPP) is to analyze the completed fuels mitigation treatments, determine areas where treatments are not continuous across property boundaries and develop methods of completing untreated fuels spaces in the various communities. Several communities and the Forest Service have been active in fuels treatment programs including large areas around Payson, Pine, Strawberry and Whispering Pines. The Forest Service has been active in planning Fuels Assessment Areas throughout the NGCCWPP planning area. A priority for utility providers is to develop and maintain safe utility corridors through public and private lands. Removing hazardous fuels from utility right-of-way improves the safety of the public, improved service reliability and decreased wildfire ignitions.

Based on the completed fuels treatment projects, community risk assessment and fire history, the 2015 Review Team developed a set of priorities for further treatment projects. Factors considered in setting these priorities included: acreage, community involvement, cost, ability to tie-in uncompleted sections around communities and completed environmental assessments. Other factors considered include community infrastructure, high value assets, and historically significant resources.

[8] https://www.fema.gov/multi-hazard-mitigation-planning

Completed Forest Service and Community Fuels Reduction Projects

Myrtle AA	Completed in 2012, 17,846 acres
Parallel RX	Area burned during Poce Fire during 2013. Mitigation work to begin in 2015

Fuels Reduction Projects in Planning Stage

The Tonto National Forest has completed the analysis work on seven separate analysis areas. The chart below lists the Analysis Area and proposed type of work and the communities affected by the project.

Project Name	Acreage Covered	Burning Acres	Mechanical Rx	Community
Verde EA	46,688	18,638	10,091	Whispering Pines, Rimtrail, Geronimo Estates, Shadow Rim GSA Camp, Washington Park, Geronimo BSA Camp
Lion EA	9,847	5,074	2,913	Thompson Draw I, Bear flats, Kohls Ranch, Little Green Valley
Chamberlain EA	21,164	4,000	1,890	Ponderosa Springs, Colcord Estates
Christopher/ Hunter EA	30,237	8,696	8,742	Hunter Ck., Christopher Ck., Gordon Canyon, Kohls Ranch
Pine/ Strawberry EA	72,447	9,940	15,793	Pine, Strawberry, Randell Place, Arrowhead
Payson EA	68,242	10, 480	20,020	Payson, Bear Vly., Mesa del Cab, Flowing Springs, East Verde Estates, Oxbow, Round Valley, Gisela
Myrtle EA	37,515	4,520	1794	Bonita Ck., Ellison Ck., La Cienga, Diamond Point, Summer Homes, Tonto Village, Long Ranch, Meade Ranch, Zane grey
4FRI Boundary	4,000 acres/year	3,000	1,000	Will include all communities with the exception of Gisela

Once the hazardous fuels have been reduced, the committee will determine the frequency of maintenance work required on the treatment areas. In addition, each treatment area will have recommended treatment methods. Developing a maintenance plan is a key to the long-term

success of the treatment projects. Based on Code 550 of the National Conservation Practice Standards, mitigation work on completed firebreaks should be on a rotating 2- to -3 year interval, or as deemed necessary to ensure that the firebreak will continue to provide a measure of safety for the community. The regular removal of highly flammable grasses and light shrub material, will help maintain the fuelbreaks. The Pine Strawberry Fuels Reduction purchased native grass seed to replace invasive species reducing the cost of maintaining the firebreaks around their community. If no maintenance work is completed, fuels will return to their previous pre-treated condition endangering the safety of the public and firefighters.

Community Treatment Areas/Projects

Many of the communities in the Northern planning area have been able to complete fuels treatment projects using grant funds and locally provided funds.

Community	Project Discription	Funding	Year
Pine Strawberry	Brush Removal/Fuel Break Maint.	Private Funds	2006
Pine Strawberry	Native Grass Seed Purchase	Private Funds	2008
Pine Strawberry	Fuel Break Maintenance	Private Funds	2015
Arrowhead Estates	70 acres fuel break constructed & 25 acres cleared		
Lomia Campground	200 acre brush clearance		
Beaver Valley	Brush Pits		Ongoing
Christopher Kohls	318 acres treated/90 acres planned	Grant Funds	
Payson	80 acres treated/60 acres planned/ 250 total community Rx	Resource Advisory Committee Grant	2008
Hellsgate	429 acres cleared of brush	Grant Funds	2012

B. Prevention and Loss Mitigation

The Northern Gila County CWPP will continue to be used as a resource for preventing potential catastrophic wildfire events. Interagency coordination is essential and the CWPP will provide

guidance in improving the safety of the at-risk communities in the planning area. The 2004 Core Team set several goals for wildland prevention and fireloss mitigation. The 2015 Review Team reviewed these initial measures and made the folowing recommendations:

- Continue to improve fire suppression capabilities, including training, apparatus, and equipement, creating safer firefighting conditions
- Improve area-wide communications including dispatching of units, radio communications, cell-phone coverage and the use of mobile repeaters
- Continue to promote community collaboration, involvement in individual and community fuels reduction projects
- Preserve the aesthetics of the interface areas while improving wildlife habitat
- Identify funding needs and opportunities, attempt regional approaches to grant funding requests where possible
- Continue to inform the community on the safest means of protecting the property from the effects of wildfire

The US Forest Service is making changes in wildfire suppression policy on Federal lands. Allowing naturally occurring fires to be monitored rather than immediately suppressed will allow the return of more natural fuel conditions and reducing suppression costs. Factors such as fire weather conditions, topography, fuel conditions and other fire suppression activities will help determine the response and actions taken on wildland ignitions. Human caused fires will continue to be suppressed at the lowest possible cost.

When the Core Team addressed the safety of the communities covered by the old "Rim Country CWPP," they set three Urban priorities: Fire Prevention, Fire Protection, and Evacuation of communities. The adoption of Firewise standards and having landowners meet the standards listed in the Firewise Communities Program has improved the safety of many of the communities in Gila County. "The Firewise Communities/USA Recognition Program is a process that empowers neighbors to work together in reducing their wildfire risk… taking action and ownership in preparing and protecting their homes against the threat of wildfire.[9]" The Arizona State Forestry Department administers the Firewise certification program. The program encourages local solutions for wildfire safety by involving homeowners, community leaders, planners, developers, firefighters, and others. The 2015 CWPP Review Team was tasked creating a list of Firewise Communities and monitoring their activities.

[9] http://firewise.org/usa-recognition-program.aspx?sso=0

Fire District/Department	Firewise Community
Beaver Valley	Beaver Valley
Hellsgate	Bear Flats, Pine Ridge, Summer Home, Thompson Draw I & II
Houston Mesa	Freedom Acres, Wonder Valley
Payson	Chaparral Pines, East Verde Park, Elk Ridge, Manzanita Ranch, Rim Club
Whispering Pines	Bonita Creek

Many of the fire departments and fire districts have been able to increase staffing, improve training and PPE supplies, and to decrease response times through mergers and the development of automatic and mutual aid agreements. Additional apparatus has been purchased, and water bladders have been filled and placed in strategic locations for firefighting purposes to improve firefighter resources and safety. Several of the fire districts/departments have been able to improve their ISO ratings which demonstrates their commitment to improving the level of service in these communities. Continued improvement in personnel qualifications and training, apparatus response levels, and other fire protection measures will be monitored by each agency and a report will be developed annually or as set by the Northern Gila County Fire Chiefs and other individuals. With input from utility providers, the members should also monitor improvements in utility corridor safety as the companies undertake specific safety measures. Each of these measures has helped with mitigating the risk of wildfire spreading into their communities and must be recorded and studied for future planning meetings.

Community evacuation plans and routes are a key element in community safety. Communicating the location of shelter areas for humans and animals, evacuation routes and programs such as "Ready-Set-Go" are critical in protecting the community and its members. Methods of communicating with weekend and holiday visitors to each community must be developed.[10]

C. Regional Agreements

Gila County Fire Agencies "Mutual Aid Agreement"

The purpose of the Gila County Fire Agencies Mutual Aid agreement is to provide a mechanism for the dispatch of personnel and equipment from the area serviced by one agency to the area serviced by any other agency … "to provide additional fire, EMS, or other emergency services in the event of emergency situations in each part of the areas served by the Agencies.[11]" Agencies who signed the agreement did so with the understanding that agencies would not charge for

[10] Safety-signs.compliance signs.com
[11] http://paysonaz.gov/Council/agendas/2010/04-15-10-A/G3-Res2546-GilaCoFireMutualAidAgmnt.pdf

their services, except for expendable supplies, and would be coordinated with the Arizona Department of Forestry and the U.S. Forest Service. Agencies would not be at fault for not being able to respond outside of the jurisdiction due to substantial reason including reduced response capabilities, staffing shortages and high call volume in their own area.

Arizona "Fire Service Mutual Aid Plan"

Signed by the Arizona Governor in 2010, the "Fire Service Mutual Aid Plan (FSMAP) is the initial activation and mobilization plan prior to a declaration of emergency. This plan is also intended to complement the State of Arizona Emergency Response and Recovery Plan (SERRP)."

The Fire Service Mutual Aid Plan "supports the concepts of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and multi-hazard response planning. Arizona's fire service conducts emergency operations planning at four (4) levels: Local, Tribal, County and State.[12]"

Phoenix Fire Department Regional Dispatch Center (PFDRDC) will act as the Intermediary and facilitator for resource requests and deployment documentation until the Incident City's and/or County's EOC is activated and operational. Once the local EOC is operational, all requests for resources will be processed through the applicable EOC.

Payson Interagency Dispatch Agreement

The Payson Public Safety Dispatch Center provides dispatch services for the Payson Police Department, Payson Fire Department and the Hellsgate Fire District. In addition, the Communications Center handles 911 and public calls for assistance.

[12] https://www.iafc.org/files/mtlAid_StatePlanAZ.pdf's

SECTION IV: NORTHERN GILA COUNTY CWPP PRIORITIES: RECOMMENDED ACTIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION

The 2015 Review Team monitored changes in wildfire suppression policy on Federal lands where Federal policy allows the return of natural fire to areas where fuel conditions have returned to a more normal fuel condition. Human caused fires will continue to be suppressed at the lowest possible cost while natural occuring fires may be monitored and managed with the goal of returning public lands to historic conditions where possible. Factors such as fire weather conditions, topography, fuel conditions and other fire suppression activities will help determine the response and actions taken on wildland ignitions.

The 2015 Review Team set a goal for the private lands in the CWPP planning area to have landowners meet the standards listed in the Firewise Communities Program. "The Firewise Communities/USA Recognition Program is a process that empowers neighbors to work together in reducing their wildfire risk… taking action and ownership in preparing and protecting their homes against the threat of wildfire."[13] The Arizona State Forestry Department administers the Firewise certification program. "The program encourages local solutions for wildfire safety by involving homeowners, community leaders, planners, developers, firefighters, and others."

The 2015 CWPP Review Team was tasked with reviewing the action recommendations developed by the "Core Team" during the Northern Gila County CWPP writing process in 2004 and 2006 update. The 2004 Core Team created a series of action recommendations with three main priorities: identify priority treatment areas, reduce structural ignitability and finally, promote community involvement. During the review process, the Review Team analyzed treatment areas, utility projects designed to reduce the potential of ignition, community programs and community response changes made by fire districts/departments, activities of both governmental agencies and community groups.

Fire Districts, Fire Departments, and government agencies have been addressing the WUI issues in the Northern Gila County CWPP planning area for approximately 11 years. During this time, grants have been used to purchase equipment, fund local fuels mitigation projects and meet matching fund requirements of federal grants. Federal funds have been used to complete environmental assessments and completion of fuels mitigation projects. State funds have been used to improve the safety of communities throughout the Rim Country. Continued federal, state and local partnerships will be critical in improving the safety of the Wildland Urban Interface communities.

[13] http://firewise.org/usa-recognition-program.aspx?sso=0

Recommendations:

- Create an accounting method of grant funds received.
- Create a method of tracking fuels mitigation projects.
- Seek opportunities for regional grant funding requests.
- Provide digitized maps to the community illustrating fuels mitigation projects.

Public Education and Communications

Fire districts, fire departments, government agencies, and community groups are involved with presenting fire safe programs in the community. Many communities have adopted Firewise suggestions and have been certified as Firewise communities. One of the common factors seen with public awareness is fatigue, when memory of recent local fires diminishes, public awareness and focus on preventing wildfires and structural ignitions becomes less important in members daily lives. Providing a standard message to all communities involved would be invaluable. A message that combines the values of community life, property value, the importance of the ecosystem they live in and the need for fire safety will greatly increase the acceptance of the message.

Recommendations:

Communicate the CWPP report to all members of the community through the:

- Continued use of home surveys with recommended mitigation measures.
- Define levels of risk and hazards for community members and visitors.
- Emphasize the value of fuel reduction programs.
- Creation of fire suppression capabilities in all communities.
- Value to the environment and wildlife in the use of prescribed fires and fuels management programs.
- Use of Firewise and related educational materials to increase homeowner acceptance of homeowner preparedness.
- Complete activation of community alert system.
- Utilize community resources to communicate messages in day-to-day and emergency activities.
- Create links to Arizona State Lands Department, Arizona Fish and Game Department, USDA Forest Service, Firewise, Gila County Office of Emergency Management, APS and SRP, Red Cross, and other relevant agency homepages.

Fire District/Department Response Functions

The Fire Departments and Fire Districts within the Northern Gila County Community Wildfire Protection Plan coverage area are involved with wildfire suppression and provide automatic and mutual aid to neighboring districts/departments and the US Forest Service. The departments provide structural firefighting, EMS, rescue in addition to wildland firefighting. Personnel should be trained to meet the qualification as required by the Federal Interagency Fire Program Management (IFPM) and NWCG.

Recommendations:

Basic Level Training:

- S-130/190
- S-215 Fire in the Interface
- I-200 Basic ICS

Burn Boss:

Having a qualified Burn Boss will address the need for local communities who are required to have a qualified Burn Boss for community projects that require burning.

- Rx 319
- Rx 341
- Rx 410
- RxB2

Supervisory Training:

- S-290 Intermediate Wildland Fire behavior
- I-300 Intermediate ICS

Specialized Training:

- Firewise
- Fire Prevention and Education
- US Forest Service should continue to facilitate the training of local fire district/department members. Joint pre-planning and pre-season training should be held on weekends to facilitate attendance by volunteer firefighters.
- Possible weekend prescribed fire events:
    - Increased opportunities for fire district/department participation in training

- Require adherence to National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) standards
- Encourage the use of task books to facilitate position certification, provide Training Tech/Specialist to increase opportunities
- Expand firefighting opportunities to local firefighters beyond structural defense and protection activities

Arizona State Forestry Training:

- Develop relationship with State Forester, and acquaint Forester with community hazards and needs.
- Improve local and state-wide funding for training
- Improve access to State training classes

Countywide Communications System

Currently in the County, there are several communication centers providing emergency dispatch to local fire agencies. Agencies may be dispatched by the County Sheriff's Office Communications Center, Payson Police and Fire Dispatch Center, and/or Globe Dispatch Center, while federal and State agencies utilize their own communications centers.

Recommendations:

Dispatching of emergency responders to emergencies should be accomplished so that all units respond to emergencies in the quickest and safest manner. The continued use and development of Regional Communications Centers will eliminate much of the delay and confusion caused by having more than one Communication Center involved with dispatching units to the same emergency call.

Equipment

Firefighters are equipped with specialized structural firefighting personal protective equipment (PPE) which is not functional in the wildland firefighting environment. Personnel must carry both structural and wildland PPE on their assigned apparatus so that they are wearing the safest and most appropriate PPE.

Recommendations:

1. All PPE must meet the specifications listed in NFPA® 1977, Standard on Protective Clothing and Equipment for Wildland Fire Fighting, 2011 Edition. The standard establishes requirements for protective clothing and equipment to protect against the adverse environmental effects encountered by personnel performing wildland firefighting operations.

- Equipment covered in the standard includes garments, helmets, gloves, footwear, goggles, chainsaw protection and load carrying equipment.

2. Adoption of standardized hose and water supply fittings will enable the usage of equipment from all apparatus improving the safety of firefighters on the fireline. Hose and fittings that do not meet the adopted standards will need to purchase adapters which can be permanently placed on needed hose and appliances to meet national standards. Once standards are adopted and all fire districts/departments meet the standards, a Zone or Regional fire cache of standardized hose, appliances and equipment could be established at a central location.
    - Increases the opportunity to catch fires in the initial attack phase of operations.
    - Improves firefighter safety by decreasing time on the firelines where water is not available.

Community Evacuation Management

Many of the communities in the study area are at an increased risk due to the limited ingress and egress routes. There are several communities in the NGCCWPP area that have only one primary road in and out of the community. Other areas have roads with limited width and bridges with limited carrying capacity. With limited access, a critical delay in emergency vehicles making access to the community while members attempt to evacuate will delay resources entering and increasing the risk to community members and their homes.

Fuels management projects along community roads may not be feasible due to limited easement right-of-way. Mowing of fuels along these critical roadways may be possible and provide an increased measure of safety.

Community Staging Areas

With limited means of access and egress to several communities, the location and use of Temporary Shelter Areas (TSA) should be considered. TSA are designed for the use of the public only and do not meet the requirements of Safety Zones which are required for firefighting personnel. These TSA are pre-designated community locations large enough to accommodate a number of citizens. Livestock should be moved to other pre-designated location such as rodeo arenas. Signs should be placed in the community directing community members and visitors to the TSA. Evacuation routes should be marked with standardized signs. Local fire districts/departments and land owners should meet and determine the most suitable location in their communities for TSA.

Recommendations:

- Signs and placards should be posted throughout the community making evacuation corridors and TSA locations. This will provide a constant message to community members and during an evacuation or sheltering emergency, reduce confusion. For visitors to Rim Country communities, signage and radio messages will provide a means of communicating lifesaving messages. [14]
- Signs should be mounted on non-flammable posts.
- Fuels in sheltering locations should be maintained by mowing, plowing or other methods.

Ready! Set! Go!

Wildfire Education Campaign

Ready! Set! Go! (RSG)[15] is a public safety message designed to educate Gila County residents about the threat of wildfire. The Ready Set Go public education program seeks to gain active public involvement in reducing life and property loss caused by wildfires. This program is presented in three steps:

Ready! Prepare yourself, your family and your property.
Set! Monitor fire weather / Activity and prepare to evacuate.
Go! Leave early when directed to by public safety officials.

Ready:

Begins with a house that firefighters can defend, Defensible Space, and a home or business that has been hardened to resist the ember wash that follows a wildfire.

- *Defensible space is an area provided around a home or other structure which provides firefighters with space or room to protect the structure from direct flame contact and reduces the potential of ember wash over the structure.*
- *A hardened home is a structure where measures have been taken to reduce the impact of wildfire and blowing members. Measures such as covering gable vents, lowering roof ventilation opening to a minimum profile, enclosing soffits and in extreme cases, providing ember protection walls around a property.*

[14] Safety-signs.compliancesigns.com
[15] http://www.sbcfire.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/Ready_Set_Go.pdf

Set:
Requires homeowners to develop an evacuation plan, prepare the family for evacuation and understanding what to do when a fire approaches.

Go Early:
Making an evacuation kit helps prepare residents in leaving early. It helps identify key safety items including:

- When to leave
- Where to go
- How to get there
- What to take

Shelter in Place
Shelter in-place (SIP) means to remain inside a home, business, or other permanent building. Shelter in-place may be recommended when there is not enough time to evacuate. It is imperative that structures be mitigated to provide this option.

Note: Shelter–In-Place is not a widely recommended strategy, however, a few communities may require Shelter-In-Place due to limited egress, location of fire and the fire situation may dictate consideration of SIP as a possible tactic.

Recommendations:
The following is suggested public education elements to be provided to all potential "shelter in-place" communities:

- If you are outdoors, go inside immediately.
- Bring pets inside if possible but do not risk your safety for your pets.
- Turn on a local Emergency Alert System radio or television station for official information.
- Close all windows, doors, and vents.
- Turn off heaters, air conditioners, and exhaust fans.
- Close as many internal doors as possible and move to the most central, windowless, above-ground room in the building.
- Wet towels, plastic sheeting, or an airtight material can be used to seal gaps where smoke could enter the room.

- Do not attempt to pick up children from school or day care until directed to do so. School officials plan to care for children in emergencies, and they may already be evacuated, or sheltered. (Before an emergency occurs, learn about emergency plans at schools or day care centers.)
- Stay inside until officials say it is safe to leave.

SECTION V: NORTHERN GILA COUNTY CWPP MONITORING PLAN

Public meetings and a public comment period were incorporated into the 2004 Rim County CWPP process to provide the opportunity for wide-spread participation and input. Comments and input were solicited from stakeholders. The final draft of the 2004 CWPP was formally adopted by the Core Team, comprised of representatives from the local fire districts/departments, Gila County, USDA Forest Service, Arizona State Forestry Department and several community groups.

The HFRA requires adoption of a CWPP, as does the FEMA Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000. With formal adoption of this plan by the 2004 Core Team, the Town of Payson and the communities of Northern Gila County were eligible for hazardous fuels and non-fuels mitigation funding that could assist with plan implementation. Furthermore, adoption of this plan highlighted the partnerships among fire stations, local government, community-based organizations, and public agencies.

The success of any CWPP hinges on effective and long-term implementation of identified mitigation practices. It was recommended in the 2004 CWPP that the Core Team identify a Team to coordinate the recommendations of the CWPP. In 2006, a Review Team met and discussed the two-year implementation process of the CWPP. When the Review Team met in 2015, it was clear that a team would be needed to maintain accurate records of grant funding, projects, community changes and emergency resources. The magnitude of the wildfire risks and hazards facing Northern Gila County is significant and any effective reduction requires on-going commitment and collaboration to implement the treatments recommended in this CWPP.

"Monitoring is an extremely difficult component of the CWPP process to maintain. It is crucial to determining which methods and initiatives are successful. For monitoring, a simple series of annual photographs from designated photo points may prove helpful. If larger treatments are undertaken, a more formal protocol of pretreatment and post-treatment measurements should be adopted. All projects should be recorded and records kept in a single designated location.[16]" In addition to coordinating the recommended actions in the CWPP, the involved stakeholders should coordinate the monitoring efforts to evaluate the efficacy of treatments. Specific monitoring duties can be delegated by the Review Team. The CWPP should be reexamined on an annual or regular basis to ensure its relevance. This may be accomplished through meetings which include the local fire districts/departments, governmental agencies, homeowner groups, and other stakeholders.

[16] http://www.cityofgolden.net/media/pdf_719.pdf

For the 2015 Northern Gila County CWPP, the Review Team agrees:

- The following group(s) should maintain the document and record of projects and initiatives: Gila County Office of Emergency Management and the Northern Gila County Fire Chief Association.
- The CWPP will be reviewed on an annual basis during the annual wildfire pre-season meeting held each year during the spring.
- The Gila County Office of Emergency Management will facilitate a website based recording method for fire districts/departments and agencies. Each fire district/department or agency will record changes in items such as:
    - Staffing
    - Stations
    - Apparatus
    - Training
    - Grant funds applied for and obtained
    - Mitigation projects completed and treatment type/activities
- Each fire district/department or agency will enter specific data on their own spreadsheet and at the designated meeting, discuss identified changes.
- The Gila County Office of Emergency Management will collate the data and add as an addendum to the CWPP each year's area-wide changes.

APPENDIX A: ACRONYMS

Acronym	Term
4FRI	4 Forest Restoration Initiative
AAR	After Action Report
ADOT	Arizona Department of Transportation
APS	Arizona Public Services
ARC	American Red Cross
ASFD	Arizona State Forestry Division
BIA	Bureau of Indian Affairs
BLM	United States Bureau of Land Management
CERT	Community Emergency Response Team
CKFD	Christopher-Kohls Fire District
CPR	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
CWPP	Community Wildfire Protection Plan
DEMA	(Arizona) Division of Emergency Management
DPS	(Arizona) Department of Safety
EA	Environmental Assessment
EAS	Emergency Alert System
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EM	Emergency Management
EMS	Emergency Medical Service
EMT	Emergency Management Training
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
ESRI	Environmental Systems Research Institute
FD	Fire District/Department
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FF	Fire Fighter

FMS	Fire Mitigation Specialist
FSMAP	Fire Service Mutual Aid Plan
GCOEM	Gila County Office of Emergency Management
GIO	Air National Guard Geo Integration Office
GIS	Geographic Information System
GPS	Global Positioning System
HFRA	Healthy Forests Restoration Act
ICS	Incident Command System
IFPM	(Federal) Interagency Fire Program Management
IGA	Intergovernmental Agreement
IMS	Incident Management System
IMT	Incident Management Team
IQS	Incident Qualification System
IRPG	Incident Response Pocket Guide
ISO	Insurance Services Office
IVM	Integrated Vegetation Management
LDS	Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
MDC	Mobile Data Computers
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NF	National Forest
NFCA	Northern Fire Chiefs Association
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NFCA	Northern Fire Chiefs Association
NFPA	National Fire Protection Association
NGCC	Northern Gila County Community Response Team
NGCCWPP	Northern Gila County Community Wildfire Protection Plan
NIMS	National Incident Management System
NPS	U.S. National Park Service

NWCG	National Wildfire Coordinating Group
PFD	Payson Fire Department
PFDRDC	Phoenix Fire Department Regional Dispatch Center
PPD	Payson Police Department
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
PSFR	Pine Strawberry Fuels Reduction
PVFD	Pleasant Valley Fire District
RD	(Payson) Ranger District
RSG	Ready! Set! Go!
SAFER	Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response
SARA	Superfund Amendments Reauthorization Act
SERRP	State of Arizona Emergency Response and Recovery Plan
SIP	Shelter In Place
SRP	Salt River Project
TNF	Tonto National Forest
TSA	Temporary Shelter Area
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USFS	United States Forest Service
VFA	Volunteer Fire Assistance
VHF	Very High Frequency
VLAT	Very Large Air Tanker
WFHF	Wildland Fire Hazardous Fuels Grant
WPFD	Whispering Pines Fire District
WUI	Wildland Urban Interface

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APPENDIX B: WILDLAND URBAN INTERFACE "WATCH-OUTS!"

Structure defense adds a whole new dimension to wildland firefighting. The Incident Response Pocket Guide (IRPG) provides an additional list of "Watch-outs!" designed specifically for the tactical challenges confronting firefighting personnel in the wildland urban interface (WUI). The WUI "Watch-outs!" include:

- Poor roads
- Bridge load limits
- Wooden construction and wood shake roofs
- Power lines
- Propane tanks and HazMat threat
- Inadequate water supply
- Natural fuels within 30 ft. (9 m) or closer to structures
- Structures in chimneys, box canyons, narrow canyons, or on steep slopes
- Extreme fire behavior
- Strong winds
- Panic during an evacuation [17]

[17] http://training.nwcg.gov/classes/s130/508%20Files/071231_s130_m11_508.pdf

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APPENDIX C: AGENCY UPDATES

As decided by the 2015 Northern Gila County CWPP Review Team, each participating Fire District/Department or Agency should maintain the following spreadsheet on a regular basis (recommended monthly). At the annual CWPP review, each participating Department or Agency should provide the current spreadsheet to be included in the CWPP updates.

District/Department/ Agency	Month/Year	Contact Information	Training/Activity/ Qualifications	Grants	Staffing

(Continued)

District/Department/ Agency	Month/Year	Apparatus	Fuel Maintenance Projects	Communications/ Dispatch	Aid Agreements

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